

(1) Ghani to...

against the appointment of candidates with close ties abroad. "People said not to vote for those whose wives live in America, whether they are minister, director or MP," Kunduz MP Abdul Wudud Paiman said on Saturday. "You MPs voted and raised your cards, now you are going against the resolution," he added, referring to emerging opposition to a resolution passed last week banning dual citizen nominees.

In addition to issues surrounding citizenship, some MPs have accused nominees of submitting forged educational documents. "In regard to education documents, the nominee for the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriates does not have a high school diploma, but the Ministry of Higher Education has confirmed the educational documents against the law," MP Jafar Mahawi said, referring to Sayed Hussain Alemi Balkhi, a nominee proposed by Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah.

With over four months gone by since the national unity government first said it would have its new cabinet formed, the House Administrative Committee has said that it expects MPs to hold a vote of confidence on Tuesday or Wednesday of the coming week. (Tolnews)

(2) Steps Needed ...

will leave no stone unturned in tackling the problems being faced by the vital economic sector," promised Rahim, who is the son of Haider Mohammad. He was born in 1978 in Tirinkot, the capital of Uruzgan province. He has received his master's degrees in political science and political geography from Tehran University.

Earlier, he served as lecturer in a number of universities. Rahimi has also been advisor to the Ministry of Urban Development and cultural advisor to the Wolesi Jirga. (Pajhwok)

(3) Road to Economic ...

regret voting for me," remarked Oghli, who promised bringing professionalism to the ministry and hiring qualified people. "I will fight against corruption to improve the economy." Sardar Mohammad Rahman Oghli is a son of Rahman Bai and was born in Faryab province. He has a degree from Kabul's Polytechnic University and has got higher education from Ukraine. (Pajhwok)

(4) NATO Envoy...

serve our full support. I congratulate the government on its ability to present ministerial nominations under difficult circumstances."

The SCR believed the ongoing process of parliamentary confirmations would be completed soon. The lower house is expected to initiate vote of confidence proceedings tomorrow.

About the Afghan security forces, Aramaz observed they had done well during last year's elections by providing a safe environment for millions of voters. "They have now assumed full responsibility for Afghanistan's security, and are a competent and professional force which is making great progress on a daily basis."

Asked about reports that First Vice-President Abdul Rashid Dostum is demanding military powers and proposing the creation of a militia to fight the insurgency, Aramaz said "every country needs a truly national army. It should represent the integrity of the entire country and be unified; there should be no militias outside the chain of command. President Ghani is Commander-in-Chief of the army; everyone has to respect the President's will. When asked if this included Vice-President Dostum, Aramaz said, "yes".

Ambassador Aramaz, a distinguished career diplomat, has been Turkey's ambassador to Afghanistan and political advisor to the ISAF commander from 2002 to 2003. (Pajhwok)

(5) Interpol ...

questioned many times for the ban

to be lifted so that he could return to Estonia to clear his name. Despite a 2004 court ruling that exonerated him, police did not allow the cabinet nominee entry. Estonia's Interpol also did not provide satisfactory answers to letters from Afghan counterparts.

Yaqub Haidari claimed the Estonian government had frozen his assets worth millions of dollars, a clear violation of his rights, the statement added. (Pajhwok)

(6) Higher Edu...

plans would be building hostels and research centres in several universities. She would also create another department in the ministry for overseeing academic activities of private universities.

She is a daughter of Abdul Hamid Khan and was born in 1977 in Kandahar province. She has a bachelor degree from the American University of Afghanistan and a master's in management and governance from the US. (Pajhwok)

(7) Balkhi to...

travel to Pakistan soon to resolve the current problems being faced by the Afghans living there. (Pajhwok)

(8) Ex-Governor...

district chief, Abdul Khaliq. Dad said he was appointed seven months back by Hamid Karzai and Independent on the recommendation of the Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG). But he has been unable to date to take full control of his office.

"When I took my documents to former governor Mohammad Omar Sherzad for final confirmation, he told me I should take his advice before assuming office."

As a result, the district chief complained, he could not assume charge so far. The double whammy is that he is not being paid his salary in full.

IDLG also sent Khuda Dad's appointment letter on June 28, 2014 to the governor's house and a copy of it has been made available to Pajhwok Afghan News. The letter says: "Based on IDLG's suggestion, Khuda Dad -- son of Mohammad Sharif -- has replaced Abdul Khaliq -- son of Janan -- as acting district chief for Khak-I-Safid..."

