



Civil Society Wants Gold, Copper Contracts Scrapped

KABUL - Civil society organisations and activists, spurning the idea of privatising the war in Afghanistan, have called for cancellation of the Badakhshan gold and Balkhab copper exploration contracts.

The contracts for extracting gold and copper were signed at the Afghan embassy in Washington DC between the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum (MoMP), Central Limited and Afghan Gold Minerals Company.

A gathering attended by more than 300 civil society activists and members of some organisations in Kabul unanimously passed a resolution against the mining contracts and privatisation of the war effort.

Syed Akram Afzali, head of the Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA), told the gathering the contracts with the two companies ran counter to Article 16 of Afghanistan's mining law.

Article 16 of the law says the president, VPs, ministers, chief justice, Supreme Court judges, the attorney general, MPs, chairmen of central and other banks and other government functionaries are not eligible for obtaining such contracts.

Based on Section 1 and Paragraph 2 of the article, one may obtain a licence or a contract stipulated in this law five years after the termination of their tenure in an official position.

Afzali stressed that based on the article the contract should not have ...*(More on P4)...*(1)

Security Threats May Force Closure of Some Polling Stations



KHOST CITY - Some polling stations may remain closed on the Election Day in southeastern Khost province, an official suggested on Sunday.

A total of 192 polling stations are to be set up in Khost but, according to security officials, at least 27 sites are situated in areas facing high-security threats.

Polling stations facing security threats are located in Ali Sher, Sabri, Bak, Nader Shah Kot, Ismael Mandozi, Spera, Musakhel and Qalandar districts.

Meanwhile, tribal elders and provincial council members hit out at the government for declaring the polling stations sensitive on the basis of deals with some candidates.

They alleged no security threat existed in the above districts and the polling stations would be closed deliberately to oblige certain election runners.

Haji Mark Zadrán, a tribal elder and resident of Nader Shah Kot district, accused the government of planning to shut the polling stations to please a Wolesi Jirga candidate.

He remarked the government's refusal to reverse its decision would ...*(More on P4)...*(4)

Khalilzad Underlines Inclusive Reconciliation Drive

US Special Envoy for Afghan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad says the Americans share aspirations of all Afghans for a peaceful Afghanistan.



KABUL - Following consultations in Islamabad, Riyadh, and Doha, Khalilzad returned to Kabul on October 13 for follow-up meetings with President Ghani, Chief Executive Abdullah and other political leaders, the US embassy said.

He also met representatives of civil society groups and leading women advocacy organisations to hear their views and priorities on a settlement to the conflict, a statement from the embassy said. "The United States shares the aspirations of all Afghans for a peaceful Afghanistan where they see themselves included. All citizens of Afghanistan must be a part of

this reconciliation process," Khalilzad remarked.

The envoy is returning to Washington for meetings with agency leaders within the U.S. government and with international partners, the statement added.

However, the embassy did not comment on the diplomat's meeting in Doha with representatives of the Taliban movement, which on Saturday confirmed the contact.

In a statement, the Taliban said the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan and finding a peaceful end to the conflict were discussed with the US delegation. (Pajhwok)

India, China Launch Joint Plan to Train Afghan Diplomats



KABUL - Putting aside their differences, Beijing and New Delhi have launched a joint programme for training Afghan diplomats, the Press Trust of India reports.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping had reached an understanding on the programme during their meeting in Wuhan city in April.

The new agency, citing a tweet from the Indian embassy in Beijing, reported: "The first joint programme by India and China for Afghanistan begins."

Indian Ambassador to Afghanistan Vinay Kumar hosted 10 Afghan diplomats who are due in his country as part of the first India-China joint training programme for Afghan diplomats. (Pajhwok)

Lack of Facilities: Thousands of Special People May Not Vote

MAZAR-I-SHARIF - Thousands of people with disabilities may not vote in the Oct 20 Wolesi Jirga elections if they are not facilitated to do so, activists say.

Afghanistan's People with Disabilities Association (APDA) officials say their problems relating to elections were not considered.

Remoteness of polling stations, no use of Braille reading and writing system for blind and visually impaired people and no humanitarian support to disabled people are problems handicapped people are faced with, according to the association.

APDA head Ahmad Shah Azimi addressed an awareness-creating gathering about elections of people with disabilities in Mazar-i-Sharif, capital of northern Balkh province on Saturday.

He said the Independent Election Commission (IEC) had promised to provide facilities for



disabled people during elections, but nothing could be seen on the ground. "People with disabilities are also citizens of this country and the law gives them the right to vote," he added.

