

(1) Khalilzad to...

He added: "I am confident in Ambassador Khalilzad's ability to execute this mission, and we are grateful for his willingness to step back into public service. As we welcome him back to the Department, let us rededicate ourselves to achieving a durable peace in Afghanistan that will ensure security for the American people. This goal is realistic. We have a team in place to accomplish it."

Born in Mazar-i-Sharif, Khalilzad was the US ambassador to the United Nations under President George W. Bush and has been involved with US policymakers at the White House, State Department and Pentagon since the mid-1980s. (Pajhwok)

(2) Lanzer Warns...

a quarter million people have been fleeing their homes, "looking for any way to get by."

"Winter is on its way, and in Afghanistan, winter bites hard," he added. Of particular concern is the serious shortfall in funds for relief work, said Lanzer, urging the international donor community for immediate resources.

"I am here to ring alarm bells because if we do not engage more on the short-term emergency relief requirements, the development gains that we have achieved over the past years ... could be lost," he warned.

Earlier this month, the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mark Lowcock, and Filippo Grandi, the High Commissioner for Refugees, visited the country and called for an urgent increase as well as sustained support for the humanitarian response.

Lanzer said: "There has been an evolution in the views of the opposition on allowing girls to access education and we can say with some confidence today that there are about eight million children across Afghanistan, girls and boys, who are in school."

He also stated that Afghans desperately want peace and that there is a need for a solution in this respect.

"There is a hunger for peace, there is a hunger for security. People are yearning for things to stabilize and as I mentioned earlier, I do think that amongst political elite, there is a sense and I hope I am right. There is a sense, this has go on for long enough. We need to find a solution," he said.

On the topic of poppy production, Lanzer said: "We need to look at not only the supply side of this equation, but also the demand side."

He said "that is a very important issue for those who live in countries of Western Europe, of North America. I think the heroin epidemic that people have spoken about across parts of the North America, is certainly worth reflecting on. And looking how that could be tackled here, not only looking at the supply side on the ground in Afghanistan."

On Saturday, The United States Agency for international Development (USAID) said in a statement it had contributed approximately \$44 million to the UN World Food Program (WFP) to support the provision of critical food assistance to drought affected Afghans.

USAID is the largest donor to the WFP in Afghanistan and has contributed \$68.8 million to WFP to support emergency food operations since the start of the 2018 fiscal year.

WFP meanwhile is increasing its response interventions, initially reaching 441,000 people in the five worst-affected provinces, to no supporting 1.4 million people in 20 provinces. (Tolo news)

(3) IEC Close to Finalizing...

Hashemi said the IEC had agreed with a German company to provide the biometric system for elections. He said the company is a well-established company with many years of experience in supplying biometric systems around the world.

He said the biometric units would be installed at more than 5,000 polling centers across the country on election day.

Parliamentary elections have been scheduled for October 20.

Use Of 'Modern Technology' For Elections
President Ashraf Ghani in August

directed the Central Statistic Organization (CSO) to use "modern technology" to specify the exact number of voters who will cast their votes at polling stations on election day.

According to Ghani's decree, the CSO was ordered to cooperate with the Independent Election Commission (IEC), security agencies and other relevant institutions in determining the exact number of registered voters.

In the decree, the Ministry of Finance and the National Procurement Authority have been ordered to cooperate with the CSO and other departments in the allocation of budget and procurement for the technology.

Afghanistan's Central Civil Registration Authority (ACCRA) has said that they are ready to help the CSO determine the voter numbers.

The decree does not state details about whether a biometric system will be used to identify voters on election day.

Statistics by the Independent Election Commission show that over nine million voters have registered their names for the upcoming elections. (Tolo news)

(4) Iran Offers...

trade corridors via Iran's Chabahar port.

India committed up to \$500 million for the development of the Chabahar port, along with roads and rail lines. Earlier US Ambassador to Afghanistan John Bass had said Pakistan 'is considering resumption of India-Afghanistan trade via its territory'.

Pakistan had approached Afghanistan earlier this year and indicated its willingness to resume trade between Afghanistan and India through its land, Bass said.

On the other hand, the Indian firms are gradually increasing their investments in Afghanistan. The Indian government wants to use Chabahar as a means to expand bilateral trade and help improve Afghanistan's connectivity with South Asia.

Reports say that Chabahar Port, which is being developed with funded by India, is a golden gateway that will help in reaching out to landlocked Afghanistan and central Asia. Last year, New Delhi successfully sent shipments of wheat aid to Afghanistan through Chabahar Port, bypassing Pakistan.

Chabahar offers India connectivity to Afghanistan and Central Asia. Along with Bandar Abbas port, Iran also offers India a means of multimodal connectivity all the way to Europe.

Chabahar is located about 140km from Pakistan's Gwadar port, which is being developed with Chinese help as part of the 'Belt and Road Initiative'.

However, both Iran and Pakistan have agreed that Chabahar and Gwadar ports are complementary to each other. Iran and Pakistan have already decided to enhance their bilateral trade volume to \$5 billion in five years.

