

(1) Ghani Insists

facing government - including that of elections, electronic national identity cards and the peace process.

On the issue of elections, Ghani stated these polls, parliamentary and district councils, have to be held on time.

Last year, the IEC set the date for the elections as July 7 this year.

Ghani meanwhile went on to say that government leaders are not intent on "monopolizing power". "Afghanistan is not monopolized by anyone. Afghanistan belongs to the Afghan nation. Our Constitution has solved the fundamental issue of power formation," Ghani said.

Hizb-e-Islami leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar also addressed the event and said government is being controlled by a certain political movement. But he called for a transparent election without "foreign interference".

"We are not in government until elections are held so that we can bring change in government through this route. Let me say it clearly that government is under the monopoly of our rivals," Hekmatyar said.

Other speakers indirectly pointed to the rift between Kabul and ousted Balkh governor Atta Mohammad Noor.

"We should solve any political and national issue through a practical way and by a measured political decision. Any emotional, hurried, ethnic or party-based decision will plunge the country into a crisis," said Second Vice President Sarwar Danish.

"Leave failed politics, put aside your dialect of war, leave the warning policy," Hekmatyar said.

Unlike in the past, prominent Jihadist leaders were noticeably absent from Saturday's event - including Mohammad Mohaqiq, Mohammad Karim Khalili, Abdul RabRasulSayyaf, Sebghatullah Mujaddedi, Sayed Hamid Gailani and other senior Jamiat-e-Islami members. (Tolo news)

(2) Afghan government

governor of Farah province Dr. Shah Jahan has been appointed as the new provincial governor of Maidan Wardak province.

Dr. Shah Jahan will replace the current provincial governor of Maidan Wardak province Handi Gul Zamani, the IDLG said in its statement.

In the meantime, the current governor of Laghman province Abdul Jabar Naeemi has been appointed as new governor of northern Kunduz province.

He will replace the current governor of Kunduz Asadullah Amarkhel, IDLG said, adding that Abdul Latif Ibrahim has been appointed as the new governor of Samangan province to replace Abdul Karim Khedam.

Mohammad Asif Nang, the ex-governor of Farah province has also been appointed as the new governor of the eastern Laghman province.

The Independent Directorate of the Local Governance has not elaborated further regarding the new changes and appointments in the five provinces. (KP)

(3) Afghanistan to

"This port gives us the access not only to Indian market but Arabian countries also," the official added.

"We have decided that from the next Iranian year (March 21) Afghanistan will start exporting fresh and dry fruits to other countries through Chabahar Port," added Sayed Yahya Akhlaqi.

He said that initially Afghanistan will send its products from Nimruz Province to Chabahar Port and will also solve problems if occurred in the transit trade route.

The official added that winter is not the actual season for Afghanistan exports but we will start sending our products to India through Chabahar Port in the next trading season of Afghanistan.

He said that Afghanistan has decreased its exports from Karachi-Torkham and Karachi-Chaman routes of Pakistan because of many problems.

Sayed Yahya Akhlaqi was hopeful that with the increase in the

capacity of Chabahar Port new avenues of cooperation will open among the regional states.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani in December last year inaugurated the first phase of Shahid Beheshti Port in Chabahar. Located in southern province of Sistan-Baluchestan, the launch of the port was attended by at least 60 representatives from 17 countries including India and Afghanistan.

Experts say that the port, which is only 80 kilometers from the Iran-Pakistan border, could help in booming the trade activities of regional countries including Pakistan.

Through this port, goods can be delivered to neighboring countries at cheaper prices and in a shorter time. (IRNA)

(4) Al Qaeda 'Warrior'

Harun's claim that he was more a soldier than a terrorist, saying Harun wanted to kill "dozens or maybe hundreds of Americans" and those from other nationalities, as well.

"I'm confident the defendant doesn't differentiate whether they are civilians or soldiers," Cogan said.

A jury last March convicted Harun after prosecutors said he confessed while in Italian custody that he threw a grenade and shot at an American military unit in a 2003 ambush that killed Army Pvt. Jerod Dennis, of Antlers, Okla., and Air Force Airman Ray Losano, of Del Rio, Texas.

While on the run, Harun later masterminded a failed plot to bomb a U.S. Embassy in Nigeria, the government said. He was under the direct supervision of al Qaeda higher-ups, including some still held at Guantanamo Bay, it said.

The Saudi-born defendant who claims Niger citizenship had insisted he was a "warrior" who should face a military tribunal rather than a civilian court prosecution.

Cogan said soldiers in wartime don't target "embassies" in third-world countries.

Harun, 47, was extradited from Italy to the U.S. in 2012.

The judge said Harun told prison officials Friday: "This is not my court. That is not my judge."

Cogan called Harun "self-absorbed," noting that he was willing to speak to the judge and his lawyers as long as he thought he was going to get his way.

"If this man ever walks the streets again, the first thing he will do is try to kill Americans," Cogan said. "He has one gear. That's to kill Americans."

