

(1) Estonia Promises ...

and promised his country would support the war-torn nation in the field of information technology and provide scholarships to Afghan youths. (Pajhwok)

(2) Sept 28 ...

person could vote instead.

Hafeez said there was a polling station in which the total number of registered voters was not more than 1,500 but in the same polling station one candidate got around 2,000 votes.

He asked the IEC to ensure that votes in ballot boxes were checked with biometric devices so that the credibility of the vote was intact.

Another presidential runner Faramarz Tamanna asked the IEC to separate clean and fraudulent votes.

He added almost one million votes would decrease from the total number of votes if fraudulent ballots were separated from clean ballots.

Earlier, the IEC has said that around 2.6 million people participated in September 28 presidential election.

According to Hafeez, officials of the IEC and secretariat should not be allowed to meet government and other officials.

Presidential hopeful Mohammad Shahab Hakimi read the council's joint statement that said two government election teams --- Ashraf Ghani's and Abdullah Abdullah's --- had monopoly over the election and declared themselves as winners before the announcement of official results.

Misuse of government resources, systematic and government planned rigging, sale and purchase of votes, lack of IEC administrative capacity were some of the problems that undermined the eligibility of election, the joint statement said.

"Taking in mind the above problems and other issues, the Presidential Candidates Council believes that this election has no winner. The low turnout resulted in circumstances that show that future government will not have legitimacy to rule." (Pajhwok)

(3) Plan Unveiled ...

Sabz districts to keep the environment clean in Kabul.

Public awareness programmes should be conducted to resolve the issue, he said, adding about 470,000 unplanned houses had been constructed in the capital whose residents used low-quality coal that contributed to air pollution.

Deputy Minister of Urban Development Roshan Wolesmal said the construction of townships, which did not have plans to protect the environment, would not be allowed.

He added they had shared their input with NEPA to combat growing pollution in the nation's capital. (Pajhwok)

(4) Abdullah Rejects ...

Pakistan, welcoming regional efforts for the revival of peace process.

"We all witness the increasing regional and global efforts for resumption of Afghanistan's Peace Process. We welcome the efforts of all the countries in the region and the world aimed at peace in Afghanistan and particularly appreciate these countries' efforts in terms of facilitating direct talks between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Taliban. Discussions continue on the mechanism of initiating the peace talks," he had said in a Twitter post. (Khaama)

(5) Afghanistan's Silent ...

on physical, rather than mental health. So, when Mirwais went to see a doctor the first time, he encountered what many Afghans experiencing psychological distress face: instead of being offered psychosocial support, he was told he had a stomach problem. Unsurprisingly, the medication he received did not help.

In April 2019, I travelled to Afghanistan for Human Rights Watch and interviewed 21 people in Kabul, Kandahar and Herat who had experienced psychological distress after direct exposure to conflict-related violence, such as suicide attacks, aerial bombardments, ground fighting, and detonations of unexploded munitions. Thirteen of these people had received little to no psychosocial support from public health services. Nine of them said they did not know that public mental health services existed.

Having again fled his home because of the drought and fighting, Mirwais today has limited access to a psychosocial counsellor provided by a nongovernmental organization in the displaced persons camp where he lives. But for many Afghans, accessing psychosocial support and mental health services remains a daunting task. For women and girls, the barriers stand higher still. Over the past 15 years, the government

has trained roughly 750 psychosocial counselors who can provide basic mental health counseling and facilitate referrals. But less than 10 percent of the population is using these services. Those who do use them can suffer abuse, such as forced hospitalizations and treatments.

The health-seeking behavior of Afghans with mental health conditions is influenced by individual, cultural and structural barriers, ranging from poor knowledge about health and available services to poverty, social exclusion, stigma, gender discrimination and the ongoing conflict. But the government can and should do more to provide access to adequate mental health services and ensure that these services are comprehensive and free from coercion. Access to health care does not mean doling out more pills.

To start, the Afghan government should conduct public awareness campaigns to inform people about mental health, reduce stigma and highlight available services. It should instruct health workers to proactively provide referrals to mental health services, with special attention to the needs of women and children, and consider less expensive ways of providing psychosocial services, such as remote counselling through mobile phones.

