Parliamentary, Provincial Polls in Ghazni Next Year

KABUL – Long-delayed parliamentary and provincial council elections in southern Ghazni province would be held in October 2021, the poll panel chief said on Saturday.

The elections in Ghazni, a province where the Taliban control several districts, had to be postponed in 2018 for security reasons and other issues.

Addressing a news conference in Kabul on Saturday, the Independent Election Commission spokesperson said the problems that led to the delay would be addressed.

Hana Alam Nuristani said the election was estimated to cost $19 million. The provincial council polls, costing $8 million, would also be conducted in 2021, she promised. (Pajhwok)

Request for Bids
Goods
(One-Envelope Bidding Process)

Publish Date: 20 Dec, 2020
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Ministry of Finance
Fiscal Performance Improvement Support System (FSP)
Project ID: P119655
Grant No: D2630-AF

Procurement of IT Equipment for ARD and Insurance
AF-MOF-FSP-185739-GO-RFB ARD

The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Fiscal Performance Improvement Support System (FSP), and intends to apply part of the proceeds towards payment under the contract “Procurement of IT Equipment for ARD and Insurance.”

Ref No: AF-MOF-FSP-185739-GO-RFB ARD

1. The Ministry of Finance now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for “Procurement of IT Equipment for ARD and Insurance”.

2. Bidding will be conducted through International approach using a Request for Bids (RFB) as specified in the World Bank’s “Procurement Regulations for IFP Borrowers” July 2016 edition (“Procurement Regulations”), and is open to all eligible Bidders as defined in the Procurement Regulations.

Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from Ministry of Finance Procurement Directorate, Mr. Nasser Waheed, nasser.waheed@mof.gov.af and inspect the bidding document during office hours 8:00 to 16:00 hours at the address given below.

3. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 01/ Feb/2021 at 10:00 AM Kabul Time. Electronic Bidding will not be permitted. Late Bids will be rejected. Bids will be publicly opened in the presence of the Bidders designated representatives and anyone who chooses to attend the address below on 01/ Feb/2021 at 10:00 AM Kabul Time and the pre-bid meeting will be held on 17 Jan 2021 at 10:00 AM at FSP Procurement Office in Ministry of Finance.

4. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security of: USD 10,000 (Ten Thousand US Dollar)

5. Financial Capability: The Bidder shall furnish documentary evidence that it meets the following financial requirement(s):

7. The Bidder shall furnish documentary evidence in any year of the last five years, that reflects its Verifiable Annual Turnover with the minimum value of USD 450,000 (Four Hundred and Fifty Thousand US Dollar) including the following experience requirement(s):

• Chartered Accountant/Auditor’s Certificate, Audit Report, Balance sheet shall be submitted

• Statement/ Liquid Asset: Not Applicable

• Experience: The Bidder shall furnish documentary evidence to demonstrate that it has executed and meets the following experience requirement(s):

• The Bidder should provide proven experience for a minimum of at least one verifiable prime contract of equal to USD 360,000 (Three Hundred and Sixty Thousand US Dollar) having executed during any of the last five years of similar nature indicating the duration, value of the performance.

For Joint Venture of consortium, the lead member shall meet at least 60% of that required, and each member shall meet at least 40% of the requirements, in which all partners combined must meet with 100% of the requirement.

8. A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be obtained by interested bidders on the submission of a written Application to the address below: 2nd Floor, Procurement Directorate, Ministry of Finance, Pashtoonistan Watt, Kabul, Afghanistan.

The address (es) referred to above is (are):

Procurement Directorates of Ministry of Finance
Contact Name: Mr. Nasser Waheed, Procurement Officer
Address: Procurement Unit, Second Floor, DM Admin Building, Ministry of Finance, Pashtoonistan Watt, Kabul, Afghanistan
Telephone Number: 0202242431
Email Address: nasser.waheed@mof.gov.af
Website: www.mof.gov.af

Zalmal “Hasin”
Acting Procurement Director
Ministry of Finance

KABUL – At least 450 civilians have been killed and 1,049 wounded in Taliban attacks during the past three months, said the Ministry of Interior on Saturday.

The ministry in a statement said the Taliban carried out 35 suicide attacks and 507 bomb blasts during the period.

