

(1) 13 Journalists...

journalists and asked the government and international community to pay serious heed to the safety and security of journalists and media outlets' workers.

Despite the regulation prepared by the National Security Council for journalists' safety, establishment of a committee for coordination between journalists and the government and President Ghani's issuance of a decree on access to information, the violence rate against journalists remained steady and did not decline.

The creation of a mixed commission comprised of the Federation of Afghanistan's media Organisations and Journalists and the government, aimed at investigating murders and violence against journalists, the process to address such cases has not yet begun and judicial organs yet to work in this regard.

At the press conference, Ahmad Wali Sarhadi, a local journalist in Zabul province, said he had been under serious threats from local officials over publishing a report about administrative corruption. He asked the government to seriously address issues and challenges journalists faced in provinces, otherwise the right to freedom of expression and free functioning of media would be compromised. (Pajhwok)

(2) Afghan Forces ...

relies heavily on U.S. forces to prevent strategic failure."

The Taliban has intensified battlefield and other attacks since August and came close to recapturing the northern city of Kunduz and the capital of southern Helmand province this month.

The insurgents continue to stage assaults on these two key urban centers and several other provincial capitals, inflicting heavy casualties on Afghan forces.

The conflict-related incidents have caused more than 8,000 civilian casualties in Afghanistan, including more than 2,500 deaths in the first nine months of 2016, according to the United Nations.

SIGAR reported that the United States has committed at least \$1 billion for projects intended to improve conditions for Afghan women, but support for woman having equal access to education and equal representation in political leadership has fallen since 2006.

"Fifteen years after the United States ousted the Taliban regime, Afghanistan remains one of the worst places in the world to be a woman."

Poverty, unemployment, underemployment, violence, out-migration, internal displacement and the education gender gap have all increased, while services and private investment have decreased, according to SIGAR. The report says more than 85,000 Afghans sought asylum for the first time in the European Union in the first six months of 2016, noting that the number of asylum applications from April to June was 83 percent higher compared to the same period in 2015. (VoA)

(3) Over 3,500 ...

operations," MoI spokesman Sediq Seddiqi said.

According to the ministry, Helmand, Farah, Uruzgan, Nangarhar, Badakhshan, Kunduz, Baghlan, Takhar, Faryab, Jawzjan, Maidan Wardak, Kandahar, Ghor and Nimroz provinces witnessed heavy wars and parts of the provinces collapsed to the Taliban during this period. Shafaq Operation was a big military operation that covered all vulnerable parts of the country. Meanwhile, a number of MPs criticized the leadership of the war by saying that there is a lack of coordination among the Afghan security forces.

"Many insurgents were killed in Shafaq Operation, but security forces have not gained the success that was expected. Meanwhile, the enemy has increased its attacks," said Iqbal Safi, an MP from Kapisa.

"Parts of some provinces fallen to the Taliban during the Shafaq Operation. Thousands of small and heavy weapons were seized by the Taliban and the enemy became stronger," said Hashim Alokozay, member of Meshran Jirga (Upper House of Parliament). Currently, Afghan se-

curity forces are conducting 15 planned operations along with night raids in 13 provinces in order to eliminate insurgents, reports say. (Tolonews)

(4) New Security...

province of Afghanistan where six districts are under Taliban control and the government's writ in a number of districts is confined to the district centers alone. (Pajhwok)

(5) 10 Kangaroo ...

2016, armed militants conducted 10 kangaroo court incidents. She did not provide further detail.

But human rights commission head in the north, Syed Ahmad Sami, told Pajhwok Afghan News they had registered six kangaroo court incidents all against women in Sari Pul and Jawzjan provinces.

He also expressed concern at increasing incidents of domestic violence against women in the four northern provinces - Samangan, Balkh, Jawzjan and Sar-i-Pul.

He said so far 380 incidents of violence against women had been registered with the human rights commission in the four provinces this year.

Balkh women's affairs director Shehla, who attended the gathering, said a campaign should be launched against violence against women in the province.

She said her department had so far registered 281 incidents of violence against women in Balkh this year. She believed civil society activists, religious scholars, and the media could help curb crimes against the gender.

She listed reasons behind the violence against women as illiteracy, poverty and non-enforcement of law. (Pajhwok)

(6) Scores of ...

Rafiqullah with 42 troops defected to the Taliban they surrendered 58 light and heavy weapons, three tanks, two pickup and other military gears to the Taliban.

