Ghani Reacts to Taliban Remarks on ‘No Army Needed’

The president reacted during a ceremony to honor freed commanders who had been in a Taliban prison.

KABUL - A number of political parties on Sunday said that the government should consult with them before taking any reformative actions against the Independent Election Commission (IEC).

Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, who has registered himself as a presidential candidate for July elections, last month had stressed that the government would bring reforms in the IEC. However, some political parties warned that without their consultation they would not accept any kind of reforms in IEC.

"We have not accepted that which has been referred," said Abdul Quddus Sirat, who is a member of Wahdat-i-Islami party and running for second vice presidency in elections.

"Any kind of reforms without our consultation would be in favor of a particular group," said Abdullah Qafoq, a member of Jamiat-e-Islami party.

However, Mohammad Hedayat, an advisor of Second Vice President Dr. Sarwar Danish said that soon reforms will be brought in regulations, structure and functions of the electoral commissions.

"Reform work is underway and there is a clear consensus for bringing reform," he said.

It comes as the international community has set electoral reforms an agenda as a condition. (More on P4).

Logar Records 30pc Increase in Violence Against Women

PUL-ALAM - Women’s affairs officials report a 30 percent increase in incidents of violence against women in central Logar province this solar year compared to the previous year due to lacklooms.

Thomas Martin, Logar women’s affairs director, told Pajhwok Afghan News that incidents of violence against women have increased in Logar.

She said 70 cases of violence against females were registered in Logar last year, compared to 100 cases this ongoing solar year.

"These cases include suicide, beating, divorce, desertion, forced marriages and fraud marriages for money," she said.

"The lack of law enforcement and women’s affairs," (More on P4).

KARUL - President Ashraf Ghani on Saturday said that these forcing people to hold peace talks must avoid discussing the issue of dissolving the country’s army.

He said: "Those who are forcefully bringing others to negotiate must not talk about dissolving our ‘lions’ (army), if they are so brave, then they must come and light on the battlefield instead of carrying out suicide (attacks) and explosion," Ghani said.

Ghani said he had been referring to a video issued by a senior Taliban member and former head of the Qatar office, Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai.

Stanikzai had been discussing the Doha talks between the Taliban and the United States.

In the video, Stanikzai said once the US forces withdraw from Afghanistan, there would be no need for an army in Afghanistan.

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