

(1) NATO Concerned...

"NATO is not only a defense alliance, but it is also a community of values and for us election is the foundation of democracy. It is of key importance..." he told ITV. The global fraternity was willing to extend all possible support for the electoral process, asking the Afghan government, civil society and political parties to work together to improve the electoral process.

The parliament's five-year term expired in 2015, but the polls were postponed due to security concerns and disagreements on how to reform the electoral system following the 2014 presidential ballot. (Pajhwok)

(2) Afghanistan Enters

MoI who represented Afghanistan in the UNESCO meeting in Paris, has said that the joint government and media committee taken serious steps for eliminating violence against journalists.

Journalists Defense Committee head, Abdul Mayeed Hashemi, said that Afghanistan was still not secure for journalists and media workers.

He said that the government should pay attention to violence and murdering cases of journalists. (Pajhwok)

(3) Pakistan, Afghanistan ...

domestic challenges facing national immunization campaigns, UNICEF officials credit ongoing coordination between polio teams of Afghanistan and Pakistan for reducing cross-border transmission of the devastating disease.

A Kabul-based UNICEF spokesman, Kamal Shah, acknowledged political tensions between the two countries are not hampering counter-polio efforts. He says polio teams on both sides make sure children among thousands of daily border crossers get vaccinated.

"There is a good cooperation going on and we try our best to synchronize the dates of our [polio vaccination] campaigns. So, the efforts and the cooperation between the two countries is having a big hand in reducing the number of polio cases [on both sides]," Shah told VOA.

Divided families and more than three million Afghan refugees in Pakistan are mostly among daily crossers and serve as carriers of the virus, officials say.

Last week, Afghanistan's ninth case of the year was confirmed in an eastern border region, with the virus linked to transmission that had occurred earlier in the year across the border in the Pakistani city of Peshawar, according to UNICEF.

Pakistan and Afghanistan share a 2,600-kilometer largely porous border. However, there are only two crossings, Torkham and Chaman, that Pakistani authorities allow for visitors to travel in either direction.

Shah says most of the recently reported polio virus cases have been transmitted through the Chaman crossing, prompting officials to focus vaccination efforts on the adjoining Afghan border town of Spin Boldak.

"[E]specially in 2017, most of the cases we have, the genetic link of the virus is linked with a polio virus in Baluchistan. That is why Spin Boldak is called the epicenter of polio in the region," he noted.

The southwestern Pakistani border province of Baluchistan is where Chaman crossing is located.

UNICEF's Shah explained that despite intensified hostilities in Afghanistan, anti-polio efforts are effectively bringing down the number of cases in the country because vaccinators are able to conduct campaigns even in areas controlled by the Taliban insurgency.

"In all areas, which are under the government or the areas which are under the control of anti-government elements, the polio program is implemented in those areas as well that is why we are successful to reduce the number of cases [in Afghanistan]," he noted. (VoA)

(4) MPs Question NUG's ...

governance, every ministry has to implement a three pronged-legal commitment," Ghani said at his inauguration in 2014.

On Monday, speaker of Afghanistan's parliament Abdul Rauf Ibrahim said the NUG is an illegal government as it has failed to bring an end to the job of caretakers in the ministries.

Lawmakers also strongly criticized government for what they described as an insult to lawmakers over their decisions.

"If today government leaders hear our voice, we suggest they work for the trust of the people, government needs to be a legal one, it should not further delay this process," said Ibrahim.

After assuming office, Ghani pledged to form the new cabinet within 45 days, something critics say he has failed to deliver on - even three years after the formation of government.

"All these plots are being made outside to sabotage the image of parliament in the public's mindset so that the president can easily get rid of this monitoring body," said

MP Fawzia Kofi.

Over the past three years the NUG leaders have on different occasions pledged to resolve the issue of caretaker ministers, but no solid steps were taken in this respect. Many across the country say that the caretaker issue has damaged governance in the institutions.

"Discussions have been finalized over the ministries which have no minister, ministerial nominees will be soon sent to house of representatives," said deputy presidential spokesman Dawa Khan Menapal.

Currently the ministry of foreign affairs, ministry of defense, ministry of education, ministry of higher education, ministry of transport, ministry of social affairs and labors, ministry of information and culture, ministry of mines and petroleum, ministry of economy, ministry of rural rehabilitation and development and the ministry of agriculture are being governed by caretaker ministers. (Tolonews)

(5) Attacks on Freedom...

the freedom of speech, but to protecting this important and credible value of democratic society from assault," Danish said.