A couple of days back police commander 'defected' to Taliban militants along with his 13 subordinates in Chori district. Police chief Aka said the 3rd police battalion commander based in the district had surrendered to Taliban along with his 13 men. He identified the commander as Qahir Khan who had been serving as the commander for 3rd police battalion over the past two months.

Earlier, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said situation in Afghanistan was challenging and the Afghan national security forces faced many threats and they were challenged by different groups.

Addressing a press conference after NATO defence ministers meeting in Brussels on Thursday, he said NATO considered Afghan security forces fully capable to take charge of security situation in Afghanistan, adding the Afghan forces were capable to counter different Taliban attacks. (Pajhwok)

(7) AISA Employees ...

Azimi, publishing department official at AISA, said AISA employees should be hired at the ministry under the National Technical Assistance (NTA). He said NTA was a new salary scale process based on which employees were given standard salaries. He said recently AISA's license department had been transferred to MoCI where the department workers were told they would work on ordinary government pay scale.

Faridoon Astana, a HR employee at AISA, told Pajhwok Afghan News if AISA employees continued their work without considering the NTA process, there would be a 10 percent deduction in their salaries.

He said everything was being transferred to MoCI but AISA employees' fate was still unknown. "I discussed the transferring of AISA employees through NTA process with the Deputy Commerce and Industries Minister but he said they don't have any vacant post in NTA sector." He said the ministry officials had told them that they could not hire them under NTA process but under the ministry framework.

He said MoCI had promised a competition among high-ranking officials of AISA through the Capacity Building for Results Program (CBR) to appoint them

on high posts.

He said MoCI besides breaching its promises had also cut daily rights --- lunch and transport facility-- of employees and AISA bank account had also been blocked by the Ministry of Finance.

Another problem was that the Mizan month salary of the employees had also not been provided as yet and today they obtained Sunbul month's salary, he said, adding 338 AISA employees were worried about their fate and MoCI officials weren't responding to their requests. The strikers warned of continued work boycott until their issues were addressed. They said if their demands weren't addressed in a week, they would prefer rallying.

Musafir Qawqandi, MoCI spokesman, said there was nothing to be worried about and AISA employees' salaries would be given by the end of current solar year.

He said the ministries of commerce and industries and finance were working on a draft which would pave the way for hiring AISA workers through NTA process.

He denied allegation of Faridoon Astana who said he was told by deputy minister that there were no NTA process related posts, and said, "No, I deny that claim as untrue." (Pajhwok)

(8) Protesters Seek...

Abdul Hadi Qani, one of the protesters, said they carried out the protest to seek justice for the victims. He asked the government to arrest those behind the inhuman act and punish them. Meanwhile, Governor Ghulam Naser Khase assured the protesters that the culprits would be brought to justice soon.

"We will not deal Daesh with mercy. We will deal with them according to laws," vowed Khase.

Security officials and residents of Ghalmin and Murghab areas clashed with Daesh rebels who tried to kidnap common people. As a result, three members of a local uprising group and one Daesh leader were killed.

In revenge, a well-placed source confided to Pajhwok Afghan News 38 people -- mainly farmers and shepherds-- were taken hostage by Daesh militants before shooting them dead. (Pajhwok)

(9) Study Finds ...

government departments contain information from past 10 years and have not been updated so far.

However, the webpages of the MoI, the Ministry of Defense (MoD) and the Ministry of Finance (MoF) are more active, but their pages also have a number of problems.

The study shows that the webpage of Interior Ministry mentions Zarawar Zahid as Nangarhar police chief, while he was killed in an explosion few weeks ago.

Commenting on the issue, Nazari Paryani, a journalist, said: "Poor management, lack of capacity among media staff, who take high salaries in the departments, are the reasons which result in incompetence in all sectors." "We can upload any type of data to a website and can update it in a short time," said Massoud Ziaee, a computer science department graduate. (Tolonews)

(10) 'Enemies Killing...

to identify the murderers and severely punish them.

The government should take care of such incidents because the enemies wanted to create divisions among Afghans, he said. Meshran Jirga chairman, Fazal Hadi Muslimyar, said: "The Ghor incident is painful for all Afghans. The enemies of our country want to create tribal and religious differences among people by perpetrating such barbaric attacks."

Muslimyar urged the people not to allow such ominous plans to succeed because enemies of Afghanistan killed innocent people in most areas of the country for creating differences among communities. Muslimyar asked security organs to prevent such incidents from recurring.

A number of senators expressed concern over the extension in Daesh activities to other parts of the country. Rona Tarin, a representative

from Kandahar province, said she was worried about the presence of Daesh militants in Pachiragam district of Nangarhar province and asked the government to take a decisive action against the outfit.

