

### (1) Kabul Renews...

Afghanistan on the pattern of the European Union.

Khan's statement seems to be at odds with the Pakistan Army's move towards fencing the border in curb traditional the movement of militants.

About the soft border proposal, Zakhilwal said: "That will be the best thing between Pakistan and Afghanistan if we get that."

However, the diplomat hastened to reiterate his reservations about the fencing project: "We oppose the fencing as it will restrict the flow of people from both sides. But we appreciate PM Khan's idea and there is no doubt about that."

He did not agree Pakistan's contention that the fencing was part of the border management to stop infiltration of militants.

"I think that preventing infiltration requires more of a policy change than restricting ordinary people's lives. That is not an effective way."

Instead the ambassador suggested policy changes to ward off threats from extremist elements. "There is a need to promote trade, free flow of people and cultural exchanges..." (Pajhwok)

### (2) Ballot Boxes...

acknowledged rigging allegations in the district.

Some individuals, who introduced themselves as observers, claimed security personnel were also involved in rigging inside the district centre.

Without naming any candidate they said security forces expelled observers from some polling stations and filled ballot boxes in the interest of a particular candidate.

Another video shows in-charge of the polling station in Mosahi district as saying he cannot stop rigging and fraud in the elections and asks people to transfer the ballot boxes to the IEC's main office from the district centre.

Eng. Ahmad Zia Ahmadzai, an observer, said as many as 2,100 people used their votes in Mosahi, but the IEC was reported that over 20,000 people took part in the elections.

He claimed some ballot boxes had been stuffed one night before the election and some on the election night in favour of a particular candidate.

He said security personnel expelled observers from polling stations and filled ballot boxes in favour of Ajmal Rahmani, Amir Gul Shahin, Mohammad Naem Wardak and Parvin Durrani.

But Imamul Haq, campaigner for Ajmal Rahmani, rejected the claims and said reality would be revealed on people after the vote count.

Police spokesman Abdul Basir Mujahid said if police were found involved in electoral fraud or rigging, they would be dealt with as per the law.

Ali Raza Rohani, spokesman for the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC), said complaints about rigging in Mosahi district had reached the IECC and they were being assessed.

IEC spokesman Syed Hafeezullah Hashimi said so far votes from Kabul province were yet to be entered into the IEC data system and that it would be premature to comment on alleged rigging. (Pajhwok)

### (3) CEO Arrived...

This conference is attended by representatives from 193 countries.

Communications and information technology minister is accompanying CEO during his trip, he added. The CEO would brief the event about Afghanistan's achievements in telecommunication area made over the past 15 years, Khwazoon said.

He said telecommunication and IT ministers from other countries would also take part in the conference. (Pajhwok)

### (4) USAID Recognizes...

representing the private sector from among 150 nominations. The awardees work for or with the Government of Afghanistan in Kabul, Herat, Balkh, Kandahar, and Nangarhar to promote gender equality. Launched in August 2018, the Champion Awards recognize Afghans who distinctly contribute to women's empowerment and social inclusion, but rarely receive national or international recognition for their efforts.

A committee comprised of Afghanistan's Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA), the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission, the Office of the Chief Executive, USAID partners, and civil society groups selected the winners.

One of the champions for women in the public sector, Whahida Azizi said, "Receiving this award is a big responsibility but this gives me the motivation to step up my efforts in supporting women."

WIG has also now formally handed over the program to the MOWA to continue the advocacy Champion Awards on an annual basis. MOWA Deputy Minister Spoghmai Wardak said "To shift the mindset, we have to work from the top down. We [at MOWA] are doing our best to secure the position of women, but we must do better in implementation."

The awardees will receive prizes from Roshan and the Promote: Musharikat project. From executive leadership trainings, to in-kind donations, the Advocacy Champion Awards will give advocates of women's empowerment the tools that they need to continue working for gender equality across Afghanistan.

Through WIG, USAID is implementing innovative communications and public outreach campaigns for local stakeholders to increase the number of women in the civil service. By amplifying the voices of local advocates for gender equality, the project is bringing real stories of women's empowerment to life.

Promote is comprised of four activities that are implemented specifically for women. The activities include leadership development, government employment, economic participation, and civil society advocacy. To date, Promote has supported over 50,000 Afghan women in more than 30 provinces nationwide. (PR)

### (5) Japan Gives USD...

16,000 farming families are expected to benefit from a new project that will improve irrigation facilities for 7,000 ha of land and build local capacities on water management. Approximately 190 km of irrigation canals will be rehabilitated, modernized and extended, and local water managers and water users will be trained on how to best manage the water so as to get the largest possible crops in what is often a very dry terrain.

The work will be implemented by FAO in close collaboration with the Ministry of Energy and Water (MEW) in three provinces of Kabul, Kapisa and Bamyan. The project is supported by the Government of Japan which is providing USD 10 million for its implementation.