It adds the IDLG and Independent Commission of Administrative Reforms are responsible for processing the appointment of eligible candidates within three months.

Khuda Dad alleged the former governor was trying to prevent him from taking office. "I am being forced to look after the governor's house correspondence in the district."

When he shared the issue with IDLG, it sent letters to the governor, who was asked to let the appointee start his duty. "But the governor did not pay any attention to the directives," he claimed.

Khuda Dad insisted his appointment was based on the suggestion of local residents because he could better address their problems.

Sherzad, who was accused of embezzlement and causing a huge loss to the government exchequer, was sacked by the president on January 18. Pajhwok tried to contact him, but failed to do so. (Pajhwok)

(9) Thousands on...

garhar, Paktika, Ghazni and Logar provinces also protested the act of disrespect to Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) by Charlie Hebdo.

Demonstrators in these provinces demanded Afghan government to cut relationship with France and close its embassy in Kabul.

Demonstrators blamed the government of France for negligence after Charlie Hebdo announced in advance that they are going to publish caricature of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) but did not take any action to stop them. Charlie Hebdo this month again published caricature of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) in a very sensitive time. (FNA)

(10) Drug Commerce ...

of land in Helmand province, where the government could eradicate only 700 acres of the illicit plant. (Pajhwok)

(11) Closing Gap...

also help counter malicious propaganda of insurgents. Sediq Siddiqui, the Ministry of Interior spokesman, said the radio would air programmes in Dari and Pashto languages from 7:30am to 4pm.

Initially, the radio will cover Kabul and its surroundings, airing news and educational programmes. The project cost 3 million afs. (Pajhwok)

(12) Dozens of ...

District chief Amanuddin Qurashi, told Pajhwok Afghan News the clearing operation began four days ago, when the fighters tried to storm the ALP training academy in Tashguzar locality. Meanwhile, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid claimed killing 30 security officials and conquering four check-posts in the area. However, he said nothing about the offensive.

Residents of Imam Sahib welcomed the clearing operation and demanded durable security in their area. Firoz, a dweller, said the operation was purely against militants and civilians were not hurt.

Officials promised more security check-post would be step up in dangerous areas to make sure the safety of civilians. (Pajhwok)

(13) University Entry...

choice."

But the chancellor made it clear that all illegal ways for passing the test had been blocked. He said irresponsible people would not be allowed to interfere in the exams. (Pajhwok)

(14) Violence...

judicial authorities to ensure swift resolution of cases involving women," said the official. (Pajhwok)

(15) Over 2.5 ...

seized from a mini-bus in Salang Shamali area on Baghlan-Kabul highway.

The statement added that the driver of the bus was also arrested. (Pajhwok)

(16) Military ...

Andrew Richard Hough RAN to receive commendation for distinguished service for leadership and courage in planning counter piracy and narcotic operations.

* Major S to receive the bar to the Distinguished Service Medal for disrupting an insurgency through his superior tactical acumen. (Agencies)

(17) Residents...

war-torn country. But the Taliban rejected the UN report as unilateral and biased. (Pajhwok)

(18) Obama ...

a solid partnership between the world's two largest democracies.

"We have to convert a good start into lasting progress. This requires translating our vision into sustained action and concrete achievements," he said, standing next to Obama.

Earlier, the two leaders walked and talked together in an elegant garden and sat outside over tea. Modi, who sold tea on a railway platform as a child, poured a cup for Obama.

On Monday, Obama will be the first U.S. president to attend India's Republic Day parade, an annual show of military might long associated with the anti-Americanism of the Cold War, and will host a radio show with Modi.

His presence at the parade at Modi's personal invitation is the latest revival in a roller-coaster relationship between the two largest democracies that just a year ago was in tatters. (Reuters)

Obama Reveals Nuclear Breakthrough on Landmark India Trip

NEW DELHI - In a glow of bonhomie, U.S. President Barack Obama and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled plans to unlock billions of dollars in nuclear trade and to deepen defense ties, steps they hope will establish an enduring

strategic partnership.

The two countries reached an understanding on two issues that, despite a groundbreaking 2006 agreement, had stopped U.S. companies from setting up reactors in India and had become one of the major irritants in bilateral relations.

