

(1) Inami Elected

the election went to a second round between Syed Ikram with 39 votes and Inami with 85 votes. Inami was elected as the Wolesi Jirga's secretary in Monday's ballot. He collected 104 votes and Syed Ikram 57.

But today's election for the deputy speaker position again did not produce a clear winner. The previous contest for the slot was held a day earlier between Mohammad Saleh Saljoqi and Syed Ali Kazmi, but both fell short of the required threshold. New contesters, Mohammad Arif Rahmani from Ghazni, Farhad Azimi from Balkh, Ghulam Farooq Majrooh from Herat and Mohammad Sarwar Fayez from Badghis province on Monday failed to obtain the required number of votes to be elected as the deputy speaker.

The election of deputy speaker went to a new round between Azimi and Majrooh, both receiving 60 votes each, but the two again failed to be elected, with Majrooh securing 59 votes and Azimi 61. The minimum required number of votes for the position was 90, while 178 lawmakers were present.

Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahim ruled the new round of voting to elect the deputy speaker would take place among new contenders tomorrow (Tuesday).

If the deputy speaker could not be elected tomorrow as well, the final round would take place between the two highest vote winners from the previous rounds. In that round, despite if the 50 plus one threshold could not be met, the most vote-getter will be elected as the deputy speaker, according to the house's internal procedures. (Pajhwok)

(2) President

Sunday ordered the suspension of the sports director and the constitution of a committee led by Aabdul Subhan Rauf, head of the monitoring and evaluation authority at the Presidential Palace, to investigate corruption charges against the director. The committee has been tasked with ensuring good governance in the sports directorate and meeting demands of sportsmen and the youth, the Presidential Palace said in a statement. The decree said Jan Alam Husaini, technical and professional director at the sports directorate, will look after the sports affairs until the investigation against Karamuddin was completed. Karamuddin had been the director for the last one year. He had previously served as head of the football federation. (Pajhwok)

(3) Glowing Tributes

president said Fahim reached the highest military rank and held important positions in the country's politics. He did not choose extreme measures even during Jihad and was in favor of fair elections. "If Fahim was alive, perhaps we would face little problems during the elections."

Fahim led Afghanistan during critical times with exceptional abilities after the demise of Ahmad Shah Massoud, the president continued.

Hamid Karzai called Fahim a patriot and said he was pro peace to a point that even he wanted peace talks with Gulbadin Hekmatyar.

"Fahim always had a firm stance on vital issues of national importance," Karzai remarked, adding that Fahim's stance on issues of sovereignty, unity, and peace was remarkable.

CEO Abdullah said Fahim was a pacifist and a champion of people's freedom. "It has been a year since he is gone and nobody could replace him." (Pajhwok)

(4) Trans-Afghan

through a pipeline passing through Afghanistan and Pakistan. (Pajhwok)

(5) Senate Chairman

would continue to deceive the Afghan people with their peace dialogues.

Muslimyar warned that if Daesh group shed bloods of citizens, they would stand against Ghani. "They have changed their names from Taliban to Daesh to con-

tinue bloodshed in Afghanistan, and we have shared our concerns with the president," Muslimyar said. "No one has consulted with the Senate in this regard."

The High Peace Council (HPC) members have also emphasized on careful negotiations with the Taliban, demanding the government to avoid hasty decisions in this regard.

"This [peace] can't take place in just one meeting," HPC Mohammad Akbari criticized. "We have Pakistan and the armed oppositions on the other side. It needs to be carried out very slowly and carefully."

The Afghan women who are more worried about their future emphasized that women's freedom should not be sacrificed for these talks.

"We fear that the government and the politicians may compromise women's rights," said Dr. Alema, member of the Afghan Women Political Participation Committee.

The peace issue has been one of the top debates in the political arena after Ghani initiated consultations with the HPC members, religious leaders, and civil society activists.

Ghani, however, assured at the inauguration of the new parliamentary year on Saturday that past gains would not be compromised in the peace negotiations. (Tolonews)

(6) Afghan Delegation

earlier said operation was launched against those Afghan refugees who didn't have legal documents. (Pajhwok)

(7) 92% Afghans

in the country.

