

(1) Afghan Gains...

international terrorist use of Afghanistan as a platform for attacks; improved prospects for regional peace and security; and increased regional connectivity and trade".

Khalilzad, who will continue to consult with Indian counterparts as the peace process moves forward, welcomed support for the peace process that "strengthens an emerging international consensus for peace efforts". The US diplomat recognised the "many important contributions India has made to Afghanistan's development." India has given \$3 billion in assistance to Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(2) Herat Residents...

Ahmad Wajid, another Herati, said prices of food items declines during Ramadan in other Islamic countries. But in Afghanistan, he regretted prices went up ridiculously.

Abdul Qadir, a shopkeeper, said: "Price increase is in hands of businessmen, not ours. If businessmen do justice and sell products at fair rates, we will also sell them at low prices." But Abdul Wadoud Faiz Xada, head of the Herat Professionals Union, accused the government of negligence and failing to monitor market prices. "Throughout the year, we are faced with inflation and one reason is our unstable currency. We purchase food items in foreign currencies. The absence of a special commission to monitor prices causes hike," he said.

But the governor spokesman, Ghulam Jilani Farhad, said a special commission, having representatives from different departments, had been formed to monitor prices in the market. (Pajhwok)

(3) Losing Candidates...

offices of the two election commissions and the Presidential Palace. They would go on strike if their demands were not addressed, the protestors said.

Najiba Faiz Helmandi, one of the protesting candidates from Helmand, claimed some people had been declared as winners based on nepotism and bribery.

She demanded the creation of a special election tribunal to look into charges of rigging and fraud.

Shukria Paikan, from Kunduz province, said: "We will go on strike if our demands are not addressed soon."

The Wolesi Jirga elections were held on October 20 and 21 nationwide except Ghazni and Kandahar provinces. The elections in Kandahar were held a week later.

The Independent Election Commission (IEC) announced final results from Laghman, Daikundi, Samangan, Jawzjan, Bamyan, Parwan, Zabul, Faryab, Nuristan, Nimroz, Kunar, Kapisa, Panjsher, Khost, Badakhshan, Sar-i-Pul, Uruzgan, Balkh, Pakhtia, Ghor, Herat, Farah, Takhar, Badghis, Nangarhar, Logar, Helmand, Kandahar, Maidan Wardak, Baghlan, Kunduz, Paktia, Kuchis and Hindu minority.

However, the final results from Kabul are yet to be announced. (Pajhwok)

(4) Mohib, Pakistan...

NSA Mohib said: "This trip could be an opportunity where we can build a positive momentum which is good for both countries."

The officials also exchanged views on various issues including mutual trade relations and health services. (Pajhwok)

(5) President May...

of an intra-Afghan delegation.

"If we think deeply, the resident who a joy told the participants of Jirga that he will decide the team of negotiators and other related issues. The purpose of worth \$5 million Jirga was to bring the entire peace process under his control," he said.

Kabul University Lecturer Musa Farivar said: "Article 18 of the statement carried hidden agenda of the government and the government want to pick their own people for the team of negotiators under this article." But Abdul Rashid Ayubi, spokesman

of the Peace Jirga, said: "Those who could better represent the system protect the national interest and values of Afghanistan will be able to represent the government in peace talks."

People who claim government monopoly say that president manipulated the cabinet, ministries and produces wrong interpretations of the situation.

Analysts also criticized the article 11th of the communique.

The article 11th of the communique says that members of the Loya Jirga want political parties and processes, politicians and influential figures of the country to get advantage of the current political consensus for peace in the country and enter from a single and Afghanistan inclusive address to intra-Afghan peace talks.

Zwak said, "The government tries to stop meetings such as the Afghan politicians' dialogues with the Taliban representatives in Moscow by what it emphasis on intra-Afghan talks, the government's presence in Moscow meeting was very limited, the government tries to colonize such initiatives,"

Farior, pointing to the article 11th of communique, said, "This article has both negative and positive sides, if the Taliban get prepared to directly talk with the government it will help sporadic efforts to become managed and solve the problem, but the Taliban do not accept that the government will have central role in talks,"

"Some of the articles of the communique indicate that the government tries to get advantage of peace talks similar like the Taliban who do not want to talk with the government, unfortunately there are no flexibilities of negotiating with the Taliban in these articles which is a hurdle to negotiations," he said.

However, Ayubi said that it was up to the Taliban if they talk with foreigners but they had to talk with the Afghan government as well.

Mohammad Mosa Ferior said that the president was given more authorities in the communique which he said was a demand of the government.

"This communique show that the government intentionally wanted to have its own presence in it and get political advantage of it," he said. (Pajhwok)

(6) Dostum Warns...

Dostum's remarks come as the Taliban has increased its attacks as part of the group's newly-announced spring offensive.