The signing ceremony, for the project entitled "The Project for Enhancing Rural Livelihoods through Improved Irrigation Facilities in Bamyan, Kabul, and Kapisa Provinces" was attended by H.E. Mr. Mitsuji SUZUKA, Ambassador of Japan, Mr. Rajendra ARYAL, FAO Representative in Afghanistan, H.E. Mr. Mohammad Gul KHULMI, Acting Minister of Energy and Water as well as a number of Japanese Embassy and FAO staff.

H.E. Mr. SUZUKA, Ambassador of Japan, remarked that "Afghanistan is essentially an agricultural country, and about 80% of the population is engaged with agricultural activities which accounts for more than 30% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Afghanistan's geographical and climate characteristics offer opportunities for the cultivation of different crops, but it is clear that if water resources are managed and used in a better manner, undoubtedly more agricultural products can be obtained. Without the development and stability of the agricultural sector, the development of Afghanistan will be very difficult. To this end, government of Japan decided to implement this project with the cooperation of FAO."

Mr. ARYAL, FAO Representative said "Decades of war and migration away from rural areas have left much of the country's irrigation systems in a poor state. And when there are no irrigation works, farmers don't have sufficient water for their crops. This is especially pronounced this year as Afghanistan is suffering from a devastating drought that is causing massive food insecurity. Approximately 80

percent of the people of Afghanistan are dependent on agriculture for their main source of income or livelihood, and good water management is key to their success. I am very happy that Japan is supporting another well-devised water management project during such a time of great need for exactly this sort of work."

This is not the first time Japan has supported work in these three provinces: this new project builds on three earlier phases of irrigation rehabilitation and hydropower projects, which began in 2010, and were completed in February 2017. In these three phases 52,900 ha of land were covered by improved irrigation systems, and micro-hydro power schemes were built that did and still are directly benefiting 163,790 farming families. This water and power has helped families grow gardens, parents to cook healthy foods, and children to do their homework long into the evening.

In addition to signing the agreement, the ceremony also locally launched the new FAO + Japan: A report on partnership 2016-2017, available at <http://www.fao.org/3/18466EN/i8466en.pdf>. This report, produced by FAO with important support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan highlights work done in Afghanistan and around the world through close Japanese-FAO partnerships.

Japan has been assisting Afghanistan's nation-building efforts in various fields including security, infrastructure, agriculture, rural development, human resource development, education, health, culture and humanitarian assistance. The cumulative Japanese assistance to Afghanistan since 2001 amounts to approximately \$6.6 billion. (PR)

### (6) ALP Commander...

told Pajhwok the clash erupted over a woman, who had lapsed from Gondalan village to Hussani village and tribal elders wanted to take her back.

The governor's spokesman, Asadullah Saeed, told Pajhwok he lacked complete information about what happened in Khas Uruzgan district but said it was feared both the sides had suffered casualties.

He added as telecommunication network did not working in Khas Uruzgan district, thus they had no enough information about the issue.

On the other hand, a security official, who wished to go unnamed, told Pajhwok that 20 people were killed, including women, in a Taliban attack on the Khas Uruzgan district.

He said a former ALP commander for the Khas Uruzgan district Hakeem Shujai was wounded and his deputy killed in the attack.

Taliban spokesman Qari Yousuf Ahmadi said ALP commander Hakeem Shujai men attacked the Taliban who wounded of his men in retaliation and captured six others alive including a woman. (Pajhwok)

### (7) MPs Ask Electoral...

count process, saying the polls result would not be announced on schedule if the current problems persisted.

The IEC has said votes cast without biometric system in some polling stations would be reviewed for their genuineness, but the IECC says such votes would be invalidated.

The issue was discussed during today's Wolesi Jirga's session. Mohammad Sarwar Osmani, a lawmaker from Farah province, asked the election commissions to cooperate instead of confronting each other and do not let people enter Parliament with fraudulent votes. He accused the electoral commissions of incompetence and said the two bodies had no capacity to identify fake and genuine votes. "Eighty percent of candidates who are going to win the elections have used money, fraud and political relations for their victory, therefore we would have a parliament full of mafia," he said.

Sayed Jamal Fakor Beheshti, a lawmaker from Bamyan province, also said differences between the electoral bodies should be resolved.

He stressed on a precise review

of votes and hoped people's votes would not be lost as a result of the commissions' differences.

Wolesi Jirga speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahim said any type of differences between the election commissions were a matter of concern. He also asked the two commissions to address their problems. Refusal of security bosses to brief Wolesi Jirga

The Wolesi Jirga had summoned Defense Minister Tariq Shah Bahrami, Interior Minister Wais Ahmad Barmak and National Directorate of Security (NDS) chief Masum Stanikzai to brief lawmakers about incidents in which Gen. Abdul Raziq, Abdul Momin Hussainkhel and Abdul Jabbar Qahraman were killed.

However, the administrative board of the lower house said the security bosses would not attend the Wolesi Jirga today as they were attending a funeral ceremony.

Mohammad Reza Khoshk Watandost, a lawmaker from Herat province, said security officials' non-attendance of the Wolesi Jirga meant they were not accountable to lawmakers.

