

**(1) Afghan President...**

to pluck the pine nuts. The letter, dated September 7, was sent in an effort to help protect workers from getting caught in clashes between U.S.-backed Afghan forces and Islamic State militants in the mountainous region. Meanwhile, a local official said on September 20 that a Taliban suicide bombing of a hospital in southern Afghanistan the previous day killed 39 people, almost doubling the initial death toll of 20. Gul Islam Syaal, a spokesman for the governor of the southern Zabul Province, said the number of wounded in the attack in the provincial capital of Qalat also rose to 140.

"Only two of those killed were security force members, and the rest of them are civilians, including women, children, patients, and visitors," he said. "The hospital is completely destroyed." The attacks, which came after the collapse of peace negotiations between Washington and the militants, occurred the same day U.S. peace envoy Zalmay Khalilzad briefed U.S. lawmakers in a closed-door session on his talks with the Taliban. (Reuters, AP)

**(2) US Renews ...**

steps to ensure the election is transparent and credible to Afghan voters. We hold all candidates accountable to the code of conduct they signed." (Pajhwok)

**(3) US Withholds ...**

an "off-budget" mechanism, given "the Afghan government's inability to transparently manage US Government resources." The withholding of \$60 million is due to a "lack of transparency surrounding procurement decisions" by the National Procurement Authority, which is "a great cause for concern." This may not come as surprise to many Afghans, who, in the midst of a nationwide power outage, read US Ambassador John Bass' September 18 tweet (which was reported on by Afghan media). "Hearing reports the National Procurement Authority won't authorize fuel purchases for the power plant providing the only electricity in Kabul—even while the US & Resolute Support [US/NATO military mission] help Afghan security forces enable repairs to transmission lines. Could this be true?"

Then, The Monitoring and Evaluation Committee lost its funding because it is "incapable of being a partner in the international effort to build a better future for the Afghan people." And a final pledge: "The American taxpayers and the Afghan people can count on the United States to act when we see assistance funds misused." (Tolo news)

**(4) Afghan Ambassador ...**

as construction of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline, construction of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Tajikistan (TAT) railway lines, Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (TAP) power transmission line, and Turkmenistan-Uzbekistan-Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (TUTAP) power transmission line. The country also participates in major regional project Lapis Lazuli along the Afghanistan-Turkmenistan-Azerbaijan-Georgia-Turkey-Europe route.

Kabul is convinced that the commissioning of the said regional infrastructure projects will turn Afghanistan into a hub of trade and transit between Central Asia and South Asia, the report said. (Trend)

**(5) Ghani and Pakistan ...**

talks planned with the Taliban, and has said the talks are "dead." "It will be a big tragedy if these talks don't make headway," Khan said at a recent ceremony at Pakistan's Torkham crossing with Afghanistan. Khan, who meets with President Trump in New York on Monday, will emphasize to the US president that there has been "destruction and chaos in Afghanistan for the last 40 years."

Khan said Pakistan had told Taliban leaders to participate in the earlier peace talks in Qatar. He said his next task would be to convince the Taliban to open talks with the Afghan government. (Tolo news)

**(6) Absence of MPs ...**

"Don't mention my name again, I won't stay silent..." But Obaidullah Kalimzai, a public representative from Kabul, endorsed Bashardost's statement and claimed the Administrative Board had failed to maintain quorum.

Without going into details, he told the second deputy speaker: "We have heard all things you told Bashardost. This is against the law and you don't reserve the right to warn a member of the house,"

Other parliamentarians also hit out at the Administrative Board for failing to firm up a clear agenda on the sensitive situation the country was in.

Amir Khan Yar, first deputy speaker who chaired the session, said: "We acknowledge there are problems but all of them don't concern the board. When we don't work properly at the commission level how can we include a free debate in the agenda?"

He pointed out that around 200 members were absent from today's session and the Administrative Board could not bring them in by force. (Pajhwok)

**(7) Team Kabul Conquers ...**

Officials at the football federation says that soon after the end of the Football Premier League matches, a women's football league will be launched in Kabul.

The final match of the premier league will be held today between Shaheen Asmayee and Toofan Harirod teams in Kabul. (Tolo news)

**(8) 20 Killed...**

Hospital and Afghan National Army's military hospital. Slightly injured people were taken to government and private hospitals in Qalat, he added.