So these two ports, which are located a short distance from each other, can help connectivity from India and China to Central Asia and vice-versa. (IRNA)

(5) Drought-Hit...

individuals.

Governor Mahmood Baligh confirmed to Pajhwok Afghan News the drought had badly affected 10 districts of the province. Available food and water was not enough to meet the demand of the families.

Recently, a UN agency on humanitarian aid said 70 percent of Afghanistan had been struck by drought.

President Ashraf Ghani, in speech to youth on Friday, said the issue of water management was vital for Afghanistan. He urged national consensus on the vital question. (Pajhwok)

(6) MPs Seek End to...

claimed the majority of acting ministries were more engaged in their personal affairs because they considered themselves unaccountable and they disregard the people and their representatives in the National Assembly. Ghulam Farooq Majroh, a lawmaker from western Herat province, also demanded an end to the acting rule and demanded ministers-designates be sent to the house for trust vote.

Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahim also stressed the need for an end to acting capacity and asked the government to introduce ministers-designates to the house.

Without going into details, he said two ministers-designate and two members of the Supreme High Council Court had been introduced through a formal letter. (Pajhwok)

(7) Politicians See...

indication of official talks between the Afghan government and Taliban and that the fate of Afghan peace process remains uncertain.

Now the question that rises is that why peace has not come to Afghanistan and the ground has not been paved for Afghan government and Taliban talks despite these efforts?

"Taliban do not exactly say that they want an Islamic emirate, but their movements, strategy and feelings show they want to reestablish their Islamic emirate," said Qazi Amin Wedaq, member of the High Peace Council.

Meanwhile, Amrullah Saleh, former head of the National Directorate of Security, and Salahuddin Rabbani, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, said the Afghan government has not adopted a clear policy for peace.

"We have been distanced from peace because the wrong politics of the government legitimized the enemy," said Saleh.

"Peace is not possible unless the roots of the war are not eliminated in Afghanistan's borders," said Rabbani.

The European Union Ambassador to Afghanistan Pierre Mayaudon however said there is still a hope for peace and ending violence in the country through talks.

"If we consider the recent developments, we find some reasons for hope," said Mayaudon.

"The main obstacle on the way of peace process is the Afghan government. Because from the government point of view, Taliban are not allowed to attend in international meetings," said Nazar Mohammad Tanin, political affairs analyst.

Meanwhile, an Afghan delegation is in Russia to address the details related to holding the Moscow format meeting on Afghanistan.

Some Kabul residents said Afghans are tired of war and that there is a consensus among them on peace. (Tolo news)

(8) Measures to Control...

said measures for reducing drought in the country would be implemented in the next six months.

On the other hand, Ghani said a good opportunity for ending the four-decades-old Afghan conflict was available and those questioning the upcoming elections were actually questioning the future of the Afghan future generations. (Pajhwok)

(9) Afghan Orchestra...

Zohra is the name of a music goddess in Persian literature, he explained.

The musicologist spoke to VOA while visiting neighboring Pakistan earlier this month with the young ensemble to perform in Islamabad as part of celebrations marking the 99th anniversary of Afghanistan's Independence Day. Kabul's embassy in Islamabad organized and arranged for the orchestra's first visit to Pakistan.

Despite the many challenges in Afghanistan, Sarmast said, student enrollment has consistently grown and more parents are bringing their children to the institute to study music. Around 300 students are studying not only music at the institute but other subjects, including the Quran, he said.

Advances for women

Negin Kholwakh, the orchestra's first woman conductor, says Afghanistan has made significant advances in terms of promoting women's rights in the past 17 years. She says there is a need to sustain the momentum irrespective of rising violence.

"We need to stand up to protect those gains and we need to open the doors for other Afghan girls," Kholwakh said when asked whether deadly attacks around the country are reversing the gains women have made.

But violence alone is not the only challenge for women and girls, espe-

cially those who want to study music, she said.

Ethnic groups help each other

Sarmast says that girls and boys in the orchestra come from different Afghan ethnic groups and they help each other when needed.

"It's hope for the future," he said.

Ethnic rivalries have been a hallmark of hostilities in Afghanistan and continue to pose a challenge to efforts promoting peace and stability.

"I strongly believe without arts and culture there cannot be security and we are using the soft power of music to make a small contribution to bringing peace and stability in Afghanistan and at the same time using this beautiful, if I can call it a beautiful weapon, to transform our community," the director said.

Some of the members of the Afghan orchestra were born and brought up in refugee camps in Pakistan, which still hosts around 3 million registered and unregistered Afghan families displaced by years of war, poverty, persecution and drought.

"We are using the healing power of music to look after the wounds of the Afghan people as well as the Pakistani people. We are here with the message of peace, brotherhood and freedom," Sarmast said.

Afghanistan and Pakistan have experienced years of terrorist attacks, including massive casualties on both sides of their long shared border. Bilateral relations are marred by mistrust and suspicion.

The countries blame each other for supporting terrorist attacks. Afghans allege that sanctuaries in Pakistan have enabled Taliban insurgents to sustain and expand their violent acts inside Afghanistan. Pakistan rejects the charges.