Allah Gul Mujahid, a lawmaker representing Kabul people, said the nature of Gen. Raziq's assassination was still unclear and security officials must respond to this. He said Raziq's assassination was a political issue and the Taliban were not involved.

Speaker Ibrahim said the top security officials should appear before the house next Saturday. (Pajhwok)

### (8) Release of Baradar...

has finally, after almost a week, confirmed the release of Baradar from a Pakistani prison.

Last week sources confirmed that he had been released - as did the Taliban.

According to Rahimi the release of Baradar had been a unilateral decision by Islamabad.

"About Mullah Baradar, it was Pakistan's decision to jail him and then they also freed him. He is in Pakistan and I do not think that Mullah Baradar's imprisonment or release has any impact on Afghanistan's situation," said Rahimi.

This comes after the Pakistan embassy in Kabul on Sunday confirmed the release of Baradar and Mullah Abdul Samad Sani, also called Samad Sani, a Taliban commander.

The Pakistan embassy in Kabul told TOLONews that the step was taken following Pakistan's commitment to facilitate the Afghan peace process.

Sources and the Taliban last week confirmed the release of Baradar who they said was now back with his family in Karachi after spending eight years in prison.

However no details have been given on exactly when Baradar and Sani were released.

Meanwhile, a number of political parties and MPs say that the government has been marginalized in most of the peace talks on Afghanistan outside the country.

Some other parties said Baradar's release was the result of Zalmay Khalilzad, the US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation, and Taliban's demands.

"Mullah Baradar has been freed because this Taliban demanded this, not the Afghan government. His issue does not relate to the Afghan government, because he was in jail in another country," said head of the National Solidarity Movement of Afghanistan, Sayed Ishaq Gailani.

Meanwhile in other peace related matters, a number of politicians have been invited to the Moscow peace conference and said that Kabul's opposition to the conference is because of Washington's issues with Moscow.

"(We hope) a confrontation should not come about between different countries such as the US and Russia and that we should be able to hold an inclusive meeting on Afghanistan peace," said Sayed Ali Kazimi, the chairman of Aqtidari-Mili Party.

"Unfortunately ... even the Afghan government is not consulted on some peace meetings," said Nadir Shah Bahar a parliament member.

According to some members of

the National Assembly, Zalmay Khalilzad's talks with the Taliban in Qatar, the release of Mullah Baradar from the Pakistani prison and the invitation of a number of regional countries and politicians to the Moscow Peace Summit are examples of how the Afghan government has been sidelined in some instances.

But the Afghan government is firm in its belief that any conference that is not led by Afghans will not be effective. (Tolo news)

### (9) Ghani Promises...

haji quota, corruption and strongmen's influence in appointment of security officials.

President Ghani said interference in elections was unacceptable and anyone made such attempts were violating the law.

About interference of strongmen in the appointment of security officials, Ghani said the 215th Mawand Military Corps were being empowered and no one would be allowed to interfere in the appointment of security and civil officials.

The president said reforms were also underway in police and their impact would be felt nationwide in near future.

Ghani promised to increase haji quota for Helmand people, considering their population.

The president also met with Helmand youth. The youth thanked the president for giving jobs to young people in government offices and shared their suggestions about dealing with strongmen, improving security in border districts, reducing electricity price, providing educational scholarships for youth and building industrial park in Helmand.

After listening to the youth, Ghani said: "I believe in the youth's will, I will use all resources to empower youth and make offices more youthful."

He said all facilities of a first grade province would be provided to Helmand and the budget for building a standard administrative complex in the province had also been finalized.

Meanwhile, President Ghani while meeting Helmand provincial council members said expansion of Kajaki Dam would begin soon. He said a Turkish company was ready to invest 175\$ million in the project, according to a statement from the Presidential Palace.

Ghani first offered prayers for the souls of Afghan security forces, Abdul Jabbar Qahraman and Saleh Mohammad Achakzai.

Later, the provincial council members shared their problems regarding shortage of ANA and police personnel, lack of market for agricultural products, schoolteachers' shortage, reconstruction of Kajaki and Farhad dams and activating Boost Enterprise.

They also suggested opening of a corn oil factory, preventing illegal traffic of precious stones, building bridges on Helmand River and some other improvements.

After hearing problems and suggestions, the president said that expansion of Kajaki Dam would begin soon and a Turkish company was ready to invest 175\$ million in the area.

He said the dam after expansion would have the capacity of storing one billion cubic meters water.

Helmand is the country's most unstable province as its six districts are currently under Taliban's control. (Pajhwok)

### (10) General Dostum...

presidential election which is scheduled to take place in April next year.

"The heads of the coalition are debating to introduce a nominee and have a strong ticket for the presidential election," said Abdul Rahman Akhlaqi, a senior member of Jamiat-i-Islami party.

General Dostum was part of the Ghani-led ticket in 2014 presidential election which was marred by mass fraud and eventually leading up to the formation of the National Unity Government.

"The heads of the coalition including General Dostum are gear up for the presidential election, and I don't think he will support President Ashraf Ghani this time," Abdullah Qarloq, Deputy Head of Junbish-i-Millie party. (ATN)