

### (1) Abdullah Seeks...

recruitment, ideological and financial support," he said. He added Afghanistan considered Daesh a serious threat and the National Unity Government was using all its resources to eliminate the group and not to allow it to enjoy safe havens in Afghanistan. Referring to Afghanistan's strong commitment to regional stability and development the CEO said: "We consider the SCO an active and effective regional body where different nations work together for improved security, economic cooperation, cultural ties and investment on human resources."

He added the SCO played a greater role than any other organization in regional connectivity, cooperation, joint policies making and more importantly it provided a platform to discuss vital issues such as regional peace, stability and improved living standards. (Pajhwok)

### (2) Study Finds Defects...

assured the Afghan government before signing the contract that the devices were sound, the TOLONews study found.

It's been found that the devices should have been used for the voter registration process so as to record fingerprints as now anyone can be fingerprinted and claim to be someone else.

According to findings, another problem is regarding that of photographs as a photo can be produced opposed to a person's face being photographed on the day. Sayed Hafizullah Hashemi, IEC spokesman, said the issue is not serious and that political parties, media and citizens have the right to monitor elections.

"If there are problems in some parts, you have the right based on the law, political parties have the right and media outlets have the right to monitor," he said.

On the election day, first fingerprints of voters and their pictures will be recorded onto the biometric devices and then the photos on the voters' IDs and the stickers on the IDs will be recorded by the devices prior to a person voting.

The biometric issue has been a controversial topic for months after the political parties coalition first raised the issue of large-scale fraud committed during the voter registration process.

The IEC has so far trained 2,000 individuals to use the biometric devices. The commission has appointed 110,000 employees for election day - half of whom are women.

The Independent Election Commission said on Wednesday that more than 10,000 biometric units are ready for use and that the process of sending the devices to provinces is underway.

A source told TOLONews a few weeks ago that the total cost of the biometric devices would be about 15 million euros and the company will send 22,000 units and other necessary equipment to Kabul by October 10.

Electoral monitoring organizations said they are not sure about election transparency by using the biometric devices.

"These devices are not able to identify under-age persons who have registered for voting," said Yusuf Rasheed, CEO of Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan.

According to the IEC, so far 53,000 election monitors from political organizations, civil society and representatives of candidates have been issued licenses by the commission to monitor the October 20 polls. (Tolo news)

### (3) District Chiefs Can...

heard the report of compiled by the different teams of district chiefs in a group work and later

Abdul Matin Baig, head of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) presented the summary of the conference.

He thanked the president for his special attention to the local governance and added this conference provided an opportunity for national dialogue and unity in which security, economic and matter related to reforms had been discussed in details.

The president hailed that the 114-page report compiled by the district chiefs and admired the IDLG head for organizing the conference.

The president said the Independent Commission for Administrative Reforms and Civil Services (ICARCS) was monitoring the performance of district chiefs and those who had performed better would be honoured. (Pajhwok)

### (4) UN Notes Progress...

constitutional rights, remarked Yamamoto, who is also head of UNAMA.

The Afghans should not be obstructed, intimidated or denied their right to choose their representatives and shape their country's future, the UN diplomat stressed in a statement.

"Any violence or intimidation directed at voters, candidates or electoral officials is totally unacceptable, and I unequivocally condemn it," the UN envoy said of recent attacks across the country.

UNAMA welcomed the allocation of additional resources for female security personnel to enhance women's participation in the democratic exercise.

The joint security planning directive on elections was signed in 2017 by the three main national security organs, as well as the IEC and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance. This commitment was followed by extensive security assessments of the polling centres by Afghan security agencies.

The October 20 elections are the first in the modern era that will be fully handled by Afghan National Defence and Security Forces.

While fulfilling their critical role in providing security, UNAMA noted the Afghan security forces also had a responsibility to remain politically impartial in discharging their duties. (Pajhwok)

### (5) Kyrgyzstan Offer...

(SCO) summit in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan.

Abylgaziev expressed satisfaction over the state of the bilateral relations between the two countries and termed terrorism, drug trafficking, and extremism as threats for the two countries.

He said his country was ready to support Afghanistan in education, energy sector and provide scholarships for Afghan students.