Afghanistan's international donors, many of whom are gathering in Amsterdam today, should continue their efforts to improve the mental health system through technical assistance and greater support. They should focus on providing medical and psychosocial counsellors with longer trainings, ensure the full inclusion of counselling psychology in university curricula, and encourage the government to deploy and retain more psychosocial counsellors, especially in rural areas.

"Everyone from the president to the average person admits that mental health is a problem in the country," one Afghan mental health professional told me. "It's shameful that the budget is so low."

This lack of resources has a clear impact on people like Mirwais, their families and the Afghan public. But it does not absolve the government of its obligation to provide adequate mental health care, especially when international donors are available to help. And help they should. Access to psychosocial support and mental health services is a basic human right. (HRW)

(6) Three Indian ...

and global efforts for resumption of Afghanistan's Peace Process. We welcome the efforts of all the countries in the region and the world aimed at peace in Afghanistan and particularly appreciate these countries' efforts in terms of facilitating direct talks between the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Taliban. Discussions continue on the mechanism of initiating the peace talks," he had said in a Twitter post. (Khaama)

(7) Rivash Gobind ...

head coach from the start of the 2017 season. Warriors have enjoyed their most successful seasons in recent years under his stewardship. (IOL)

(8) Paktians Ask ...

had taken place towards peace.

Jaji Ahmad Jan, a tribal elder, questioned Taliban's trips to Russia, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Iran and other countries and said the rebels should be careful in future endeavors in this historic period.

Participants of the meetings asked the Taliban to seek an intra-Afghan path for peace and use all local resources and facilities for this purpose.

Despite unconditional peace offer and ceasefire from the Afghan government, the Taliban refused to enter direct talks. (Pajhwok)

(9) Gauging ...

increase in water level of the river.

Canal reconstruction
A contract for reconstruction of the 20-kilometer Tizan Irrigation Canal in Guzargah district of Herat province was also signed.

The MoWE statement said that the contract for reconstruction of the canal was signed with Raho Construction Company and the project would cost 40 million afghanis funded by World Bank and would take 15 months to complete.

With reconstruction of the canal, 4,821 hectares of land would be brought under irrigation and around 4764 people would get benefit of the project, the ministry said. (Pajhwok)

(10) Work on Girls' ...

and take a year to complete and will have the capacity for 800 students. Hamida Hussaini, a student of the school,

said, "Our school has no building and we study in a rented house which is very small. If the new building is completed, it would solve our problem."

On the other hand, Arif Noori said reconstruction work on a school in Subos village of Andar district has been completed.

He said reconstruction of Laghar Primary School in Andar district cost 500,000 afghanis.

According to Ghazni education officials, half of schools in the province are without buildings and six schools got new buildings this solar year. (Pajhwok)

(11) U.S. Starts ...

terrorist groups such as the Islamic State (IS) and will endanger the security and safety established in Kurdish-controlled areas in northeastern Syria.

On the ground, the Turkey-backed Syrian rebels started crossing from Syria into the Turkish territories to be transported to areas opposite to the Kurdish-controlled parts in northeastern Syria as part of the preparations for the Turkish campaign. Turkey sees the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) and its allied Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) as separatists and terrorists, citing their links with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which is listed as a terrorist organization by Turkey, the United States, and the European Union.

The Kurdish militia forces have been controlling areas in northern Syria since the early years of the crisis in Syria, in order to force Damascus to recognize a federal rule or autonomy for the Kurds in northern Syria.

However, Syrian government officials repeatedly said that Kurdish federalization in Syria or self-rule is out of the question. (Xinhua)

(12) Brexit: No ...

the negotiations but if European leaders are betting that it will prevent a "no deal", they would commit a historical error of understanding," the source added.

The plan for Brexit presented by Johnson on Wednesday was received with scepticism by Brussels, which saw several "problematic" points. He spoke this weekend with several European leaders including the Finnish, Dutch and Portuguese, and with the French President.

With less than a month from the UK release date from the European Union and with the next EU summit scheduled for 18-17 October, Johnson told Macron that this was the "last chance to reach an agreement - what each party wants - so that we can move on and build a new partnership between the UK and the EU," Downing Street spokesperson said. "But for this to happen, the EU must make compromises, just as the UK has in recent weeks and months," Johnson said. He assured that the project has the support of Parliament, contrary to the Brexit agreement negotiated by former PM Theresa May - rejected three times by the deputies.