Democracy International interviewed 4,020 people across 34 provinces, with 50 percent of respondents being male and the rest female. The key takeaways from the survey section dedicated to the electoral system are as follows: 92 percent of the interviewees called for the immediate implementation of reforms in the electoral system; 28 percent of the people identified corruption in the election commission as the biggest challenge facing elections; 19 percent expressed trust in the credibility of the Independent Election Commission (IEC) and Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC); 57 percent said that participants in the 2014 presidential election didn't vote on the basis of ethnicity; 90 percent said women should be allowed to determine their own votes; 67 percent said the recounting of votes in the 2014 presidential election improved public trust in the elections; and 62 percent said that the presidential elections reflected the aspirations of the Afghan people.

Regarding good governance, the survey's findings were as follows: 85 percent of respondents vowed support for the national unity government; 82 percent expressed optimism about the success of the national unity government; 81 percent said the country was moving in the right direction; 94 percent said they trust President Ashraf Ghani; 71 percent said public trust in the Taliban has declined; and 61 percent expressed support for the peace negotiation process.

"We conducted this survey after the formation of national unity government, and the poll shows that a large amount of people await reforms in the electoral system and are willing to vote in the elections," senior Democracy International advisor Zekirya Barakzai said on Monday. "Public perspective on the national unity government is positive and almost 85 percent of people support it," he added.

The Free and Fair Election Forum of Afghanistan (FEFA), a major election monitoring group, welcomed the survey, but maintained its ongoing criticisms of the national unity government's performance to date. "We strongly value the findings of this poll about the elections and it is a positive move, but regarding the national unity government, we have our criticisms, because only a few months have been passed since the establishment of the national unity government and already the new government has

broken its commitments," FEFA Executive Director Naeem Asghari said. Therefore, it is too early to issue a judgment on its performance."

Based on Democracy International's survey, just about 10 percent Afghans are concerned with the possible increase of security threats and the Taliban's influence. Moreover, Overall public confidence in the country's current situation has increased by 30 percent over the past two years. (Tolonews)

(8) Wolesi Jirga

officials and residents of southern Ghazni province said some of the kidnapped men had been brought there from Zabul.

"The individuals were kidnapped to spark sectarian and ethnic violence in the country," the Wolesi Jirga said in a statement.

It added the people of Afghanistan belonged to different ethnic groups and they had been historically living in peace with each other despite the civil war of the early 1990s.

The lower house urged the president, security bosses, tribal elders in Ghazni, Kandahar, Zabul and Helmand to take early steps for the release of the kidnapped men in order their families could get a sigh of relief.

The statement quoted Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahim as hoping the Wolesi Jirga's statement would have an impact on efforts at rescuing the abducted Afghans. (Pajhwok)

(9) Improvement of

He said that result oriented steps would be taken to highlight the recommendations regarding Afghan Transit Trade with concerned authorities. (Agencies)

(10) CSO Records

hundreds of acres of land around the country.

"These government entities are active, but their revenues have decreased," CSO Director Azizullah Faqiri told TOLONews. "I must say, their work is not significant."

All together, the 39 state-owned entities have seen around 10 billion AFN in revenue, but only a small portion of it has gone to the government's treasury. "If the government works on this, and supports the companies, then they can work better and make more revenue," Faqiri asserted. The 39 firms vary across a wide range of industries, including hotels, slaughterhouses, construction companies, construction material production companies, animal products, animal labor, electricity, coal, bread production, gas, pharmaceuticals, transportation, freight services and agriculture seeds. (Tolonews)

(11) Disagreements

Kabul Municipality have reported that number to be much higher, somewhere between 70,000 and 100,000 taxpayers.

According to the Merchants Association, there are roughly 100,000 medial and large-sized potential taxpayers in Kabul, yet the majority of them are not registered and do not pay taxes. The association has pointed to this as evidence of the country's troubled tax system, which they have said is a result of its muddled structure, lack of enforcement and corruption.

"Ministry of finance has been failed to identify the taxpayers and also the lack of any particular system for the collection of taxes has paved the way for tax evasion," Merchants Association spokesman Mohammad Hassan Sepahi said.

Meanwhile, the Kabul Municipality has reported around 70,000 eligible taxpayers in the capital. "More than 70,000 are doing business, including super stores, workshops, restaurants and parlors, but only 15,000 of them have received permission from us while another 55,000 operate without proper registration," municipality spokesman Mohammad Tawab said.

