

(1) Women's Rights...

are expected to re-start Saturday behind closed doors, and no details have yet given to media regarding peace talks. (Agencies)

(2) New Permanent...

the Secretary-General's points and stressed that as a founding member of the United Nations, Afghanistan strongly supports the UN Agenda, and emphasized the importance of the key issues of gender, specifically protecting women's rights and gains made in the last 17 years during peace efforts, and environment, as Afghanistan is a country severely affected by climate change as evidenced by recent droughts affecting the country.

Prior to her appointment as Permanent Representative, Ambassador Raz developed an extensive career in the field of economic development. In 2013, she was appointed as the first female Spokesperson and Director of Communications for President Hamid Karzai. Following the election of President Ashraf Ghani, she was appointed to the role of Chief of Staff at the Administrative Office of the President in November 2014 and then to the role she held prior to her appointment as Deputy Minister for Economic Cooperation at Ministry of Foreign Affairs in March 2016.

Ambassador Raz is the 12th Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations since the organization's foundation in 1945 and she succeeded H.E. Ambassador Mahmoud Saikal in that role. (Monitoring Desk)

(3) Investors Concerned...

the (possible) return of the Taliban are done through a mechanism like the former President Dr. Najibullah's era, then the businessmen will be worried about the loss of their capitals," said Khan Jan Alokozai, the deputy head of the ACCI.

Critics said the Afghan government, the international community and the Taliban should clarify their future position towards the private sector in the country.

This comes as the talks between the US negotiators and the Taliban members entered their 13th day on Saturday. Reports indicate that the talks are focusing mainly on US troop withdrawal from Afghanistan and counterterrorism efforts. (Tolo news)

(4) Special Court...

The new amendments in the election law were approved by President Ghani last month based on which new commissioners were appointed for the two electoral bodies - the Independent Election Commission and the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission.

So far, the Independent Election Commission has announced the final results of parliamentary elections for 18 provinces and the results for another 15 provinces are yet to be announced.

The parliamentary elections faced allegations of fraud and irregularities by a number of candidates, the people and electoral monitoring organizations.

A parliamentary elections candidate from Logar, Sayed Farhad Akbari, said the former commissioners failed to maintain transparency in the electoral process.

"We call on the new commissioners to secure justice for the people," Akbari said.

A spokesman for the Independent Election Commission, Mirza Mohammad Haqparast, meanwhile, said the new commissioners are assessing the operational plan for the upcoming elections.

"Announcing the remained results of parliamentary elections, budgeting for the four upcoming elections, operational plan and specifying

the polling centers are the issues the commission is working on," Haqparast added.

This comes as former election commissioners have been accused of corruption and their cases have been handed to the Attorney General's Office and have been banned from traveling outside the country. So far, it is not clear whether judicial organizations have started investigation into the allegations against the election commissioners. (Tolo news)

(5) Afghan Politicians...

should come together and work for a sustainable peace in the country. Former President Hamid Karzai said at the event that Afghans are supporting the ongoing efforts by the US for Afghan peace. He said efforts are underway in national level to move towards a lasting peace in which the achievements of the past years should be preserved.

Mohammad Karim Khalili, head of the High Peace Council, said there is a national consensus on peace in Afghanistan. "At least 200 Afghan youth are killed every day from both the sides of the war," he said.

"We will not go back to a Taliban emirate," Khalili said, adding that Afghans want peace with dignity. "Afghanistan has changed," Khalili added.

Meanwhile, Abdul Rab Rasul Sayyaf, former Jihadi leader, said Afghans want peace with dignity and that everyone in the country is in favor of peace.

"We want peace with dignity and we welcome everyone trying to reach a lasting peace in Afghanistan," he added. "This government does not belong to (President Ashraf) Ghani, (Chief Executive Abdullah) Abdullah or (Second Vice President Mohammad Sarwar) Danish; it belongs to the Afghan people. We should maintain dignity of both the government and the people in (peace) negotiations."

He called on presidential candidates to be cautious in their campaigns and consider the "sensitive" situation in the country. (Tolo news)

(6) Outcome of...

were shifting their trade through the Chabahar port in Iran. Kabul-Islamabad trade had dwindled from \$5 billion to \$2.5 billion and touched the lowest ebb of \$1.5 billion last year. "We have lost a captive market."