The Kyrgyz prime minister said there were many opportunities where the two countries could increase their cooperation and asked the CEO to visit Kyrgyzstan to officially sign Memorandum of Understandings for increased cooperation and interaction.

He expressed the hope that upcoming parliament and future presidential election in Afghanistan would be conducted in peaceful environment.

The CEO promised to visit Kyrgyzstan soon to further increase bilateral relationships. (Pajhwok)

### (6) Second Joint...

Chief of IEC, representatives of IEC, ECC, Chief of CSO, Deputy Chief of Mission and Political Advisor of the US embassy, NATO SR Senior Civilian Representative, Acting Deputy Ambassador of the UK Embassy, European Union chargé d'affaires, Germany Embassy chargé d'affaires, Japan Em-

bassy chargé d'affaires, Australian Ambassador, and Denmark Embassy chargé d'affaires, participated in the meeting. During the meeting different electoral topics were discussed and the concerns of the international community were elaborated in details.

The representatives of the international community emphasized once more on Afghan electoral transparency and vowed to support strongly the forthcoming elections through using a biometric system. According to the representatives of the international community, using biometric system and overall supervision of the election process would ensure a fair and transparent election in the country. They also pledged that they would support the presidential election in 2019 and would cooperate with the people and government of Afghanistan to conduct the presidential election in a fair and transparent manner. The representatives of the international community lauded their support for women participation in the forthcoming elections and also raised their concerns over low participation of the women in the electoral process. They said they were especially concerned about taking photo of the women in the electoral process that is considered as one of the main barriers to their participation in this process.

"Voting secrecy, transparency and timely conduction of the forthcoming elections are the concerns of the GoIRA, Afghan people and Afghan Political parties" Said Vice President. "Government has taken the necessary measures to ensure electoral security" said the Vice President. "Afghan government and international community fully support a transparent, fair and just election and support strongly the Independent Electoral Commission to conduct it in a fair and transparent manner and Afghan government will take all the necessary measures to ensure increased participation of the women in the electoral process" he added. (DOA)

### (7) Minister of...

Estonian platoon.

Luik commended the Estonian soldiers for their contribution to ensuring the security of Estonia and its allies. "Thanks to you, who you are serving with honor here today and to the ones who have served before you, the state of Estonia can be sure that our troubles, too, are our allies' troubles," he said, also commending the soldiers' families and people close to them.

"I wish to commend your professionalism and can confirm that I have only heard appreciation for the skills and dedication of our soldiers," Luik said according to spokespeople.

While in Kabul, the Estonian minister also answered questions asked by defence personnel, some of which were rather pointed, the Aktuálne Kaamera newscast of public broadcaster ERR reported.

The Estonian unit is tasked, for instance, with patrolling the so-called green zone, a secure zone that serves as home to foreign embassies and government offices. This is where a suicide bomber blew up an ambulance laden with explosives on a crowded street in January. Nevertheless, all currently seems calm in that zone, ERR said.

Commander of the unit Lt. Allar Olesk said that the most difficult aspect of the service for Estonians was that on a daily basis, nothing happens and routine takes over. If something does happen, however, a reaction is needed. "Avoiding routine is the most important thing," Olesk said.

Luik said that some years ago,

there was no talk about threats in Kabul "I remember being here five or six years ago when all threats were in the South and the East. Now, Kabul is the center where explosions are carried out and then shown on Twitter," the minister told ERR.

32 Estonian soldiers are currently serving in the Resolute Support mission in Kabul. Estonia's contribution also includes one staff officer in Kabul and an EOD team and two staff officers in Northern Afghanistan. The Estonian infantry platoon is tasked with providing force protection to the allied units advising the security forces of Afghanistan.

The Estonian platoon is part of a company of the armed forces of the United Kingdom which includes seven more states.

In the course of the visit, Luik also met with with Afghanistan's President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani and Minister of Defence Tariq Shah Bahrami. (Agencies)

### (8) Taliban Restore...

Taliban leadership in Doha discussed the humanitarian situation and security concerns before renewing the pledge, said Andrea Catta Preta, the ICRC's spokeswoman in the Afghan capital.

"We told the Taliban leaders about our support to all prisoners in Afghanistan jails, we explained our medical programs," she added. "Finally, we reached an understanding."