The ministry said the period, lasting 90 days, had witnessed 177 house attacks and 306 assassinations.

Afghanistan is scheduled to hold its next parliamentary elections on July 8.

The Taliban have not yet commented about the Ministry claims, but their spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, claimed in a statement that the Taliban had executed and wounded 35 civilians in three attacks in the past week. (TNN)

Afghan Female Health Workers Nominated in ‘Top 100 Midwives and Nurses Leader’ Program

KABUL – The World Health Organization (WHO) has designated 2020 as the “International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife,” in honor of the 200th anniversary of Florence Nightingale’s birth. Nightingale was a visionary nurse and leader.

International Year of the Nurse and Midwife organization (WONM) and Women in Global Health (WGH) nominated 100 outstanding nurse and midwife leaders across the world. These nominees were selected using a Request for Bids (RFB)

KABUL – Afghanistan has been nominated for the Afghan Female Health Workers Award, which is being selected by a monitoring committee with representatives from Women in WGH and partner organizations such as WHO, UNFPA, International Confederation of Midwives, and Nursing Now.

WONM in their website said, “amidst global pandemic, the courageous work of nurses and midwives deserves, more than ever to be honored, not just by applause” but to call on countries to invest in decent work and the social contract for nurses and midwives as part of their commitment to health.

The selection process included +300 nominees and +300 final nominees were selected to be featured. Fortunately, 4 Afghan female health workers are also among the nominees. (TNN)

Taliban Attacks Kill 487 Civilians in 3 Months: Mol

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Leo (July 21-Aug. 21)

Dec 20, 2020 - Your freedom is more important than your family or friends today. You will need to stand up for your standards and do things in your own time. How do you really want to live your life? Are you restricted by the norms that control you? Do you need to take control of your life? You might feel some of the answers today.

Cancer (June 21-July 20)

Dec 21, 2020 - You are too gung ho to give proper help and you help them direction in their work. You will need to ask for more help. You need to ask for some help. Today is a good day for your future making plans.

Virgo (Aug. 22-Sep. 22)

Dec 22, 2020 - Your freedom is more important than your family or friends today. You will need to stand up for your standards and do things in your own time. How do you really want to live your life? Are you restricted by the norms that control you? Do you need to take control of your life? You might feel some of the answers today.

Sagittarius (Nov.23-Dec.21)

Dec 23, 2020 - Sagittarians, you feel secure in the warmth of the depths of your emotions. Today, you will focus on the opportunities that are available to you. Take advantage of the energies at play to deepen your relationships with the people around you. You will find it easy to know them better. Your powers of seduction will strengthen as a result.

Capricorn (Dec.21-Jan19)

Dec 24, 2020 - The atmosphere may be a bit oppressive today. Capricorns, you may find it difficult to do what you want. You will need to be more assertive to help you to get your way. Today you may find yourself in the middle of negotiations between two people with opposing views. Help your partners to open their eyes to each other’s point of view.

Aquarius (Jan.20-Feb.18)

Dec 25, 2020 - You may feel a bit tided down today. It won’t necessarily be a good day for you to set off on your own journey. You will need to keep a close eye on your fund balance. You may need to get your hands on a loan and you may need to get some help from above to make your plans work. Today you need to be more serious and you need to think about getting it right.
Violence Likely to Push Talks to Stalemate

Taliban's refusal to reduce violence and the escalated military conflict, which inflamed heavy casualties on Afghan civil society, has been serious concerns for the public. All segments of society and global stakeholders urge reduction in violence, which is one of the conditions in the agreement signed by the United States and the Taliban in late February 2020. Recently, as the government and the Taliban negotiations are taking a break, all calls are for reduction in violence, leading to a nationwide ceasefire. But “the Taliban use violence as leverage,” said the US Army Gen. Mark A. Milley, who held an unannounced meeting with the Taliban negotiators in Doha, Qatar. Calling for reduction in violence, the military chief said “they are using the ground are now starting to do things that are not conducive to peace talks to solely achieve results.”

