

### (1) Acting Minister...

Commenting on the matter Sadat said: "We assessed the short-term staff (based on contracts) and recruited new youths and announced the vacant positions in Kabul and the provinces."

According to the Caretaker Law, acting ministers have limited authorities. Sadat, however, has taken steps that only a permanent minister has legal the authority to do.

The documents show that Sadat, on 11th of January 2017, sent out an order to the ministry's sub-offices in Kabul and provinces. After to some complaints, the recruitment process was stopped until the next order.

But on 27th and 30th of February 2017, Sadat himself recruited Faridullah, Aimal, Sadeya and Munir Zardran as his advisers.

Sadat claims that he recruited these people based on their merits and professionalism. The documents, however, contradict his claim.

"I have all the authority to appoint someone or to fire someone according to law," he said.

The documents show that Sadat had ordered the Balkh directorate of Information and Culture to recruit a man graduated from Economic Faculty in archeology department.

Although his order led to adverse reactions, he insisted the man should be appointed in the department.

"An acting minister has more limited authority than a minister. In appointing and firing, the civil services law has explained everything, but we have seen that the acting ministers overrule the law," said Fawzia Kofi, MP.

A document of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) also show that MoFA had requested MoCI to send an authorized female representative of the ministry to the 61th Commission Meeting on Women Status that will be held in New York city in March. (Tolonews)

### (2) Pakistan...

"We can either be collectively secure or collectively insecure."

Using a Frankenstein monster against another country was foolish as it would come back to haunt its master, Atmar remarked.

He said: "We do not have empirical evidence that Daesh and Taliban are enemies today. These terrorist outfits are mutating. Our regional response thus far has been inadequate..."

The terrorist groups based in Pakistan were threatening Afghanistan and other countries in the region, he claimed, saying: "Daesh is an enemy and a threat to all of us."

Atmar estimated up to 45000 terrorists were currently operating in Afghanistan. "Associating Islam with terrorism is unhelpful."

The narrative of good and bad terrorists needed to be discouraged and stopped. Atmar stressed. Violence in Afghanistan was not a civil war, it was terrorism and extremism at its worst, he said

"Separating economic objectives from political objectives of terrorist groups in Afghanistan is difficult," he added. The outfits also needed relationships with rogue state elements that provided them sanctuary.

"We are no longer talking of a lone group. There is a symbiotic relation between the economics and geopolitics of the region," the advisor continued.

The NSA made clear success against terrorism in Afghanistan was vitally important for the stability of the region and the world.

He said 20 out of 98 terrorist outfits were operating within the Afghan region. He also hailed India's assistance worth a billion dollars to Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

### (3) Ghani Warns...

our message for them is clear --- we have strong intention to win the war."

The president said he was happy that the public representatives were back from the winter recess with new ideas and plans. He asked the lawmakers to share their new strategies and plans with him and other government officials.

The president said during the two and a half years of his government, he consulted lawmakers from both houses of the parliament and discussions with the legislators took place 32 times during the period.

He said it was his constitutional duty to maintain balance between the three pillars of the state and facilitate cooperation among them.

The president said elections were one of the basic principles of democracy and it was necessary that Afghanistan have free, fair and transparent elections.

He warned all departments against interference in the election process

and stressed over a transparent conduct of the democratic exercise.

"From this house of the people, I want to announce that neither I have any intension to interfere in election nor anyone else would be allowed to interfere."

About the future presidential election, the president said future election would be conducted in its due time and further delay in holding the Wolesi Jirga polls would not be allowed.

Article 83 of the Constitution states: "The constitutionally mandated tenure of the house of people shall terminate after the disclosure of the results of the election, on the 1st of Saratan (22 June), and the new parliament shall commence work."

However, the Presidential Palace on June 2015 announced the Wolesi Jirga would continue its duty until the announcement of next parliamentary elections. The parliamentary elections are yet to be conducted.

Ghani said holding of parliamentary and district council elections next year would be an important step towards addressing the country's challenges.

"Our main goal is to put an end to crisis and the important document we follow for that is our Constitution," he said, adding 20 terrorist groups facilitated by the Taliban were operating in Afghanistan.

He said there was no difference among militant groups as all were responsible for people's miseries.

The president said Afghanistan found access to enough resources for improving its security after achievements in the Warsaw and Brussels summits. It was the responsibility of the political lot to defend law enforcement, support national unity and back the society in fighting against terrorism.

"Fortunately the definition of enemy and friend is clear to the nation and the government. Besides Daesh and other foreign terrorist groups who want to use Afghanistan's land, the Taliban militants who continue to kill our people are also our enemy, our security forces would seriously stand against them," he added.

The president promised peaceful livelihood opportunities to the youth who had been deceived by propagandas of foreign intelligence agents if they stopped fighting.