The French president told Boris Johnson that the negotiations would be evaluated "at the end of next week to assess the feasibility of an agreement" on the Brexit, the Elysee said. (Brussels times)

(13) Report Says South ...

When investigations do take place, committee members are hand-picked by President Salva Kiir and carried out in secrecy, it said. Reports are often buried and their findings largely ignore crimes committed by the army.

A government-led investigation into sexual assaults in Bentiu last year brought few results as the government denied they had taken place. "Nothing of this kind occurred in Bentiu," Rabi Emanuel, a government representative, told a meeting in the capital, Juba, early this year.

Legal experts are concerned by the government's silence.

"Accountability is a key issue and the government needs to pay attention," said local human rights lawyer Phillips Anyang Ngong.

South Sudan's government disputed the new report's findings.

"I don't think that (Amnesty) report corresponds with the reality in South Sudan. Each time a perpetrator commits a crime the government always takes measures," said spokesman Ateny Wek Ateny.

Some officials said the country should prioritize stability before it can move ahead with justice.

"Let peace come first and accountability later, we can't do two things at once," said Sylvester Sebit, an army intelligence officer.

But the peace deal is on shaky ground. Next month opposition leader Riek Machar is expected to return to South Sudan and again serve as Kiir's deputy, but key issues such as security arrangements have not been resolved. Some in the international community

fear that fighting could erupt again.

Mental health experts say justice is essential in recovering from the trauma of war.

"There's well-established literature that if there isn't justice served, recovery from significant trauma becomes a lot more difficult," said Jairam Kamala Ramakrishnan, a psychiatrist with the medical aid group Doctors Without Borders.

One new project has started to bring justice to a small number of victims at the local level.

Since last year the United Nations, with support from South Sudan's judiciary, has been holding mobile courts in the towns of Malakal, Bentiu and Rumbek, trying cases including rape, robbery and assault.

"Women who have suffered rape and other serious crimes against them are finally getting justice," said David Shearer, chief of the U.N. mission in South Sudan.

The initiative will be expanded to other areas over time, the U.N. said.

Yet many other victims await their turn. In Malakal town, Regina Nateu hung her head. Three years ago her brother was shot and killed by soldiers when he left a U.N. protected camp looking for food, she said. The perpetrators have never been found.

Nateu said she is losing hope.

"People in power can't do anything," she said. "Only God can do something to those who killed my brother." (Ap news)

(14) Tunisian Election ...

corruption charges, entailing a possible challenge to that result.

Eight years after ending autocratic rule, many Tunisians are disillusioned by the failure of repeated coalition governments to address economic problems and their rejection of major parties threatens a new period of upheaval.

If official results confirm Ennahda's first place, it has two months to form a coalition. After that the president can ask a politician of his choice to try. If that also fails after two months, Tunisians will go back to the ballot box. Next week's presidential runoff pits Kais Saied, an independent, against Nabil Karoui, a media mogul detained on corruption charges that he denies. If he loses, he might appeal to overturn the result citing his detention.

RED LINES

Speaking on Sunday night, another senior Ennahda official, Abdelkarim Haloumi, said he hoped a new parliamentary election could be avoided and that the party would attempt to build a coalition from among the parties opposed to corruption.

A governing coalition requires 109 seats in government. Ennahda's vote share projected by the exit poll would translate into about 40 seats, the polling company Sigma Conseil said.

It and Karoui's Heart of Tunisia, which exit polls projected as coming second with about 33 seats, had already ruled out going into coalition with each other before the election. A spokesman for Karoui repeated that after Sunday's vote, calling it "a red line".

Attayar, another party that appeared on course for more than a dozen seats in parliament, also said it would not enter government with Ennahda, with its leader Mohamed Abbou saying "we will be a responsible and serious opposition".

However, the conservative Karama said it would be ready to enter coalition negotiations with Ennahda if asked.

Any political paralysis entails new risks for a fragile economy that has never really recovered from the shock of the 2011 revolution that ended decades of autocracy, introduced democracy and set off the "Arab spring".