Meanwhile, Deborah Lyons, UN Secretary-General’s Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, said that she expects “violence will be at a top priority when the peace talks resume,” and called on all countries to put pressure on warring sides that reduction in violence to the top priority at the upcoming talks. With the start of the talks between the Donald Trump administration and the Taliban, the people of Afghanistan for peace on multiple occasions and urged the Taliban to shed their blood. However, the Taliban have so far held out against the public call and continue spilling the blood of soldiers and civilians despite the agreement signed with Washington and sitting around the talks with the government’s interlocutors. In the upcoming round of talks, if the Taliban do not agree over reduction in violence, talks are likely to reach deadlock and Afghans will lose their trust and hope in the peace process.

It is important to note that killing civilians as a bargaining chip will only lead to escalation of violence, which will only reduce the Taliban are viewed as a national pariah since they are largely viewed as non-coercive in terms of keeping people, women, and children. The Taliban minimize their acts of killings and may threaten or kill civilians and members of civil society in the conflict don’t make this the time for donors to reduce funding for Afghanistan. 

In reduction violence and nationwide ceasefire will be the top priority for the government’s negotiating team in the upcoming round of talks, as head of High Council for National Reconciliation Abdullah Abdullah also maintained. "If the Taliban express public submission to reduction in violence, there will be two possibilities. First, the talks will resume with the Taliban in a position that leave the Taliban with two options: either stoppage of talks on the grounds of demands or the issue of prisoners. But if the US and its international allies will press the Taliban to agree on reduction in violence. If talks fail, stalemate, Afghan state and nation expect regional and global stakeholders to break it and persuade the Taliban to reduce violence. In short, some regional actors, including Pakistan, also invite the Taliban government negotiations. The United States and its international allies believe the Taliban should show goodwill for peace through stopping violence and showing them that the Taliban will leave the country with two options: either stoppage of talks on the grounds of demands or the issue of prisoners.

Concerns About Human Rights Violations in Afghanistan

By: Sajjad Aasi

I n the Geneva Conference on Afghanistan last month, the eradication of corruption and the safeguarding of human rights were two essential guarantees which the international community sought before confirming the peace agreement. Unfortunately, the Taliban government has so far failed to maintain any success in the country.

though on many occasions, the governments in Afghanistan have promised to reduce violence and end violence, but in the majority of cases, the Taliban have not been able to do so. Many people feel that violence so as to reach some sort of agreement will only lead to violence in the country, and that the Taliban government has failed to protect the rights of Afghan civilians properly. The Human Rights Watch (HRW) also emphasized that reduction in violence is a key to the success of the peace process in the country. The HRW in its key report on the situation of violence and human rights in Afghanistan for 2019, have emphasized that the Taliban government has failed to protect the rights of Afghan civilians properly.

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As 20% of men work as nurses globally, the organization also calls on governments to pay nurses and midwives fairly. (Khaama Press)

According to YONM As 28% are global-

exchange of sports commentators, "as well as pay in line with other orga-
nizations that call on paying nurses and midwives fairly. (Khaama Press)

The aim of this program is to call on

the Taliban to hold the second round of

negotiations with the Afghan government. (Khaama Press)

This comes as Deborah Lyons, UN Sec-
ter Secretary-General's call, for a compre-

hensive ceasefire. (17) EU Parliament…

According to Al-Jazeera, a spokesman for

the Taliban, he said no such case was registered

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India’s virus cases cross 10 million as new infections dip

irus cases in India have crossed 10 million with new infections dipping to their lowest levels in three months, according to government figures, raising hope that the country is on the cusp of a turning point in its battle against the pandemic.

Additional cases in the past 24 hours dropped to 25,139, the lowest since August 31, raising the total number of infected people to 10,080,735, according to government figures. The lowest number of new cases each week has also been reported since the corresponding week in August.

India’s seven-day moving average of new cases fell to 29,000, down from a peak of nearly 100,000 in mid-September, while the number of new cases reported in the last seven days fell to around 115,000, close to the lowest level seen in the second wave of the pandemic.

The Health Ministry on Saturday also reported 367 deaths in the past 24 hours, taking the total fatalities to 1,43,366.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been under significant political pressure to bring down cases as the new year approaches. The Bharatiya Janata Party-led government has heavily criticized the central opposition Congress party for its handling of the virus since the pandemic began.

India was the world’s worst-affected country with 80,000 infections and 2,000 deaths per day when it went into lockdown in March last year. However, the number of infections fell to 17,000 per day and a low of 3,000 in December with several states getting their infections under control.