When asked about the inconsistencies in figures being reported, MoF spokesman Abdul Qadir Jailani maintained that the official estimate was in line with the existing laws of Afghanistan. "The figure that I shared

abides by the prevailing laws of the country, and they are paying their taxes." (Tolonews)

(12) Foreign Hands

Brig. Gen. Abdul Baqi Nuristani, provincial police chief, told Pajhwok Afghan News that "we held several mediation rounds between the tribes but those did not yield any results.

Maulvi Umar Farooq, a provincial council member, urged the government to send a high-powered delegation to settle the issue without further delay. (Pajhwok)

(13) Govt. Asked

was shot dead in Wazir Akbar Khan locality of Kabul in January 2014. A Taliban's offshoot had claimed responsibility for his killing.

Karzai, the MoFA political affairs deputy, said Horner had sacrificed his life in raising Afghans voices and freedom of speech.

Karzai reiterated protection of journalists, freedom of speech. "Unfortunately, a number of Afghan and foreign journalists sacrificed their lives in defending freedom of press," he added.

Ahmad Sardar, his wife and children's brutal killing in Serena Hotel was yet another example of journalists' sacrifices, he recalled.

"There has been much progress into Horner's assassination case and the results will be shared with the Swedish Embassy after the probe is concluded," Karzai pledged.

But Mohammad Ayub Salangi, deputy interior minister, in his meeting with reporters had said the investigation into the case didn't yield any result. But he stressed the case was still open and security organs were trying to bring the perpetrators to justice. (Pajhwok)

(14) Kabul

from police academy and assumed charges as governor of Kabul province in 2012. (Pajhwok)

(15) ANA Equipped

to help establish more lines of communication with local civilians in restive areas, as well as make the Afghan military more effective in combating militants.

"This equipment will help tell the people of Afghanistan what the Afghan national army is doing, what it is doing in the area, what are the challenges and the threats," Resolute Support Mission Deputy Commander Lieutenant General Carsten Jacobson said on Monday. "There are people out on every call that are already trained and know how to use this equipment and how to talk to the people of Afghanistan in the area of operation, and that is important; the insurgents are telling their story, now the Afghan National Army has the opportunity and the equipment to tell what they are doing and how they are succeeding."

Officials from the Afghan Ministry of Defense (MoD) and ANA commanders have echoed those remarks, and celebrated the new equipment donation as a major advantage for the ANA. They have said the new equipment will allow troops to better track and engage insurgents, as well as communicate with local communities and minimize noncombatant casualties. The new radios will cover 50 square kilometers.

"These radios are quite effective, and they compliment our combat units practically and help coordinate their communications according to the nature of the area, therefore this will have a major impact for the Afghan army," Deputy Minister of Defense for Policy and Strategy Mohammad Homayoun Fawzi said.

Local support, and public backing around the country more broadly, is thought to be critical for the success of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). In addition to raising the morale of troops, public support, more practically, can help in locating and defeating insurgent groups. The Defense Ministry established its Public Affairs Department four years ago in hopes of enhancing the relationship between the ANA and the general Afghan public.

"We will use the equipment to reduce casualties among the ci-

vilian population and for the support of the Afghan National Army," Ministry of Defense Operations Commander Afzal Aman said. (Tolonews)

(16) Kunduz

with 70 percent of them did not clear their outstanding.

He said that the levy of cleanliness tax on shops and urban services for each building was 3,000 Afghans. Security organs were asked to help in collecting tax money from defaulters and bring those people to justices who were defaulters, he added.

"The departments of power, water supply and police headquarters have recently signed a memorandum of understanding to cut electricity and water supply of those who did not clear their dues," he said.

He said that the defaulted residents were repeatedly informed through local media to pay clear their payments but no one had taken it serious. However, some residents said they were not aware about buildings and urban services' taxes.

Sayed Abdur Rahman, a resident of the 3rd police district of Kunduz City, said that tax was the right of the government and people must pay. He said that he has always paid his tax payments to the municipality asking other residents to clear their outstanding. (Pajhwok)

(17) Surrendered

added the governor's house had shared the issue with police officials. Security officials had said Shah's case was under investigation in National Directorate of Security (NDS) and information in the regard would be shared later. (Pajhwok)

(18) Craftswomen

duction, decrease prices and lure buyers."

She said most of their products were exported abroad through foreign traders and at home, the products had a fewer number of buyers.

A handicrafts expert in Taloqan, Nooria Nekzad, said the government had failed to discharge its responsibility toward promoting the handicraft sector.