If Daesh operations were not curbed in-time in Pachiragam, the group would expand its presence to other areas too, she said.

Deputy Meshran Jirga head, Najiba Hussaini, also expressed concern over increasing presence of Daesh in Nangarhar but said: "We would not allow Afghanistan to become a second Syria."

Calling Daesh, Al Qaeda and Taliban as international projects, she said the government should stop the groups from shedding Afghan bloods.

However, Meshran Jirga chairman, Fazal Hadi Muslimyar, said that operations to clear Pachiragam from Daesh were underway.

The nation was ready to closely stand with the government in the fight against insurgent groups, he said. (Pajhwok)

(11) UAE Pledges ...

worth \$15 million for the cadre hospital at the in the next three years.

Governor Habibi also sought UAE cooperation in construction of Islamic seminaries and mosques in the province.

Yousuf Al-Ali said he would personally travel to Khost with regard to implementation of projects on the university campus and all other projects that had been suspended. (Pajhwok)

(12) NDS Thwarts...

for terrorist activity targeting government or security officials. He said that National Directorate of Security (NDS) personnel captured the militants who were involved in the plot in Shakhil area of the city.

A corolla car, two motorcycles, a pistol and three liters of alcoholic drinks also seized from the detainees, he added.

Elsewhere, seven people accused for different crimes were detained in Khost province.

Khost Police Chief Faizullah Ghairat said the criminals were accused for armed robbery, murder, kidnapping and drug trafficking.

Two of them were accused for stealing cars, two others for murderers and as many for drug smuggling and one of them was accused for kidnapping, he said, adding the convicts were currently under investigation.

However, Ghairat said that the numbers of criminal cases were decreased this year compared with the past as result of public cooperation with police. (Pajhwok)

(13) Torkham Termi-

monitored and no one had complained about the quality.

A driver on Jalalabad-Torkham highway, Sabir, told Pajhwok Afghan News that passengers were suffering from problems in Torkham Border Township and the terminal would provide them many facilities.

Sabir said passengers, particularly, women could be seen on the border very unmanaged in absence of proper facilities. Currently there is no place for passengers to stay and wait or keep their women and children safe, he said. (Pajhwok)

(14) Hekmatyar's...

security in the country," Amin said.

Hizb-e-Islami has promised to submit all its weapons to the National Unity Government (NUG), but Amin said some armed groups have attacked on the strongholds of Hizb-e-Islami in parts of the country and that the process of handing over the weapons to government will take time.

"Government has failed to maintain the safety of civilians belonged to Hizb-e-Islami. Therefore, disarming the Hizb-e-Islami fighters will take time," he said.

Meanwhile, a number of members of Meshran Jirga (Upper House of Parliament) urged government to implement the peace agreement signed with Hizb-e-Islami. "The peace deal was signed with Hekmatyar, but it is not clear that why it is not implemented," said Habib, member of Meshran Jirga.

It is reported that the NUG has asked Hizb-e-Islami to issue an official statement on cutting its relations with other terrorist groups and government will not ask the United Nations to remove its sanctions from Hekmatyar as long as the statement is issued.

However, Hizb-e-Islami says they have mentioned their commitments clearly in the peace agreement and the issuance of a statement is not required. (Tolonews)

(15) First-Ever...

where sports facilities like other institutions are limited, women rarely dare to attend sports facilities, like stadiums, allocated for men, and it was a lack of such facilities for women that inspired Nuristani to open her club.

In conservative Afghanistan society where people, especially in rural areas, deeply believe in tribal traditions, some of which include prohibiting girls from going to school or working outside home, opening a fitness club for girls, is a particularly brave move for a female and took a great deal of courage.

"My sole aim of opening the club is to support the women's cause and to encourage them to come out of their houses, go to sports clubs and exercise," Nuristani asserted.

Although Afghanistan has made tremendous achievements since the collapse of the Taliban regime in late 2001 and Afghan athletes have brought medals home from regional and international tournaments, including from the Olympics in Beijing 2008 and London in 2012, the percentage of female sportspersons is almost zero, mostly because of traditions and cultural barriers.

"Men on the roads harass me everyday as I travel to and from the fitness club," Rukhsar Habibzai, 19, a member of Blue Moon Fitness Club said, adding that the men even go as far as to throw stones and hurl abusive language at her as she rides her bicycle to the club, just because she is a female. "Even though these ignorant, sexist men with extreme views are trying to intimidate me from going to the fitness club, I am determined to continue my practice," the gutsy young girl proclaimed.