The issue of increasing insecurity in different parts of the country was raised by lawmakers in the Meshrano Jirga, the Upper House of Parliament, on Tuesday as they called for summoning security heads to the house.

"I agree with the suggestion of senators. If you agree, we will summon all the three heads of security agencies this week and will ask them about their plans (for improvement of security)," said the Meshrano Jirga Speaker Fazl Hadi Muslimyar said.

Mohammad Alam Ezediyar, a lawmaker, meanwhile, called on President Ghani to review his decision on the release of Taliban prisoners.

"We hope that President (Ashraf) Ghani reviews his decision on freeing 176 Taliban prisoners. It means that we release 176 suicide bombers and they will come back and will kill the people of Afghanistan," said Ezediyar. The remarks come after the Taliban rejected the grand council's call for a ceasefire during Ramadhan. (Tolo news)

(7) Kandahar Solar...

the province have been shut over the last few years due to lack of electricity.

Many other investors are waiting for the solar power to be made available so they run their own factories, he added.

He said Kandahar factories were producing cotton, ghee, soap, ice, ice-cream, package materials, plastic dishes, pipes, edible items, non-alcoholic drinks, oil cake and others

and 5,000 people were busy working there.

However, he said most of these factories closed were semi-functional due to lack of electricity.

Mohammad Ajmal, a resident of Kandahar city, told Pajhwok that their livelihood was affected due to shortage of electricity over the last several years.

He asked the government to press companies responsible for the implementation of the solar power project to accelerate their work.

Ajmal said that the electricity from Helmand province's Kajaki Dam was not reliable as its cables connecting Kandahar province were most of the times cut during clashes and windstorms.

He believed that officials of the solar power plant and solar and battery companies were shared with each other. "Whenever the weather gets hot, our electricity shuts down in order the companies sell their own products on people," he said.

Head of Afghanistan Entrepreneurs Board, Rahimuddin Haji Agha also said that 15MW of electricity could not resolve shortage of power in Kandahar.

He said dozens of factories in the province stopped functioning due to shortage of electricity there.

Many of these factories are functioning based on shifts due to shortage of electricity which is a challenge for the industry, he said.

He said Kandahar city alone required more than 50MW electricity according to its population.

Kandahar Breshna Sherkat director, Amanullah Faroqi said that implementation of the 15MW electricity power plant was going to complete in the next few days.

However, he said that implementation of a 15MW solar power project awarded to an Indian company and a 10MW project contracted to an Afghan company was going slow.

He added that the two companies were pressed to accelerate implementation of the projects.

Kandahar city currently receive 20MW electricity from Kajaki Dam of Helmand province which is said to be unreliable due to clashes and windstorms. (Pajhwok)

(8) South Korea...

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) statement said.

During the meeting Zaman stressed over improved ties between the two countries and demanded more scholarships in specialized sectors from the government of Korea.

Rhee Zha-hyoung pledged support in different areas with Afghanistan and said 100 scholarships would be provided annually to Afghan government employees for training.

Bilateral ties, economic cooperation and other issues also came under discussion. (Pajhwok)

(9) American Soldier...

Ninawa Province, Iraq.

A day earlier, Staff Sgt. Albert J. Miller, 24, of New Hampshire, died at Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar.

All incidents were under investigation and all were the result of non-combat circumstances. (Pajhwok)

(10) Hungary Fails...

whom the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in Strasbourg granted the temporary injunction preventing deportation.

In the case of the second family, the 35-year-old pregnant mother of three fainted when the police arrived to take her away. She was taken to hospital by ambulance, while her husband and three children were allowed to stay in the Transit Zone, the detention camp on the Hungary-Serbia border.

In the early hours of Wednesday, they crossed the border into Serbia, rather than be taken to an Afghanistan-bound plane waiting at Budapest airport.

The third family had already chosen to be deported to Serbia instead of Afghanistan.

That couple and their four children were driven in the dead of night in a Hungarian prison bus along the service road between the two Hungarian border fences, and pushed back through a gateway in the fence into Serbia.

This was witnessed by officials of the United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) and reporters. Several European countries, including Germany and Sweden, have deported failed Afghan asylum seekers back to Afghanistan in the past, despite protests by human rights groups, and the deteriorating security situation there.

What was different in the Hungarian case is that the 16 individuals had waited two years in camps in Serbia for the chance to enter Hungary legally. Hungary only allows two applications a day.

"Hungary never examined their asylum claims on merit," said Andras Lederer, of the Helsinki Committee human rights group, which took the three cases to the ECHR.

Asylum was refused by the Hungarian Asylum and Immigration Office in each of the 16 cases on the grounds of inadmissibility. Under a draconian 2018 law, passed by the Hungarian Parliament, any asylum seeker who passed through a safe country - Serbia in this case - is automatically rejected. According to the UN refugee agency and human rights groups, this is a breach of international and Hungarian law.