"We are committed to moving towards full implementation," Obama told a joint news conference with Modi. "This is an important step that shows how we can work together to elevate our relationship."

The new deal resolved differences over the liability of suppliers to India in the event of a nuclear accident and U.S. demands on tracking the whereabouts of material supplied to the country, U.S. ambassador to India Richard Verma told reporters.

"Ultimately it's up to the companies to go forward, but the two governments came to an understanding," he added.

Signaling warmth and determination to take ties to a higher level, Modi broke with protocol to meet and bear-hug Obama as he landed in New Delhi, then referred to him as Barack. It was a remarkable spectacle, given that a year ago Modi was persona non grata in Washington and was denied a visa to the United States.

Between a working lunch that included kebabs made with lotus stem, figs and spices and an evening banquet where Obama spoke a smattering of Hindi, the two leaders got down to talks.

They emerged with a 10-year framework for defense ties and deals on cooperation that included the joint production of drone aircraft and equipment for Lockheed Martin Corp's C-130 military transport plane.

Other deals ranged from an Obama-Modi hotline -- India's first at a leadership level -- to financing initiatives aimed at helping India use renewable energy to lower carbon intensity.

But Modi cautioned that work was still needed to create a solid partnership between the world's two largest democracies.

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Up to 40,000 security personnel have been deployed for the visit and 15,000 new closed-circuit surveillance cameras have been installed in the capital, according to media reports.

NEW VITALITY

The United States views India as a vast market and potential counterweight in Asia to a more assertive China, but has frequently been frustrated with the slow pace of New Delhi's economic reforms and unwillingness to side with Washington in international affairs.

Elected last May, Modi has injected a new vitality into the economy and foreign relations and, to Washington's delight, has begun pushing back against China across Asia.

In a veiled reference to China, the leaders reiterated the "importance of safeguarding maritime security and ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight throughout the region, especially in the South China Sea".

They also called for the peaceful resolution of territorial conflicts. Obama will depart slightly early from India to travel to Saudi Arabia following the death of King Abdullah, skipping a planned visit to the Taj Mahal. Like Obama, Modi rose from modest origins to break into a political elite dominated by powerful families. Aides say the two men bonded in Washington in September when Obama took Modi to the memorial of Martin

Luther King, whose rights struggle was inspired by India's Mahatma Gandhi.

On Sunday, the two leaders talked outside over tea in an elegant garden. Modi, who sold tea on a railway platform as a child, poured a cup for Obama.

The "chemistry" they describe is striking because Modi's politics is considerably to the right of Obama's and because he was banned from visiting the United States for nearly a decade after deadly Hindu-Muslim riots in a state he governed.

Obama, the first sitting U.S. president to visit India twice, also enjoyed a close friendship with Modi's predecessor Manmohan Singh, who staked his premiership on the controversial nuclear deal that made India the sixth "legitimate" atomic power and marked a high point in Indo-U.S. relations.

The deal failed to deliver on a promise of business for U.S. companies because of India's reluctance to shield suppliers from liability, a deviation from international norms that reflects the memory of the Bhopal industrial disaster. (Reuters)

At Least 15 Killed in Protests on Anniversary of Egypt Uprising

CAIRO - At least 15 people were killed in anti-government protests in Egypt on Sunday, the anniversary of the 2011 uprising that toppled autocrat Hosni Mubarak, security sources said. In the bloodiest day of protests since Abdel Fattah al-Sisi was elected president in June, security forces and plain clothed police fired at protesters, witnesses said.

The anniversary is a test of whether Islamists and liberal activists have the resolve to challenge a government that has stamped out dissent since the then-army chief Sisi ousted elected Islamist president Mohamed Mursi in July 2013 after mass protests against his rule.

After nightfall, gunfire and sirens could be heard in central Cairo as armored personnel carriers moved through the city center. Protesters set fire to a government building on a street near the Pyramids, state media said.

Dozens of protesters were killed during last year's anniversary. Again this year, security forces fanned out across the capital and other cities.

The heaviest death toll was in the Cairo suburb of Matariya, a Muslim Brotherhood stronghold. Special forces fired pistols and rifles at protesters, a Reuters witness said. Eight people, including one policeman, were killed, according to the health ministry.