Seyal said powerful explosives were used in the blast that totally destroyed Qalat Civil Hospital. He said 12 ambulances with some of them recently brought to the hospital were also destroyed. Mirwais Hospital doctors in Kandahar province say they sent 20 ambulances to Qalat city and brought 26 injured to the hospital for treatment.

One of the doctors, who wished to go unnamed, said that one of the injured succumbed to his injuries on the way and the hospital sent a team of professionals to Qalat for treatment of the injured there.

A Taliban spokesman, Qari Yusuf Ahmadi said that the target of the attack was NDS compound where he claimed dozens of Afghan forces suffered casualties. (Pajhwok)

**(9) Women Activists ...**

Shekiba Moahid, a women's rights activist, said many families did not allow their women to vote for the candidate of their choice.

"Families whose leaders are affil-

iated with political parties, they force their women to vote for the candidate of their choice." She said insecurity and fraud were two major challenges for the election and women were worried about that.

The Ministry of Interior says it has prepared plan for ensuring security for 4,942 polling stations across the country and around 100,000 soldiers would be deployed for security on the election day. (Pajhwok)

**(10) Daesh "Recruiting ...**

but based on intelligence information, the practical activity of Daesh has not been seen in Helmand so far because people are not in their favor," the governor said.

This comes as parts of Helmand are under Taliban influence, and the province has faced many clashes between Afghan forces and militants over the past few years. (Tolo news)

**(11) 'We'll Respond...**

accused Tehran of warmongering and threatening to "fight to the last American." His Iranian counterpart, Mohammad Javad Zarif responded by saying that Pompeo "has it the other way around." (RT)

**(12) Trump to Welcome...**

Emmanuel Macron's last year. "Australia played a very smart game with Trump," he added, noting the country had avoiding directly criticizing him, unlike some European counterparts. Trump got off to a smooth start with Morrison, congratulating him on his surprise election victory in May, with a tweet noting there were "no greater friends" than the United States and Australia.

The two also met on the sidelines of the G20 in June, cementing warm ties that Trump did not enjoy with Morrison's predecessor, Malcolm Turnbull. Trump berated Turnbull in February 2017 over a bilateral refugee agreement before abruptly ending their telephone conversation. Australia also agreed last month to join a coalition to protect oil tankers and cargo ships from threats posed by Iran in the Strait of Hormuz after a series of attacks there that Washington has blamed on Tehran.

Australia has also banned China's Huawei Technologies Co Ltd, the world's top provider of telecoms equipment, which the United States accuses of spying capabilities, from its 5G network, something the Trump administration has struggled to persuade other allies to do.

Australian intelligence concluded China was responsible for a cyberattack on Australia's parliament and its three largest political parties, Reuters reported on Monday.

Following an arrival ceremony, bilateral meetings, and a joint news conference, Vice President Mike Pence and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo will host a luncheon for Morrison to be followed by a state dinner at the White House. (Reuters)

**(13) Israel's Netanyahu...**

preference for prime minister, and will then choose the one he thinks has the best chance of putting together a coalition. His office said the consultations "normally last around two days," and that he would then begin the process of inviting candidates to form a government.

Netanyahu has dominated the political scene for more than a decade with tough security-first policies, an instinct for how to dominate news cycles at the expense of rivals, and frequent trips to Washington, Moscow

and other world capitals.

There were only narrow differences in the two main parties' campaigns on many important issues, and an end to the Netanyahu era would be unlikely to bring significant changes in policy on relations with the United States, the regional struggle against Iran or the Palestinian conflict.

Netanyahu, a man known to his adoring Likud supporters as "the magician", has survived difficult situations before.

Many political analysts are waiting to see what manoeuvres he will try to prolong his political survival, not least to claim a public mandate in the face of possible corruption charges that prosecutors may bring within months. He denies any wrongdoing, accusing his critics of mounting a witch-hunt. (Reuters)

**(14) Center-2019...**

at incoming enemy 'rockets.' Beijing contributed more than 1,600 troops along with tanks and strategic bombers. The exercise is aimed at improving the "comprehensive strategic partnership" with Russia, the Chinese contingent's commanding officer, Lieutenant General Liu Xiaowu, said during the opening ceremony.