Urged on by the International Monetary Fund, Tunisia is trying to rein in a public debt that swelled as political leaders sought to buy goodwill with rampant state employment.

However, there is unemployment of %15 nationally and %30 in some cities, inflation remains high at %6.8, and tourism is only this year recovering from two jihadist attacks in 2015 that caused many countries to warn off their citizens.

Economic pain has contributed to an anti-establishment mood among Tunisian voters, who punished the main parties in the first round of the presidential election last month.

Though exit polls showed Ennahda coming first on Sunday, its projected vote share of %17.5 represented a sharp decline from the last parliamentary election in 2014, when it had %27.5. (Reuters)

(15) Kazakhstan Aims to ...

worth of joint projects in spheres of

industrial manufacturing, mechanical engineering, construction, chemistry, energy, alternative energy sources, agricultural complex, trade and so on.

"The gross inflow of direct investments from Germany to Kazakhstan amounted to 183\$ million in 2018 alone, which is 35 percent less than compared to the same period of last year," the source said.

Countries realized investment projects worth over 190 million euro during 2018.

"Last year CLAAS company and akimat (administrative center) of North Kazakhstan region signed an agreement on construction of a plant for montage of combine harvesters and tractors of CLAAS brand with further localization of manufacturing. Furthermore, the successful realization of the project on construction of largest solar park in Central Asia, the capacity of which amounts to 100 MW in Saran city near Karaganda city. The project was realized with participants of German Goldbeck Solar GmbH company," the source in the ministry noted.

As at March 2019, there are 900 legal entities, branches and offices registered in Kazakhstan with German participation. Only 450 units of them are operating ones, the source concluded. (Trend)

(16) Israel Sees 28-Pct ...

waste treatment and implementing a government program on this issue," it said.

The ministry is following a new strategy aimed at reducing Israel's landfill rate from 80 percent currently to 26 percent by 2030.

However, the data shows that in 2018, there was a -20percent decline in sulfur oxide emissions and a -70percent decline compared with 2012.

There was also a -6percent decline compared with 2017 and a -53percent decline compared with 2012 in emissions of nitrogen oxides.

In addition, non-methane volatile organic compounds emissions decreased by 4 percent compared to 2017, while emissions of PM10 particulates (with a diameter of 10 micrometers or less) decreased by 0.5 percent.

According to the report, natural gas consumption in Israel increased by 17 percent in 2018 compared with 2017 while fuel oil consumption decreased by 13 percent. (Xinhua)

(17) Germany Warns ...

the minister drew attention to Turkey, saying Ankara needs more assistance in dealing with millions of refugees that have entered the country since the start of militancy in neighboring Syria in 2011.

"Turkey is doing a great deal in welcoming refugees," Seehofer said. "It is also in our interests, but it is clear that we cannot manage the future with the resources of the past."

He made the comments following visits last week to Greece and Turkey, where he discussed a deal on refugees and border controls.

In an unprecedented refugee influx, over one million refugees arrived in the European Union in 2015, most of them fleeing conflict zones in the Middle East and North Africa.

A year later, Turkey became Europe's gatekeeper after signing a deal with the EU aimed at controlling the inflow of refugees into the continent. The agreement ended the influx, bringing the number down to around 30,000 annually in the following years.

The refugee deal is, however, in trouble, with Ankara accusing Europe of failing to honor its economic pledges. Under the agreement, 6.5\$ billion was pledged to help Turkey host 3.6 million Syrian refugees, but as of June, only 2.4\$ billion had been paid to Ankara.

Last month, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan threatened to "open the gates" if the US and the EU refused to help Ankara with a plan to resettle one million refugees in northern Syria.

The Europeans have stepped up efforts to save the 2016 deal amid a rise in the number of refugee arrivals in the continent. According to the United Nations, 9,000 migrants entered Greece from Turkey in September, bringing the total to more than 40,000 since the start of 2019.

Many refugees take perilous sea journeys to reach European shores, from where they attempt to make their way into wealthier European Union states, particularly Germany, in search of better living conditions.

At least 15,000 people have lost their lives in Mediterranean crossings since 2014, according to the UN's International Organization for Migration. (Press TV)