In August, the Taliban had accused the Red Cross of failing to provide adequate medical aid to prisoners on a hunger strike in Kabul's Pul-e Charkhi prison and withdrew the security cover.

The decision forced the ICRC to suspend several emergency programs in Afghanistan, where it has had a presence for three decades and about 1,000 staff. Last year it scaled back operations after attacks killed seven of its staff.

The ICRC treats all parties harmed by warfare and does not take sides. It operates in Taliban-controlled areas with guarantees of safety and helps to repatriate bodies from both sides after fighting between the militants and the Afghan army. (Reuters)

### (9) Pakistan Green...

He referred to Afghanistan as a major country where Riyadh could help resolve the conflict through mediation.

He also urged the UN to engage more effectively with Saudi Arabia's conflict resolution to achieve peace in the war-torn country.

In March, Riyadh showed its desire to play its role in starting a peace process to help Washington in peace talks with the Taliban, while both Washington and Kabul are hoping that Riyadh can bring the Taliban to the table.

In June, Saudi Arabia supported the ceasefire between the forces of Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and the Taliban to mark the Eid holiday. (Agencies)

### (10) Exhibition in...

The photos, Akbar said, show the challenges Afghan girls are facing including early marriage, lack of access to education, child labor and many other problems. She said sufficient work has not been done for wellbeing of Afghan women and girls.

Akbar said photography is something that she can describe her feelings through and also by shooting good pictures she wants to tell that Afghan women can have high quality accomplishments if they are given the appropriate chances. "I don't photograph subject, I photograph the way they make me feel. Admittedly, it's strange concept. But it's honest - and it's the

best way to describe my approach to the craft. I wrestle with every image I shoot. I assume perfection is possible and I want to wring it out of every picture. As a female artist, I want to convince our society that Afghan women can produce high quality works and be recognized internationally for their craft," said Akbar.

US ambassador to Kabul, John R. Bass, meanwhile said they will work with the Afghan government to make sure Afghan girls will have the opportunity of access to education, getting rid of violence and early marriage.

"While we have seen Afghanistan making enormous progress over the last 17 years, there is still a great deal of work to do to ensure the girls have access to education, that they are not forced into early marriages, that they are not subjected to sexual assault, or mistreatment or child labor. This exhibition is part of our ongoing efforts to both promote awareness of the challenges, but also work shoulder to shoulder with our Afghan partners to create better opportunities for the girls in the society," said Bass.

In part of the exhibition, girls from Afghanistan National Institute of Music (ANIM) performed folk music.

Ahmad Nasir Sarmast, head of the ANIM, said the Afghan girls who have been studying music at the institute in the past 17 years have had good achievements for the country.

"If we compare Afghanistan 2018 with Afghanistan 2001, we can see that girls in Afghanistan 2018 are in a better status than Afghanistan 2001 and before that. We cannot ignore the reality and this positive change, but still the girls are facing lots of challenges. In today's exhibition, you can see the challenges that girls, especially underage girls, are facing with," said Sarmast.

The United Nations has named October 11 as the International Day of Girl Child to recognize problems and challenges in the way of girl children and take action to tackle those challenges. (Tolo news)

### (11) 3.7m Afghan...

better serve their country with their abilities.

Calling education a human right, the MoE statement said every family was responsible to give their girls the right to education.

The MoE said it had increased its efforts at improving the education sector compared to the past and urged the countrymen to support and help the ministry in implementing its policies. (Pajhwok)

### (12) Candidates...

would be removed from the list, he added.

Rouhani said their offices in the capital and provinces were permanent and their representatives would also be present at polling stations on the Election Day.

Governor Hayat assured that all preparations including security measures were in place for the polls and the provincial administration was decisive in ensuring transparency in the democratic process.

He said no one would be allowed to interfere in the election process -- a reason he advised his brother not to contest the elections.

Shekib Kamjo, the IECC head for Nangarhar, said they had registered 26 complaints against candidates before the electioneering period had started and so far there were 45 complaints in total.

He said 11 candidates were fined from 50,000 to 100,000 afghanis, 10 candidates were advised and five others warned. (Pajhwok)