"Our message for those who have no will for peace is clear and that is we have the will for victory in fighting and would not allow them to threaten our nation," he said.

Ghani also planted a sapling in the parliament's compound in presence of parliament members and prayed for future of Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

### (4) Police Surrender ...

in the area, said the three policemen had recently joined the force. They took away three weapons and a walkie-talkie.

The strategic valley was also surrendered to the Taliban a month back. (Pajhwok)

### (5) Meshrano Jirga ...

elected as first deputy of senate. Mohammad Asif Rahimi obtained 34 votes and nominated as second deputy of senate.

"We commit to conduct our duties transparently, said second deputy of senate Mohammad Asif Sediqqi, referring to the vote of confidence by the senators.

"I promise to use all my energy to serve the senate and the senators in the next one year," said deputy of senate speaker Mohammad Faisal Sami who obtained 34 votes.

None of the candidates succeed to gain the votes necessary for the position of senate secretary. (Tolonews)

### (6) 8 Police Defect ...

weapons", Zabihullah Mujahid, a Taliban spokesperson, tweeted. He said the surrendering police also brought with them one ranger pick-up vehicle, four motorcycles and ammunitions. (Pajhwok)

### (7) Kabul Hosts ...

to revive the love and sentiments we have lost through political relations," said writer Ghafoor Laiwal. Participants at the festival also stressed the need for further development of cultural relations to promote peace and stability in the region.

"We must use the art for ethics and strengthening human thought. Such thoughts could help to promote tolerance, love and affection," said Afghan film maker Roya Sadaat.

Singers from the three countries, including Pakistan's famous singer Zaib Khan, performed their traditional songs and traditional Afghan classical music. (Tolonews)

### (8) Kandahar: ...

She asked the central government to pay more attention to the prob-

lem and increase the number of female workers the judicial organs.

As many as 23 women are currently imprisoned in the province. They are in jail for different crimes such as murder, elopement, kidnapping, robberies, etc. The director said 210 cases of violence against women, including beatings, denial of rights, child marriages and elopement, were filed this solar year.

These complicated cases needed investigations by professional female prosecutors and judges, she said, adding a number of female workers in Kandahar lived in Kabul, a problem the government should resolve.

Achakzai also blamed families for not allowing girls to choose what they wanted to study. "Many girls who want to continue professional studies are prevented by their families and that is why the number of female workers is limited."

Kandahar civil society's female activists said men and women were equal members of society and both should have an equal share in serving people and having access to facilities.

Shahida, a civil society activist, said harassment and torture of women by males and decisions on such incidents by men were against all principles of justice.

When a woman needed a female doctor, they similarly needed female workers in judicial organs to address their cases, she argued. The government could resolve the problem and employ women to the justice sector on reasonable salaries, she believed.

Pajhwok tried to the only female prosecutor in Kandahar on the issue, but she declined commenting due to security problems.

The governor's spokesman, Samim Khpalkwak, acknowledged judicial organs were not alone having fewer women workers. There is a similar situation other government organs.

"Unfortunately the number of women workers in Kandahar is three percents. The problem is rooted in medieval traditions," he added.

Khpalkwak said some women were working in a few departments such as education, public health and labour and social affairs. (Pajhwok)

### (9) NPC Approves...

process of CASA-1000 project. The NPC discussed technical study and designing of Ghodar Dam in central Daikundi province, Gazak Dam in Bamyán, Dahna Ghor Bandak Dam in Parwan, Paltoyee Dam in Paktia, Dwamand Dam in Khost, Alingar Dam in Laghman, Tirpul Dam in Herat and some other dams.

The meeting decided to hold a special meeting under the leadership of the president on effective implementation of important national and infrastructure projects in the country.

About feasibility study of the projects, President Ghani said he would personally review their documents. He said an economic analysis was needed about the efficiency of projects against their costs.

The NPC meeting was participated by the commission officials, observers from SIGAR, Parliamentary Anti-Corruption Caucus (PACC) and NATO's RS mission. (Pajhwok)

### (10) Jobless Kunduz ...

challenge to youth in recent years. In 2001 in the presence of international forces, hundreds of organisations and military or other companies started functioning in Afghanistan. Thousands of Afghan youth were employed then on high salaries.

But with the pullout of foreign forces in 2014, the employment situation worsened as thousands lost their jobs and it was difficult for them to find other openings having the same privileges.

Sher Aghan, another younger person, also grumbled about unemployment. There were many educated youth in the province, but no work opportunities existed there, he charged.

He expressed concern over the lack of job opportunities and administrative corruption, particularly in the appointment of youth. "If a post is announced or a test conducted, the whole process is cosmetic. An individual is already selected."

"People who don't have money or the right connections in an organisation, they always remain unemployed. It is a very big challenge to youth," he said.