He said there were around one million people with disabilities in Afghanistan

and almost half of them were eligible to participate in polls.

Azimi said thousands of special people would be deprived of participating in elections if they were not provided with facilities.

Rohullah, a blind person, told Pajhwok that it was his legal right to participate in elections.

He said no facilities were provided to the special people to participate their participation in the Oct 20 polls. He said creating awareness through workshops was important for disabled people.

"If we are considered citizens of this country, then we have the right to take part in national political processes," he said.

He said lack of wheelchairs was one of their major problems. Rohullah added they could not go to polling stations without wheelchairs.

Hamayon Hakim, representative of people with disabilities in ...*(More on P4)...*(3)

Parwan Candidates Accuse Rivals of Fraud Attempts

CHARIKAR - Wolesi Jirga candidates in central Parwan province on Sunday accused their rival hopefuls of using government resources and making some areas insecure in order to pave the ground for rigging.

The Wolesi Jirga elections are scheduled for Oct 20. Six Wolesi Jirga candidates from Parwan jointly addressed a press conference in Charikar, the provincial capital.

They included Abdul Zahir Salangi, Mohammad Agul Mujahid, Mohammad Shafi Mushfiq, Hasina Efat, Waheeda Paında and Mujahid Muahid Ibrahim.

Salangi claimed some candidates wanted to rig the elections and others wanted to make some areas insecure in order they were able to commit fraud.



They also alleged some government officials participated in candidates' campaign gatherings and openly voiced their support for the runners. The candidates claimed high ranking officials who appear in campaign gatherings of candidates used to warn their subordinates they would be fired if they did not vote for the candidate of their choice. But Parwan Governor Fazaluddin Ayar said ...*(More on P4)...*(5)

Pact on Khanabad-II Project Inked with Indian Firm



KABUL - The Ministry of Energy and Water (MoEW) has inked an agreement with Indian company 'Lanco Infratech' on irrigation and electricity production at the Khanabad-II hydro-project in northern Kunduz province.

The agreement was signed at the Presidential Palace here by Acting Energy and Water Minister Mohammad Gul Khelmi and Ahmad Farzad, a representative of Lanco Infratech, the ministry said in a statement on Sunday.

President Ashraf Ghani, Cabinet members, Wolesi Jirga members, Kunduz governor and other government officials were present on the occasion.

According to the statement, the hydro project would generate electricity and reserve water for irrigation in the Khanabad district.

The 25\$ million project would help improve the irrigation system in Khanabad district, generate 4.1 megawatts of electricity and irrigate 47,000 hectares of land. (Pajhwok)

Mps Seeking Reelection Accused of Using Govt Resources



GARDEZ - Sitting lawmakers, who are seeking reelection to the Wolesi Jirga, have been using government resources and authority in the ongoing electoral campaign, rival candidates in south-eastern Paktia province complain.

The candidates say they are not provided level-playing field, which is possible only when the sitting lawmakers are relieved from their power.

They said it was against rules that sitting lawmakers seeking reelection continued to use government resources.

Jumma Gul Afghan, a Wolesi Jirga candidate from Paktia, told Pajhwok Afghan News that most of the people were not happy with the performance of current lawmakers and they did not want them to be reelected.

"It is unfair that the current lawmakers still enjoy government resources, salaries and power, they should be relieved from these facilities," he said.

Mohammad Hanif Ahamdzai, another candidate, said taking ...*(More on P4)...*(2)

Afghan, Pakistani Forces Clash Over Border Fence

KANDAHAR CITY - Afghan and Pakistani border forces engaged in an armed clash over building a fence along the Durand Line on Sunday, local officials in southern Kandahar province said.

Kandahar police spokesman, Zia Durani, told Pajhwok Afghan News that Pakistani forces tried this afternoon to fence a part of the Durand Line in Shorabak district of Kandahar, but Afghan border forces prevented their move.

He said Pakistani forces in response attacked the Afghan forces and the clash was still underway. No one has so far

been hurt in the battle. However, Pakistan closed down the friendship gate in Spin Boldak.

A day earlier, Kandahar police chief, Gen. Abdul Raziq, said they had stopped Pakistan from fencing the Durand Line.

He said that Pakistan started fencing the Durand Line in the southern region of the country but they stopped them. "Two weeks back, Pakistani forces started installation of fence on the border between Spin Boldak and Shorabak districts of Kandahar but border forces removed the fence and prevented them from doing so," Raziq added. ...*(More on P4)...*(6)