The asylum seekers also told the BBC that they were deprived of food and medication after their asylum requests were rejected. It was not possible to verify this, but last week the UN Human Rights Office accused Hungary of denying food to 21 asylum seekers after their claims were rejected.

Neither the Hungarian interior ministry nor the Asylum and Immigration office responded to BBC requests for information. A press conference called by the government next to the Transit Zone at Rösztke, on the Hungary-Serbia border was cancelled when it became clear that the deportations to Kabul would not succeed.

In response to BBC questions, Frontex, the European Border Control agency, replied: "We are afraid we cannot comment on any return operations which have not taken place yet." The planned deportation of the 16 individuals from Budapest to Kabul was the first attempted by Hungary in collaboration with Frontex. (BBC)

(11) Gunmen Storm...

explosive-laden vehicle from the attackers and rescued more than 150 employees of the Counterpart International.

Taliban in a statement claimed responsibility for the attack. (Tolo news)

(12) 8 Schools...

in the area after security forces conducted an operation there. They had restarted providing education to the locals, he added. Residents of the locality had been informed that the situation had improved and they could send their children to schools, the director said. Shinwari admitted 65 percent of school buildings in Haska Mena district had been damaged. A survey of these schools has been completed. The buildings would be reconstructed under a special scheme. He said hundreds of families had been displaced from Khogyani district and many schools in the area closed as a result of conflict.

According to Shinwari, some schools in Pachir Agam district had been closed due to poor security. He urged militants to avoid closing, destroying and damaging schools. (Pajhwok)

(13) 2 Dead, 5 Injured as...

between the commanders. The police personnel have controlled the situation and launched an investigation into the incident.

Haji Ghulam Mohammad, an eyewitness, said the gunbattle happened at a time when shopkeepers were closing

their shops and heading to the mosque to break their fast.

The clash erupted following a verbal dispute between the two parties. Two civilians were killed in the gunbattle that occurred 400 metres from the district police headquarters. (Pajhwok)

(14) US Lifts Sanctions...

backbone of the embattled socialist administration, Maduro and his allies started going after opponents who supported the uprising.

On Tuesday, the country's top court opened a criminal investigation against six opposition lawmakers for allegedly "betraying the homeland" and "instigating an insurrection," among other charges. The pro-government Supreme Court said those facing accusations include prominent figures in the Venezuelan opposition such as Henry Ramos Allup and Luis Florido.

In his speech, Pence said the U.S. would extend sanctions to all 25 members of Venezuela's Supreme Court if they continue to be a "political tool" of Maduro. The U.S. already has sanctions on about 150 officials and businesses in the country.

More than 3 million Venezuelans have left their homeland in recent years amid skyrocketing inflation and shortages of food and medicine, and Pence and other Trump administration officials have warned that 2 million more are expected to flee by the end of the year if the crisis continues in the oil-rich nation.

The opposition-controlled congress began discussions on a proposal for Venezuela's return to a regional defense agreement that dates from the Cold War - a move that could provide political cover for greater international involvement in the nation's crisis. Years ago, Venezuela and other left-governed nations in the region pulled out of the U.S.-led defense pact known as the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance.

Military police prevented journalists from entering the National Assembly, and some reporters were harassed by government supporters outside. Venezuela's state-run internet provider restricted access to YouTube, some Google services and other streaming platforms during the assembly session, according to NetBlocks, an online censorship-monitoring group based in Europe. (Fox News)

(15) Iran Tells Foreign...

international and unilateral economic sanctions in exchange for voluntarily restricting its nuclear program. The document was signed by Iran, China, Britain, France, Germany, Russia, the US and the EU.

Trump sided with Israel in calling the agreement "the worst deal ever" and refused to keep Washington's part of the bargain in May last year. The US has since re-imposed the unilateral sanctions, which had been lifted from Iran under the JCPOA terms, and is currently seeking to cripple its oil export by targeting buyers with secondary sanctions. (RT)

(16) Tomorrow's Guard...

around 1,070 T-90 tanks as well as 2,400 older T-72 tanks and 124 domestic 'Arjun' models in its 67 armor regiments. (RT)

(17) Pompeo Briefs...

important strategic partner for Iraq, but stressed that Baghdad was continuing to seek a balanced relationship with all of its "friends and neighbors, including neighboring Iran".

"Iraq is building its relationships with all on the basis of putting Iraq's interests first," said a statement from his office released on Wednesday.

Pompeo said the purpose of the meeting was to also let Iraqi officials know more about "the increased threat stream that we had seen" so they could effectively protect U.S. forces. Pompeo said he expressed U.S. support for Iraqi sovereignty, noting: "We don't want anyone interfering in their country, certainly not by attacking another nation inside of Iraq." (Reuters)