But in recent weeks, a new and more contagious variant of the virus has emerged and cases are on the rise once again.

This comes even as the government last week approved a plan to start the country’s first COVID-19 vaccinations on January 16. The vaccine is expected to be available for free on a priority basis to certain categories of health workers and frontline workers.

The approval comes after a top Pakistani court ordered the government to release the remaining schoolboys who were kidnapped by gunmen from a government-run boarding school in Kankara village in northwestern Pakistan earlier this month. The boys were rescued and freed after a top Pakistani court ordered the government to release the remaining schoolboys who were kidnapped by gunmen from a government-run boarding school in Kankara village in northwestern Pakistan earlier this month.

The government has confirmed that around 350 students were abducted by the group called JeM that is associated with the Pakistani Taliban. The group has split from the main Taliban group following a power struggle.

The abduction was one of the worst attacks in Pakistan’s history and sparked international concerns about the growing influence of extremist groups in the country’s conflict zones.

The boys were taken after two Pakistani soldiers were killed in an operation launched by the Pakistan Army in the region to rescue them.

The abductors demanded the release of their fellow members in Afghanistan and Pakistan and threatened to kill the schoolboys if their demands were not met.

The Pakistani government has been under pressure to release the remaining schoolboys as a sign of goodwill and to improve its relations with the international community.

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UNICEF Strikes Deal with Taliban to Set Up Informal Schools

KABUL - UNICEF has struck an agreement with the Taliban to establish thousands of informal schools in areas controlled by the insurgent group - schools that will reach up to 14,000 children. According to Sam Mort, the agency’s chief of communications, advocacy and civic engagement in Afghanistan, UNICEF will support the establishment of 4,000 community-based education classes across Helmand, Kandahar, Uruguay and Faryab provinces.

Mort said currently there are 680 such informal classes already taking place across these provinces. She said that each class could accommodate up to 35 students, and classes are expected to start in March, when the new school year begins in Afghanistan.

Mort said the plan aims to ensure that every child, especially girls, in remote areas, can go to school safely and securely.

"Currently, 60 percent of the children that are out of school are girls and that increases to 80 percent in some hard-to-reach areas," Mort said.

"The fact that the Taliban asked UNICEF to support them with other services, beyond polio drops, to help their children survive and thrive, is a break-through moment," she said.

Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid confirmed the insurgent group’s agreement with UNICEF.

“We believe it is a good step forward for the establishment of these schools in areas under our control,” Mujahid told VOA. (ATN)

Rockets Fired at US Air Base in Afghanistan: Officials

KABUL - Four rockets hit the Bagram Airfield, a major US air base in Afghanistan, early Saturday morning but so far officials have not given details on possible casualties in the incident.

The rockets were fired at Bagram Airfield from Qalandarkhil area in Parwan province, said Waqtullah Salarzai, spokesperson for Parwan governor. Bagram district governor Abdul Shakoor Qudosi said that the incident happened at around 7 am on Saturday morning.

He said that 10 BM-12 rockets were placed on a small truck in Qalandarkhil... (More on P4)...

UNSC Extends Mandate of Team Monitoring Taliban-Related Sanctions

The 15-member Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2557 (2020) and directed the Monitoring Team to gather information on instances of non-compliance with the measures and to facilitate, upon request by Member States, capacity-building assistance.

In a statement issued by the UNSC, the Council welcomed recent efforts by the Afghan government and the Taliban in facilitating intra-Afghan negotiations and highlighted the importance of ensuring that the Monitoring Team receives the necessary administrative and substantive support to effectively fulfill its mandate in a safe and timely manner.

This comes after Afghanistan’s... (More on P4)...

Afghanistan Reports 80 New COVID-19 Cases in 24 Hours

NEW YORK - The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on Friday took the decision to extend for 12 months the mandate of the team monitoring sanctions against individuals and entities associated with the Taliban and emphasized its serious concerns about ongoing violence in Afghanistan.

UNSC, the Council welcomed recent efforts by the Afghan government and the Taliban in facilitating intra-Afghan negotiations and highlighted the importance of ensuring that the Monitoring Team receives the necessary administrative and substantive support to effectively fulfill its mandate in a safe and timely manner.

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