The female teenager has been a member of the National Women's Cyclist Association for more than three years and is currently practicing Yoga at the fitness club in Kabul.

"With courage and determination we Afghan women can overcome the harmful traditions and cultural barriers to prove and elevate our existence in society," she said.

Although women's social status in Afghanistan has been improving demonstrably since the Taliban's reign ended 15 years ago, and women are currently engaged in politics, business, art and other pursuits previously prohibited, many families still do not allow their female members to work outside of home.

The private fitness club, which opened 45 days ago, is rapidly gaining popularity among female sports enthusiasts and its members are on a constant rise, despite a backlash from traditional male quarters, according to Fakhria Ibrahim, a yoga instructor. "Since the club opened, 50 women and girls have registered and regularly practice yoga, body building and other exercises, and the number is consistently rising in the face of traditional restrictions," Ibrahim told Xinhua proudly. (Xinhua)

(16) Daesh Commander...

years. Taliban has started attacking the Daesh affiliates since last year, reports say.

This comes after on Monday at least 9 loyalists of Daesh were killed in separate operations in eastern Nangarhar province.

The provincial government media office said in a statement that at least 4 militants were killed during an operation by the Afghan forces in Pachir Aw Agam district of the province.

Meanwhile, the Afghan Ministry of Defense, said at least 5 militants were killed during an airstrike in the same district. (Tolonews)

(17) Kandahar ...

in a suicide bombing. The bombing was carried out though a Saracha type of vehicle at around 10:30am in Teri Ade locality sit-

uated in the limits of 9th police district, according to Durrani.

He said the target of suicide attacker was police chief of the 9th police district but he luckily survived the attack. (Pajhwok)

(18) Trump Accuses...

appeared to be linked to the FBI's Clinton email probe completed in July.

"I agreed that the FBI should take appropriate investigative steps designed to allow investigators to review these emails to determine whether they contain classified information, as well as to assess their importance to our investigation," said Comey in the letter. (Xinhua)

(19) Australian Govt....

Bishop said the laws would send a "tough message" not only to people smugglers, but to those thinking of coming to Australia illegally. (Xinhua)

(20) Saudi-Led ...

of 27 civilians, mostly children and women, in three Yemeni provinces of Saada, Marib and Taiz, according to residents, medics and local officials.

Earlier this month, the airstrikes hit a funeral hall in the capital Sanaa, killing 140 mourners, including children, and wounded over 600 others.

Saudi Arabia intervened in Yemen conflict in March last year to restore its ally President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi and his government to power, after Houthi and forces loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh fought a revolution against "Hadi government corruption" and drove Hadi with his cabinet to flee into exile. (Xinhua)

(21) Brexit Biggest ...

know that there were many good people on both sides of this debate. But the only way that we can ensure that Northern Ireland's interests are best served is if we are united and determined."

"What will guide me through these negotiations, and yes, they will be tough, are five simple principles."

"Firstly, Brexit means Brexit. The whole of the United Kingdom leaves the EU. Secondly, the economic and social benefits for Northern Ireland within the United Kingdom are far more important than our relationship with the EU." (Xinhua)

(22) Syrian Airstrikes...

insurgent positions with artillery shells and rockets adding that "all kinds of weapons" are being used in the fighting in the Assad neighborhood.

The Aleppo Media Center, an activist collective, reported airstrikes and artillery shelling of areas near Aleppo. The AMC and another activist collective, the Local Coordination Committees, said rebels entered the village of Minian west of Aleppo Saturday afternoon after intense fighting with government forces. (AP)

(23) Former Leader...

In order to refund an autonomous party.

"As socialists we want to vote. As the grassroots member I now become, I will from Monday dedicate all my effort to defending that right", he stated.

"Between the options given by the management committee, I do not choose any of them. I will not go against my party and I will not go against my manifesto commitment either," he emphasized, encouraging the management committee to call for a congress after the investiture vote. (Xinhua)

(24) Turkey Dismisses...

suspected links to Fethullah Gulen, who Ankara blames for orchestrating the failed July coup. Fifteen media firms, including the Dicle News Agency and a number of newspapers and magazines were closed as per the decree over their alleged links to the Kurdistan Workers' Party. (Xinhua)

(25) ISIS Defeats...

continued bombardment has destroyed much physical infrastructure, film studios, computers and buildings housing the ISIS internet operation. The death of chief propagandists has equally affected ISIS efforts to draw recruits. (AP)