The joint committee of the government and media, led by the second vice-president, had always tried to support media and freedom of speech as well as prevent assaults on these important values, he said. He thanked journalists and media personnel who struggled for the freedom of speech and shared information with the public. Their efforts led Afghanistan to a better position in terms free speech. (Pajhwok)

(6) Climate Change ...

"Climate change now threatens the very fabric of our society, threatens our identity, an identity that is grounded in the rich and yet delicate patchwork of natural heritage," she told journalists in Bonn.

The report found that 29 percent of World Heritage sites faced "significant" threats, and seven percent - including the Everglades National Park in the United States and Lake Turkana in Kenya - had a "critical" outlook. (AFP)

(7) Pugwash Meeting ...

a number of such meetings in the past and representatives from various political parties were supposed to have attended.

Nazar Mohammad Mutmaen, a writer and political activist, was himself due to have attended the meeting. He said however, that the meeting was postponed.

"The plan was that the meeting should be held in the first week of November, but now it seems the meeting will be held at the end of November in one of the Gulf countries and Taliban might attend," he said.

Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid however told TOLONews in a telephone interview that the group was not aware of the latest development. He said the Taliban had not agreed to attending the Dubai meeting.

But Mutmaen said: "At such meetings if foreigners and Afghan politicians sit together, their views get closer and it can help bring peace."

Some MPs meanwhile said such meetings were a waste of time.

"The quadrilateral meeting between US, Pakistan, China and Afghanistan was held and nothing was achieved! Another meeting was held in Moscow between Pakistan, China and Iran and that also yielded no results. The Afghan people have lost trust in such meetings," Kabul Provincial Council member Naqibullah Hashimi said.

"Afghanistan's war is being controlled by a number of regional groups and by people from ISI (Pakistan's intelligence service), not by those who hold meetings in Dubai, Qatar or other places. In my view, these meetings do not achieve anything," MP Abdul Rahim Ayoubi said.

In recent years, holding peace talks with the Taliban has always been one of the main plans of the Afghan government and Kabul and its allies have repeatedly called on Pakistan to take part in these efforts and work honestly.

Recently the head of the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) said the US will do everything it can to get the Taliban to the peace talks table, but first Pakistan should eliminate insurgent groups' safe havens. (Tolonews)

(8) MPs Engage in ...

lawmakers called on Ibrahim to step down.

"Mr. Ibrahim, I humbly request you to step down, it is enough now," said MP Akbar Stanekzai.

Stanekzai's remarks were met by an outcry from some MPs.

"Please do not push this house in another direction, otherwise we will not have another option except to use our disciplinary responsibilities according to our internal procedures," said MP Abdul Qader Zazai.

The fact-finding team assigned to probe the corruption allegations against Ibrahim and Nusrat shared its findings in parlia-

ment's session last Saturday.

Based on the team's findings and decision, Ibrahim has to repay five million AFs and Nusrat's case will be handed over to the Attorney General's Office (AGO) for further investigation.

"Regarding corruption in the Wolesi Jirga, this issue has been finalized before and was dispatched to the attorney (general), there is no need for further discussion in this respect," said Ibrahim.

Based on the task-team's decision, Nusrat has also been suspended pending the outcome of the AGO investigation. (Tolonews)

(9) 2,000 ANDSF ...

will be implemented totally and it won't affect the army negatively," said Waziri.

"This will provide opportunities for the young officers to grow and be appointed in higher positions," interior ministry spokesman Najib Danish said.

Based on the new plan, in the next two years, 70 percent of the army's generals will be pensioned off.

According to the plan, the generals will retire at the age of 62, lieutenant generals at 60, major generals at 58, brigadier generals at 56 and colonels will retire at 54.

Questions have however been raised over what the impact will be on the army and other security institutions once these experienced military personnel have left.

"Those generals who do not have military experience and work in civilian sections should retire. Because they are involved in corruption and even kidnapping and have ties with the enemy," a former military officer Mohsin Mukhtar said.

"The army should become younger and government should replace those old people who cannot work properly," MP Lailuma Hakim said.

Based on the military law, an officer can be promoted to the rank of general at the age of 48, but in the new plan the retirement age for a brigadier general is 56.

"Those who want to reconstruct the army in wartime and appoint less experienced people in such a time that war is ongoing must know that this is a big worry," former military officer Atiqullah Amarkhil said.

Some reports however show that in the army and police forces, there are generals who are not yet 38 years old and that there are generals who have gained the rank without having any experience or receiving the required training. This is what critics have complained about in the past. (Tolonews)

(10) Pakistan Fencing ...