He asked government leaders to create jobs for youth, otherwise they would be obliged either to leave the country or join the militants.

Waheedullah Rahmani, Kunduz peace council secretary, agreed unemployment had become a serious issue as the fighters exploiting the situation by luring them into their

ranks. "The government should do something in this regard."

Youth affairs officials at the information and culture department verified BA degree-holders had joined the Taliban to support their families due to growing unemployment.

Abdul Ghafoor Hotak, youth affairs director, said: "Unfortunately, unemployment is increasing day by day; there is insecurity in Kunduz and the Taliban are hiring most of our youth."

He said unemployment and issues stemmed from it had caused some youth to suffer from psychological and mental illness. "If the government doesn't pay serious heed to the problem, more of youth will join insurgents."

Currently 750 jobless educated youth, including 12th grade graduates and those with bachelor and master degrees and PhDs, were registered with them, he revealed. Hotak explained the figures did not cover unemployed young people who had not been registered yet. (Pajhwok)

### (11) Low Wages...

returned from Pakistan with his family of 13 members. He now works for 12 hours a day in Kabul's industrial park and the company pays him only 5500 Afs a month. Abdul Rahman, currently he lives in a relative's house because of financial difficulties.

"There are some factories who hardly manage to hire laborers. Some workers are hired for less money. Up to fifteen people ask us for work in a week, but we are unable to hire all of them," said Sherzad Yousufzai, a factory owner in Kabul's industrial park.

"I came here for work from Nangarhar, but now I am compelled to work for a low wage despite doing heavy duty work. I work twelve hours a day and stay here day and night," said labor Ziaullah.

In the view of current unemployment in the country, labor unions have blasted the government for not implementing the labor law to protect the rights of the workers in the country. Labor unions say employers are exploiting the legal gaps at the expense of the rights of their laborers. (Tolonews)

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### (12) Trump ...

US and Afghanistan were discussed at the meeting.

"Ms. Miller assured of cooperation and support of the US new administration for the National Unity Government and stressed that his country would continue to work with Afghanistan in all areas to bring security, peace and stability in Afghanistan," the statement added.

Appreciating the US constant cooperation, the Chief Executive emphasized on the principle of close cooperation between Afghanistan and the US and assured of implementation of the political agreement for building peace and stability in the country. (KP)

dividing river flow between the two countries, and hammered out the treaty in 1973.

However, political events such as a 1973 coup in Afghanistan, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, and subsequent civil war and Taliban rule had a damaging impact on the fate of the Hamoon wetlands.

In the last two decades, the fertile wetlands have substantially dried up. The Taliban government closed the sluices to the Kajaki dam on Hirmand until 2002. This compounded the impact of the worst drought the region has experienced in many decades, caused in part by climate change and warming temperatures. (Ipfnews)

emphasized that cooperation from Afghan side for effective border management was important for preventing cross-border movement of terrorists and militants. "Pakistan summons Afghan diplomat over cross-border attack (Xinhua)

begging to bring money for bread and powder," she added. Hundreds of addicts are living under the bridge.

Another man who has a bachelor degree in foreign languages was also admitted to Phoenix camp but escaped after spending some time there.

"I pursued education for sixteen years to serve my country but now I am here," said the addicted man.

There are some addicts who live under the bridge alongside their children. Experts say that such an existence will devastate the lives of their children unless the government

takes step and rescue them. Based on statistics, there are around ten female addicts who live alongside male addicts under the Pul-e-Sukhta bridge.

Zainab 14 is of the female addicts who have been living under the bridge alongside her two brothers, mother and father over the past several months.

Based on the international statistics, the number of children and women using drugs in Afghanistan is estimated to be one million.

Drug smuggling and production in Afghanistan has been one of the major concerns among the international community.

Over the past decades, Afghanistan and international community have spent millions of dollars to wipe out drug smuggling and production in the country. These efforts not yielded positive outcomes and Afghanistan is still the world's largest producer of opium. (Tolonews)

added.

A walkie-talkie, laptop, recruitment list, remote control and some weapons had been recovered during the raid.

Civilians could not be reached for comments because telecommunication networks remained off in the district. (Pajhwok)

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the southern and southeastern parts of the country.

The Taliban insurgents are actively operating in this province and often carry out insurgency activities against the security forces and government officials. (KP)

deportees, an action that comes as the Afghanistan-Pakistan border remained shut for the 17th day.

Attallah Khogyani, the governor's spokesman, confirmed the deportation via Torkham. He said the deportees had no documents of travel and residency in Pakistan.

Relations between the neighbours hit a new low after a series of bombings in the neighbouring country. Islamabad closed all crossing points on the Durand Line subsequently. (Pajhwok)

factories were recovered and destroyed in security forces raid, he added.

Also a statement from the MoI said Special Security Forces conducted operation in Khogyano district last night at