Journalist Rahimullah Yousafzai believed Afghan peace talks would continue despite some hiccups. Taliban's key demand had been withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan, he said.

"Now efforts are underway to convince Taliban into avoiding the spring offense as a confidence-building measure to make the peace process a success," he remarked.

Former minister of commerce Humayun Akhtar Khan said peace in Afghanistan held great promise for regional prosperity. Pakistan would benefit from trade and transit networks and energy corridors, he added.

Former chief of general staff Ishfaq Nadeem said peace was possible in Afghanistan if the US-Taliban negotiations ended on a successful note. (Pajhwok)

(7) Ghani Meets...

Bakhshabad dam.

They also urged the president to prioritize addressing problems concerning health, cold storages, the provincial university's development and demanded dispatching a high authority delegation for assessment of Farah security situation.

The president told the attendees that his government had talked with Siemens Company to use winds in Farah, Nimroz and Herat provinc-

es in producing electricity because these winds were estimated to produce 65,000 megawatts of power.

President Ghani also promised with the Farah youths that the university's surrounding wall would be constructed.

The president said assistance for families affected by recent floods was taking place and the damages would be repaired at the earliest possible.

A high level delegation will visit Farah soon to evaluate the province security situation, said the president.

Ghani said Farah would witness development changes with implantation of the Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan (TAP) project and Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project.

Ghani also met with some Islamic scholars and influential people in Farah to hear their demands and suggestions.

Abdul Habib, a tribal elder, told the gathering that residents of Farah supported the current National Unity Government (NUG).

He shared people's concerns about security, poverty and electricity and added that Farah has much potential, which needed attention in order to bring about positive changes in people's lives and increase the national income

He also thanked President Ghani for his promise to dispatch a high level delegation for assessing security situation in the province and measures for security improvement.

President Ghani said fundamental works on the Bakhshabad dam had been carried out and these works would continue to reduce power tariff from 35 million afghanis to 17 million afghanis in the next solar year.

He added they had directed Da Afghanistan Breshna Shirkat (DABS) to increase its generating capacity from four megawatts to six megawatts until renewal of imported electricity. (Pajhwok)

(8) Afghan Sikh...

said that the inclusion of ethnic minorities in the peace process has been one of the fundamental issues and that they are trying to pay heed to their demands.

It comes as U.S. and Taliban representatives are holding peace talks in Qatar aimed at ending the nearly two decades of war in Afghanistan. The withdrawal of American troops and preventing Afghanistan being used against the United States and its allies are the two main topics as the two sides discussing on before reaching into a final agreement. (Tolo news)

(9) ADB Donates...

is finalized, includes 40 kilometers road and the 3rd part of this project involves construction of Ghazni-Kandahar road, which will start after the completion of the procurement process. (Agencies)

(10) Afghanistan...

McBrine and Boyd Rankin bagged two scalps each, Hotak said. Asghar Afghan put on a seventh-wicket partnership of 50 runs with Nabi to in Afghanistan's fight-back before.

In a poor run chase, the ACB spokesman said, Ireland lost wickets at regular intervals. Only four Irish batsmen managed to enter double figures.

Medium-fast bowler Aftab Alam claimed four wickets, conceding 25 runs. Ireland were bundled out for 114 in 35.3 overs. Rashid and Mujeeb Rehman finished with two wickets each. (Pajhwok)

(11) 3 Security Personnel...

added but he had no information about Taliban casualties. Hashmatullah Ahmadi, the spokes-

man for the Second Military Battalion confirmed the attack but did not comment on the casualties and the capture of security forces by the Taliban.

A Taliban spokesman, Qari Yousuf Ahmadi, without giving details, said casualties have been inflicted on security forces in the attack. (Pajhwok)

(12) Taliban Commander...

attack and assassination operative." "Ubaida is believed to have been responsible for facilitating, ordering and conducting several assassinations on government employees and other non-combatants," the sources said.

The anti-government armed militant groups including Taliban have not commented regarding the report so far.

Wardak is among the relatively volatile provinces in central parts of Afghanistan. Taliban and other groups are active in some of its districts and often attempt to carry out attacks against the government and security institutions. (KP)

(13) Brazil's Bolsonaro...

Bolsonaro and Trump both favor regime change in Venezuela, and are harsh critics of the Cuban and Nicaraguan governments.