Line under its billion Rupees project, the process would complete by next year end. Lawmaker Haji Zahir Qadir said the recent statement of English ambassador was not irrelevant. The president, he said during his recent trip to United Kingdom (UK) signed an agreement of Boarder Management.

The English Ambassador to Afghanistan Nicholas Peter Kayhas recently told BBC that the international community considered Durand Line as formal boarder between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Qadir claimed the Boarder Management Agreement was signed by President Ashraf Ghani and the then Army Chief Gen. Qadam Shah Shaheem.

He did not expose the names of opposite party but assured to present the related documents and materials on Wednesday.

The lawmaker said government silence over the fencing of Durand Line reflected its consent with and ongoing process.

Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahim termed the Durand Line an issue related to the people of Afghanistan and asked the government to declare its stance regarding the ongoing fencing by Pakistanis.

Earlier, President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani had said he did not talk to Pakistanis regarding the Durand Line and the issue was above his authority.

The president, however, said every effort and move to split people residing on the both side of the Durand Line will fail.

"Those, who think by fencing they could split nation should reconsider their decision. Shelling and bombardment cannot separate us and fencing would never divide us," he said.

Dawa Khan Menapal, deputy spokesman of the president, rejected Qadir's claim and termed it as false and untrue and asked the lawmaker to present documents to support his claim.

Qadir, two years back, claimed that the heads of Daesh militant group was living in Kabul and enjoyed full support of the Kabul government and its National Security Advisor. (Pajhwok)

(11) Herat to Harvest ...

result of government's support.

In addition to the government, Comprehensive Agriculture and Rural Development-Facility (CARD-F) NGO also works to promote saffron cultivation in Herat.

"We have provided trainings for farmers in Herat on how to cultivate and develop saffron. We have also obtained international licenses for a few factories to produce and

sell saffron," said the head of CARD-F office in Herat Basher Ahmad Nusrat. (Wad-sam)

(12) Czech Republic ...

in transit and trade and other spheres to Afghanistan.

Abdullah at the meeting told the Ambassador that Afghanistan was in favor of having expanded bilateral cooperation with Czech Republic.

The CEO said in addition to military support; increased cooperation in other fields such as trade, transit and urban transport were of vital importance for Afghanistan.

Separately, Abdullah also met with RS mission commander General John W. Nicholson and both conferred on various security topics on Sunday, a separate statement said.

At the meeting, recently conducted operations against Afghanistan's enemies were dubbed as 'successful'. Security improvements across the country and recent security situation were among the topics discussed.

Meanwhile, Abdullah also held a separate meeting with UNAMA's Secretary-General's Deputy Special Representative for Afghanistan, Pernille Dahler Kardel, and discussed with her security and political situation as well as the peace process.

Another statement from the CEO office said the ongoing preparations for Wolesi Jirga and district council elections also came up for discussion at the meeting. (Pajhwok)

(13) Norwegian ...

highest rate ever, the Norwegian government continues to condemn scores of Afghans to fear, uncertainty and the risk of human rights violations by returning them to the country.

According to Eurostat, Norway returned 760 people to Afghanistan in 2016, and 172 in the first half of 2017.

Amnesty International has been supporting a grassroots campaign led by a group of Norwegian teenagers, who are fighting to protect their classmate Taibeh Abbasi from being deported to Afghanistan.

Taibeh, 18, was born in Iran to Afghan parents. She has never been to Afghanistan as the family fled to Norway from Iran in 2012. Taibeh told Amnesty International that she is terrified of what the future may hold if she is sent to Kabul, the most dangerous province in Afghanistan where human rights violations are rife.

In recent weeks hundreds of people have been killed and wounded as a wave of attacks have struck the Afghan capital. In recent years, the heavily fortified Norwegian embassy has itself been attacked and forced to shut down because of threats.

"There are thousands of teenagers like Taibeh, in Norway and across Europe, who live in fear of a knock on the door that will change their lives forever. Rather than uprooting young people from safe homes and sending them to war zones, European governments should be supporting them to build their lives in safety and dignity," said Serrano.

"Tomorrow (Tuesday) Norwegian parliamentarians have the chance to set the standard for Europe and send a message that protecting human rights should be at the center of any migration policy. We are calling on them to see sense and to vote to halt these returns, which will expose people to serious harm and danger, in brazen violation of international law."

Parliamentarians will vote on a motion tabled by the Socialist Left Party, on Tuesday. In 2016, according to UNAMA, 11,418 people were killed or injured in Afghanistan. Attacks on civilians took place in every part of the country and most of them were carried out by armed groups, including the Taliban and Daesh. In the first six months of 2017 alone, UNAMA documented 5,243 civilian casualties.