New Delhi sent hundreds of soldiers to the drill, which takes place amid the renewed tensions between India and Pakistan over disputed Kashmir.

All of the exercise's objectives were completed and received "a positive reaction" from President Vladimir Putin, who visited troops in Russia's Orenburg Region bordering Kazakhstan, the Kremlin spokesperson said. (RT)

**(15) Ireland Says Brexit...**

people and say that we're not close to that deal right now. But there is an intent I think by all sides to try and find a landing zone that everybody can live with here."

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has repeatedly said he wants to strike an amended deal at an EU summit on Oct. 17-18 but that if that is not possible then he will lead the United Kingdom out without a deal.

Coveney said Johnson was serious about seeking a deal but that Dublin was still waiting for "serious proposals". But he cautioned against political spin.

"Everybody needs a dose of reality here, there is still quite a wide gap between what the British government have been talking about in terms of the solutions that they are proposing, and I think what Ireland and the EU will be able to support."

Britain said on Thursday it had shared documents with Brussels setting out ideas for a Brexit deal, but an EU diplomat described them as a "smokescreen" that would not prevent a disorderly exit on the Oct. 31 departure date.

Ireland is crucial to any Brexit solution. The 500 km (300 mile) land border between Ireland and the United Kingdom's province of Northern Ireland has always been the biggest stumbling block for an orderly Brexit.

The Withdrawal Agreement that former Prime Minister Theresa May struck in November with the EU says the United Kingdom will remain in a customs union "unless and until" alternative arrangements are found to avoid a hard border.

But many British lawmakers oppose the prospect of being bound to EU rules and customs duties that would prevent Britain doing its own trade deals and leave it overseen by EU judges. Johnson says the backstop is undemocrat-

ic and must be removed.

Coveney, Ireland's second most powerful politician, said a no-deal could lead to civil unrest and undermine the fragile peace secured by a 1998 U.S.-brokered agreement to end decades of sectarian and political conflict in Northern Ireland.

"Trade across 300 road crossings that has created a normality and a peace that is settled on the island of Ireland for the last 20 years, that now faces significant disruption," he said. "That is what we're fighting for here."

"Ireland is in no doubt as to what a no deal means for us," he said. "It is very damaging, very difficult and it poses huge questions for politics and potentially for the management of civic unrest in the context of Northern Ireland, around the border question."

Johnson also faces challenges on the home front. After three days of hearings which ended on Thursday, Britain's Supreme Court is due to rule early next week on whether he acted unlawfully when he suspended parliament for five weeks in the run-up to the departure date.

If the ruling goes against him, Johnson could be compelled to recall parliament ahead of schedule, giving the legislature additional time to challenge his plan to lead Britain out of the European Union on Oct. 31 with or without a divorce deal. (Reuters)

**(16) Meetings of...**

meetings at the invitation of President of the International Association of Judges Tony Pagono (Australia) and President of the European Association of Judges Jose Igreja Matos (Portugal). (Trend)

**(17) Leader of Zimbabwe ...**

also suggested a third party could be involved in the disappearance to taint the government's image.

Responding to the police allegation, and also Twitter posts alluding to the same accusations, Magombeyi said he had no answers.

"I need time to think about it, I don't know," he said. (VOA)

**(18) Uzbekistan Hosting...**

involved in the podium discussions. Members of the management of Bayat Group, Ghazanfar Group, Samruk-Energy, Sapphire Group and Kazakhstan Energy Exchange will share their views.

During the second day of the forum, regional startups and innovative business models in the energy sector will be considered, and representatives of the management of Power Ledger and Next Kraftwerke GmbH will deliver speeches on the topic.

Then the presentations of regional startups in the TedTalk format, the voting and an award ceremony of the authors of the best startups will be held.

Furthermore, the participants will discuss common regional methods and procedures for doing business. The representatives of various chambers of commerce and entrepreneurs will share their experience.

The CAREC program was created upon ADB's initiative in 2001. It is a partnership of 11 countries and development partners working together to promote development through cooperation, leading to accelerated economic growth and poverty reduction. The CAREC member-states are Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, China, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. (Trend)