She said if a market was established in Taloqan exclusively for women's handicrafts, it would help increase the number of buyers with the passage of time.

Currently 5823 women are associated with handicraft industry in Taloqan, Baharak, Warsaj, Rustaq, Kalfagan and Farkhar districts.

Women's affairs director Razm Hawash said a number of NGOs had assisted women in building their skills and finding market for their handicrafts, but the assistance had been insufficient to resolve all problems being faced by businesswomen.

She said a market for selling handicrafts had been established in a women's park in Taloqan, but no department had so far come forward to lease it out.

She said her department had repeatedly called for the market to be privatized but no one could be found to take the market on lease so that women's handicrafts could be put on sale.

She said handicraft industry was crucial to stimulating domestic economy and urged NGOs to help her department establish a women's market in the province. (Pajhwok)

(19) 72 Suspects

operation across the country.

The operations are led independently by the Afghan National Security Forces and NATO forces only train and support them in the time of need.

One large scale military that begun about three weeks by hundreds of soldiers of the Afghan National Security Forces is still ongoing in Helmand Province.

Around two hundreds of insurgents have been reportedly killed in this operation which is named Operation Zulfikar.

The other operation as been initiated in Zabul province to release the 30 abducted passengers by a group of unidentified gunmen. According to the government sources over 100 members of the group that is responsible for the kidnapping have been killed in this operation.

Although, it is not officially confirmed by Kabul but local elders who were trying to negotiate the release with the insurgents said that the group is connected to DAISH also known as Islamic State. (KP)

(20) Dozens of Fighters

forces released the female fighters in exchange for aid workers kidnapped by the insurgents.

Afghanistan in the north is connected to Uzbekistan from where Uzbek fighters cross the border for terrorist activities.

The presence of Uzbek fighters have been reported in some other northern and northeastern provinces. (KP)

(21) Policemen

chief, told Pajhwok Afghan News the gun battle erupted after a group of insurgents stormed a security post of ALP in Yomal locality on Sunday.

He said one rebel died in the fire fight. Zabihullah Mujahid, Taliban spokesman, said six ALP personnel have been killed in the fire fight.

More than 1,000 families have been displaced due to fighting and natural calamities from Jurm and Yafal districts of the province. (Pajhwok)

(22)6 Rebels among rebels erupted late Sunday in Tangi locality of Pachirag-am district.

The rebels of the two groups had a verbal brawl over an issue, which developed into an armed clash, he added.

Noman Hatifi, spokesman of the 201 Sailab Military Corps, said that the clash occurred between Mullah Asmatullah and Mullah Dawood groups. However, militants have not yet commented on the incident. (Pajhwok)

German Military Says Worried About Islamists Infiltrating to Get Arms Training

BERLIN - The head of Germany's military intelligence says he fears its armed forces could be infiltrated by Islamist militants to obtain weapons training for use in fighting in Syria and Iraq for insurgent groups like Islamic State.

"If a moderately intelligent Islamist turns up who conceals the motives for his interest, it would be difficult to prevent him from being recruited," Christof Gramm, head of the intelligence service known by its acronym MAD, told the German daily Die Welt in an interview.

No serving members of the Bundeswehr armed forces are among the estimated 600 German citizens who have joined the jihadists, Gramm said, "but we have identified over 20 former German soldiers who are known to have traveled to the conflict zone".

The MAD chief said he wants to introduce background checks on potential recruits, adding that it was routine for people who are going to work with secret documents or in sensitive areas of the economic infrastructure, "but for people who are going to be trained in weapons of war, there are no prior checks".

Germany is one of various Western states that are concerned about citizens, often with Islamic immigrant backgrounds, joining jihadist insurgencies and have cracked down to reduce the risk of returning fighters posing a security threat at home.

Commenting on the interview, Defence Ministry spokesman Ingo Gerhartz said 20 ex-soldiers fighting with Islamic State should be seen in the context of "about 25,000-30,000 part-time and full-time soldiers who leave the armed forces each year". However, he added, "each case is one too many".

Gerhartz defended the military's selection process, which he said already includes backgrounds check by the police for any criminal record which would rule out recruitment.

The military intelligence chief said espionage by Russia and China remained the main challenge for the MAD, adding that both countries had "huge" interest in all aspects of the Bundeswehr. (Reuters)