The binding international legal principle of non-refoulement means that European countries cannot transfer anyone to a place where they are at a real risk of serious human rights violations. Returning asylum-seekers to harm and persecution in Afghanistan, as violence escalates, is a violation of international law. (Tolonews)

(14) Gender Dept., ...

establishment of Gender Department at the Education Faculty and a committee to hear the complaints, the implementation of the policy has been practically started.

A number of students and teachers welcomed the step. Marena Mirzad, one of the Education Faculty teachers, said although there has been decline in the incidents of sexual harassment in recent years but the issue has remained a challenge as yet and there was need for effective campaign. (Pajhwok)

(15) 370,000 Afghans ...

than 200,000 unregistered Afghan citizens returned to their homeland last year when law-enforcement agencies launched a crackdown on them.

The registration campaign is being con-

ducted by NADRA in collaboration with Afghan Commissionerate and the Afghan Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation.

At least 21 registration centres have been set up across the country, including 11 in northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The project will account for Rs175 million.

Of the 370,000 Afghans documented over the last four months, 230,000 are living in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The province is hosting over half a million undocumented Afghans.

"Approximately 40 to 45 per cent of the applicants are Afghan passport holders," one official was quoted as saying. Most of the Afghan citizens want to obtain ACC because of instability and fighting in their country. (Pajhwok)

(16) Bamyan Women...

growers also received production supplies and equipment and vegetable seeds. All farmers and beneficiaries of the initiative are women and their families.

Governor Mohammad Tahir Zahir expressed happiness over the programme, calling it useful for job creation as well as helping women.

Salima, one of the beneficiaries, told Pajhwok Afghan News all women in Bamyan were unemployed and creating greenhouses would enable them to contribute to their families' financial situation.

"Through this business we can at least earn money to make ends meet. And the important point is that such businesses are independent run by women," she remarked. (Pajhwok)

(17) The Blind Grumble ...

class at the Sadiqi High School in Charikar, the provincial capital.

He lost his eyesight when a plastic mine he was playing with exploded. He was seven years old at that time, recalls Nangyalai. He is upset by slights from people and loss of eyesight. He has considered committing suicide several times.

"Generally, the blind are subject to jokes and insult by other people in the family or society. I am insulted to the extent that I wish to die in a bomb explosion in my childhood," he remarks.

He is pained beyond description when some people call him blind and some Qari. People believe Qari is someone who is blind. Nangyalai goes to school with the help of his brother and uses the books made for the blind.

Recalling the bitter moments of life, he said: "One day, when I entered home, my uncle angrily told me I have nothing to do with school. Instead I should sit in a corner of mosque and recite the Holy Quran. You are moving too much here and there."

In a palpably disappointed tone, Nangyalai says he could never forget the exam day when one of his teachers said: "Nangyalai has become a headache for us."

But the young man does not weak or incapacitated. He established the Blind Association in Parwan four months back. Nangyalai, with the help of an NGO called Sarf, managed to learn computer programming. He works at Dunya Radio where he conducts Kahkashan and Qandeel-i-Marifat programmes.

In Parwan, he said, around 300 blind people have been registered. Of them, 120 including seven women have got membership of the association.

Nooria Nabizada, 20, lost her eyesight when she was four. She complained against the wrong attitude of people and said: "I have bad memories of insult and disgrace. I am disappointed with jobs given to the blind."

A student of 12th class, Nooria said during her school days, classmates teased her a lot. But now she has become used to the behaviour.

Qari Abdul Hameed, 23, a resident of Qalacha area, said he lost his eyesight as a result of a bomb blast in 2003.

Wakeel Ahmad Sohail, head of the Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled Department, confirmed some people insult the blind. For addressing their problems, meetings are held with people to spread awareness regarding the importance of behaving well with the blind and this drive may be expanded. (Pajhwok)

(18) Over 400 Dead...

another 2,530 injured. Iranian authorities also said that thousands of families have been displaced as a result of the earthquake.

In Iraq, the government has said that seven people have died and around 300 injured in the northern part of the country.

The effects of the earthquake were also felt in parts of Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Kuwait and Syria.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Afghanistan Dr. Abdullah Abdullah has expressed his condolences towards the victims of the tragedy. A statement from the CEO's office was received by Pajhwok Afghan News in which he, on behalf of the Afghan government, expressed his sympathies towards the victims. (Pajhwok)