Like Trump, Bolsonaro is a climate change sceptic, whose pro-business agenda and appointment of a like-minded right-winger as environment minister have done nothing to ease concerns about deforestation in the Amazon. (AFP)

(14) Canada Political...

On Thursday, Trudeau addressed the allegations head-on, telling reporters in Ottawa that he had learned "lessons" from the crisis -- but denying any wrongdoing.

For the opposition, that wasn't enough. On Friday, they renewed their calls for Trudeau to resign.

"Trudeau is facing a serious crisis of confidence in his leadership," said Stephanie Chouinard, a politics professor at the Royal Military College of Canada.

"Seeing not one, but two members of his cabinet slamming the door like that, it's unheard of for many years in Canada and it augurs very badly for him ahead of the October elections." (AFP)

(15) 'Forbidden City'...

German Kaiser Wilhelm II, served as the Nazis' military command center during World War II -- and then headquartered the Soviets' military high command for East Germany during the Cold War.

"This was 'Little Moscow' on German ground," Borchert, who grew up in the area, said during a recent tour. There was a theater, a museum, shopping facilities, a swimming pool and many barracks for the about 40,000 soldiers who were stationed here.

"It was the cultural center for the Soviet Army in Germany," he said. In 1994, several years after the fall of the Iron Curtain, the reunification of Germany and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the last Russian soldiers left the compound, a six-square-kilometer (2.3-square-mile) area enclosed by a 17-kilometer (10.5-mile)-long concrete wall. (Fox News)

(16) Venezuela's Minister...

were not aware of at that time.

Branding the country-wide power outage "the most brutal attack on the Venezuelan people in 200 years," the minister promised to file a complaint to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

President Nicolas Maduro earlier also raised suspicions of Washington standing behind the power outage as he accused the US of waging the "electricity war." The country's

electric energy minister, for his part, said that "deliberate sabotage" on behalf of the US-backed opposition was the reason.

Caracas and a number of other Venezuela's cities were plunged into darkness on Thursday. The power outage shut the capital's subway and left principal roads gridlocked as traffic lights were put out of order. The country's largest international airport was also left without power. While power started to return to some parts of Caracas officials are so far unable to fully restore the supply. (RT)

(17) No Patriots...

to decide whether to buy the Raytheon-built Patriot missile system. The formal offer expires at the end of this month, and it seems Turkey will not accept it.

Earlier this week, Turkish Defense Minister Hulusi Akar said his country is buying the S-400s because "we have to protect our 82 million citizens." The purchase is "not a choice but a necessity," he argued.

Ankara is planning to purchase 100 F-35s from the US and its pilots are currently going through training at Luke Air Force Base in Arizona. Turkish companies also contribute to America's costliest defense program supplying key components, including airframe structures and assemblies, and the center fuselages. US defense officials have long insisted that using both F-35 and S-400 is impossible without compromising the stealth jet's classified features. However, Turkish leadership believes the American pressure has more to do with politics than technical issues.

Washington has also been trying to compel India to ditch a similar S-400 deal with Russia. New Delhi has said the deal is not up for discussion. (RT)

(18) British Government...

it smacked of populism over principle.

"The tragic death of Shamima Begum's baby, Jarrah, is a stain on the conscience of this government," Diane Abbott, the opposition home affairs spokeswoman said.

"The Home Secretary (interior minister) failed this British child and he has a lot to answer for."

Found in a refugee camp in February, an unrepentant Begum sparked a debate in Britain and other European capitals as to whether a teenager with a jihadist fighter's child should be left in a war zone to fend for herself.

More broadly it has shown the predicament that governments face when weighing the ethical, legal and security ramifications of allowing militants and their families to return.

Begum left London aged 15 with two other schoolgirls to join Islamic State. She married Yago Riedijk, a Dutch IS fighter who is being held in a Kurdish detention center in northeastern Syria. (Reuters)

(19) UNEP Plans to...

to use such innovation to transform the world into greener and more sustainable living," he told delegates.

Peduzzi noted that unlike the previous single data system that is scattered, the new platform will glue the information in one platform.

He noted that the UN Environment will be partnering with earth observation institutions, the science and policy communities, green tech start-ups, citizen scientists and the worlds of finance and industry.

"We hope this new approach that uses cutting-edge technology will be of essence to creating cleaner, greener and more efficient solutions to sustainable development," he added. (Xinhua)