People in Matariya chanted "down with military rule" and "a revolution all over again". Demonstrators threw Molotov cocktails at security forces and fires raged.

Riot police backed by soldiers in armored vehicles sealed off roads, including those leading to Cairo's Tahrir Square, the symbolic heart of the 2011 revolt. In downtown Cairo, riot police with rifles and plain clothed men with pistols chased protesters through the streets.

Six people were killed in separate protests in Alexandria, Egypt's second biggest city, Giza governorate outside of Cairo and the Nile Delta province of Baheira, security sources said.

A bomb wounded two policemen stationed outside a Cairo sports club, the sources said.

Signs of discontent built up as the anniversary of the revolt against Mubarak approached, and a liberal woman activist, Shaimaa Sabbagh, was killed at a protest on Saturday.

About 1,000 people marched in her funeral procession on Sunday. The Health Ministry said she had been shot in the face and back and Interior Ministry spokesman Hany Abdel Latif said an investigation into her death had begun, adding: "No one is above the law." "Shaima was killed in cold blood," Medhat al-Zahid, vice president of the Socialist Popular Alliance party that Sabbagh belonged to, told a news confer-

ence.

CRAVING STABILITY

Sisi's crackdown has neutralized the Brotherhood but failed to end an Islamist insurgency in the Sinai Peninsula near the Israeli border.

A curfew imposed in north Sinai was extended for three months, authorities said. Islamist militants based in the Sinai have killed hundreds of police and soldiers since Mursi's removal. They have pledged support for Islamic State, the ultra-hardline group that seized parts of Iraq and Syria.

After four years of political and economic turmoil following Mubarak's fall, many Egyptians have overlooked allegations of widespread human rights abuses and praised Sisi for restoring a measure of stability.

Sisi, who served as military intelligence chief under Mubarak, has also taken bold steps to repair the economy, such as cutting costly fuel subsidies.

But his critics accuse him of restoring authoritarian rule and repealing freedoms won in the uprising that ended three decades of iron-fisted rule under Mubarak.

"The situation is the same as it was four years ago and it is getting worse. The regime did not fall yet," said engineer Alaa Lasheen, 34, protesting near Tahrir Square.

In a televised address on Saturday, Sisi praised the desire for change that Egyptians showed four years ago but said it would take patience to achieve all of "the revolution's goals".

Sheikh Youssef al-Qaradawi, an Egyptian-born cleric based in Qatar who supports the Brotherhood, called for protests on Sunday and said Mursi was Egypt's legitimate leader. Qaradawi's outspoken support for the Islamist movement has fueled a diplomatic rift between Qatar and its Gulf Arab allies which, like Cairo, consider the group a security threat. (Reuters)

Iran's Foreign Minister Summoned to Parliament over Walk with Kerry

DUBAI - Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif is to appear before parliament following controversy over a promenade with his American counterpart during intense nuclear negotiations in Geneva, state media reported on Sunday.

Zarif, who leads Tehran's talks with "P5+1" - the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China - had a 15-minute walk down Geneva sidewalks with U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry during discussions on Jan. 14 aimed at reaching a settlement of the 12-year nuclear dispute between Iran and the West.

Media images of the top diplomats from old adversaries strolling together in a foreign land provoked an outcry among Iranian hard-liners deeply wary of rapprochement with the "Great Satan".

On Friday, conservative-leaning prayer leaders heaped scorn on Zarif and President Hassan Rouhani for the "diplomatic slip-up" and newspapers said 21 members of parliament had signed a petition to call in the moderate minister to provide an explanation. "Given the Great Satan's endless demands and sabotage during the course of the nuclear negotiations, there is no conceivable ground for intimacy between the foreign ministers of Iran and America," said the petition published in hard-line Fars News. "Your exhibitionist walk together with (Kerry) along Geneva sidewalks was certainly outside the norms of diplomacy, so why don't you put a stop to such behavior?"

The row over the diplomatic stroll is the latest in a series of summons since Zarif took charge of the nuclear file in late 2013. Tehran and Washington broke diplomatic ties after Iran's 1979 Islamist revolution, establishing tentative direct contact on specific cases such as the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and more recently as part of the nuclear talks between Iran and "P5+1," under way since after President Rouhani's 2013 election. (Reuters)