The Islamist insurgency controls or is attempting to control nearly half of Afghanistan. (VoA)

(10) 'Assets Registration...

registration, publication and verification.

"ARVO expresses its satisfaction for the government leadership support, and hoped that all politicians support this process," Esar added.

Meanwhile, Anti-Corruption Secretariat, who is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy, says that they report about their performances every six months.

"The registration of assets of government officials and employees was part of the government's commitment to the people and international community" said Yama Torabi, Director of Anti-Corruption Secretariat. Asset Registration and Verification Office urges the People, Civil Society Institutions, Ulama Council, and other institutions to visit ARVO website, and read the published assets of government officials, and share their relevant information through. (Pajhwok)

"The registration of assets of government officials and employees was part of the government's commitment to the people and international community" said Yama Torabi, Director of Anti-Corruption Secretariat. Asset Registration and Verification Office urges the People, Civil Society Institutions, Ulama Council, and other institutions to visit ARVO website, and read the published assets of government officials, and share their relevant information through. (Pajhwok)

(11) Armed Forces...

The statement by ARG Palace also added that the military and civilian officials were instructed to take necessary measures to resolve the issues and to respond to the recommendations of the provincial officials. (KP)

(12) ICC Fines Afghan...

a batsman upon his/her dismissal during an International Match."

While Hasan and Rashid have received demerit points for the first time, it is the second occasion that Asghar has been handed a demerit point within a 24-month period. In February 2017, Asghar received a reprimand and one demerit point for showing dissent against an umpire's decision in an ODI against Zimbabwe. As such, he now has two demerit points.

The incident involving Hasan happened in the 33rd over of Afghanistan's innings when he threatened to throw the ball towards striker Hashmatullah Shahidi after fielding off his own bowling.

As regards the incident involving Asghar, the Afghanistan captain brushed his shoulder with the bowler Hasan in the 37th over as he passed him while taking a run.

Rashid was charged and fined for giving a sendoff to Asif Ali in the 47th

over of Pakistan's innings by holding up a finger and staring at the batsman, an action that could have provoked an aggressive reaction from the departing batsman.

After the match, all the three players pleaded guilty to the offences and accepted the sanctions proposed by Andy Pycroft of the Emirates Elite Panel of ICC Match Referees and, as such, there was no need for a formal hearing.

The charges were levelled by on-field umpires Anil Chaudhary and Shaun George, third umpire Rod Tucker and fourth umpire Anis-ur-Rahman.

Level 1 breaches carry a minimum penalty of an official reprimand, a maximum penalty of 50 percent of a player's match fee, and one or two demerit points. (Tolo news)

(13) Nangarhar...

The protestors had shut down the IEC office in Nangarhar last week, but police reopened it and detained 15 demonstrators.

The IEC maintains it is people's right to protest but closing their offices created problems for elections. (Pajhwok)

(14) Pyongyang Joint...

C: The two sides agreed to actively promote south-north environment cooperation so as to protect and restore the natural ecology, and as a first step to endeavor to achieve substantial results in the currently on-going forestry cooperation.

D: The two sides agreed to strengthen cooperation in the areas of prevention of epidemics, public health and medical care, including emergency measures to prevent the entry and spread of contagious diseases.

3. The two sides agreed to strengthen humanitarian cooperation to fundamentally resolve the issue of separated families.

A: The two sides agreed to open a permanent facility for family reunion meetings in the Mt. Geumgang area at an early date, and to promptly restore the facility toward this end.

B: The two sides agreed to resolve the issue of video meetings and exchange of video messages among the separated families as a matter of priority through the inter-Korean Red Cross talks.

4. The two sides agreed to actively promote exchanges and cooperation in various fields so as to enhance the atmosphere of reconciliation and unity and to demonstrate the spirit of the Korean nation both internally and externally.

A: The two sides agreed to further promote cultural and artistic exchanges, and to first conduct a performance of the Pyeongyang Art Troupe in Seoul in October this year.

B: The two sides agreed to actively participate together in the 2020 Summer Olympic Games and other international games, and to cooperate in bidding for the joint hosting of the 2032 Summer Olympic Games.

C: The two sides agreed to hold meaningful events to celebrate the 11th anniversary of the October 4 Declaration, to jointly commemorate the 100th anniversary of the March First Independence Movement Day, and to hold working-level consultations toward this end.

5. The two sides shared the view that the Korean Peninsula must be turned into a land of peace free from nuclear weapons and nuclear threats, and that substantial progress toward this end must be made in a prompt manner.

A: First, the North will permanently dismantle the Dongchang-ri missile engine test site and launch platform under the observation of experts from relevant countries.

B: The North expressed its willingness to continue to take additional measures, such as the permanent dismantlement of the nuclear facilities in Yeongbyeon, as the United States takes corresponding measures in accordance with the spirit of the June 12 US-DPRK Joint Statement.

C: The two sides agreed to cooperate closely in the process of pursuing complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

6. Chairman Kim Jong Un agreed to visit Seoul at an early date at the invitation of President Moon Jae-in.