"There is not an ounce of remorse, not a smidgeon of self-doubt," the judge added.

He said he knew the life sentence would not end terrorism, but hoped it would work "best at the margins," where one potential terrorist might decide a life behind bars was not worth killing.

He also refused to recommend Harun serve his sentence at a particular facility.

The judge said the Federal Bureau of Prisons "is going to have its hands full with this violent and uncooperative defendant."

And though he said he suspected Harun was not listening to the court's video feed, Cogan instructed him that he could appeal. (AP)

(5) Ghani Meets

said the statement.

According to the statement, President Ghani said he commends the Australian government's support to Afghanistan. He said the Defense Ministry will follow the plan to receive Australia's help in military trainings. (Tolonews)

(6) Fifty Senior

from Afghanistan on Saturday, Abdullah said that any decision contrary to the will of people, will lead the country into crisis.

He said any decision related to public should be taken wisely in order to preserve the unity of the people.

This comes as Mohammad Khan First Deputy of the Chief Executive has also announce his support for the electronic National Identity Cards' roll out. (ATN)

(7) 70 Taliban Killed,

were destroyed during the operations that resulted in the killing of at least 70 Taliban militants.

Another 15 Taliban gunmen were wounded and some weapons destroyed during the operations with security forces and civilians escaping unharmed.

The Taliban have not yet commented about the operations. (Pajhwok)

(8) Zadranscripts

Afghan News Zadranscripts' mesmerizing bowling spell saw Zimbabwe slipping to 134 in the 34th over.

Opens Mohammad Shahzad and Ihsanullah remained unbeaten on 75 and 51 runs respectively, as Afghanistan cruised to an emphatic 10-wicket victory. Shahzad smashed 10 boundaries and three sixes

For Zimbabwe, Craig Ervine was the only batsman who put up some resistance. Running out of partners, Ervine stayed not out on 54, but could not save his side.

The 16-year-old Zadranscripts, who claimed four wickets on debut against Ireland in 2017, was adjudged the Player of the Match, as Afghanistan clinched the ODI series 3-1. (Pajhwok)

(9) India, Iran to

and secure country," adding that Iran and India would also cooperate in dealing with the situations in Iraq, Syria and Yemen. Iran is a key stakeholder in the future of those nations.

Rouhani's visit to India comes at a time when President Donald Trump has threatened to scuttle an international deal reached with Iran in 2015 over its nuclear program that ended economic sanctions imposed on the country.

The uncertainty puts India in a difficult position with its growing ties with the United States.

On Saturday, India and Iran signed agreements for avoidance of double taxation and implementing an extradition treaty signed in 2008. Another agreement envisaged the pooling of technical, scientific and human resources between the two countries.

India will also help Iran in running a multipurpose container terminal at the Chabahar Port for 18 months as part of a lease agreement.

India is helping Iran develop Chabahar Port on the Gulf of Oman for trade with Afghanistan and Central Asia, bypassing Pakistan, which has refused to provide New Delhi access through a land route. India committed up to \$500 million for the development of Chabahar along with associated roads and rail lines.

Rouhani's three-day visit to India ended Saturday. (Fox news)

(10) Taliban Cannot

addressing the American nation and Congress in which the Taliban showed readiness for the dialogue to end the violence.

Taliban called on the American nation and Congress to put pressures on American military and end the so-called occupation of Afghanistan.

In the meantime, Hekmatyar insisted on timely, free, fair and transparent elections to end the ongoing crisis and issues in the country.

Hekmatyar called on all Afghans to participate in the upcoming elections and urged the all parties involved in organizing the elections including the international community to pave the way for the participation of all political parties to monitor the elections process. (KP)

(11) Movie-Makers

film industry has in the past proved a difficult industry to sustain and women in particular find it difficult to earn a living in the sector.

"No government worries about it, nor do the people, and some people working in this field have to deal with problems from all sides, from college, from government, from the family side, and then the person loses hope and leaves the industry," said RahilaRezai an artist.

Among the group is FreshtaRa-

souly an actress appearing in the series. But she says in order to survive she runs a fast food restaurant.

"Eight in the morning I open the restaurant and prepare everything, at the moment my colleague is sick and I have to cook too; when she is here she does the cooking," said Rasouly.

Freshta in turn provides job opportunities through the restaurant to six other people. However she said the work is exhausting, especially as she also works in the film industry - her true profession she said. (Tolo news)

(12) Efforts Underway

hat numerous women and children also used the recreational areas for relaxation.

"Women can come with their families here to have some fun," Shogufa Ahmadi, a resident of Kunduz said.

"I have come with my sisters to the park to spend some time here," said Hanif, another Kunduz resident.

"We thank those who have established these parks," said Neda, another grateful resident.

Meanwhile, lights in some city streets have been installed - another move that has been welcomed by residents.

"We have some other projects for the city and after their implementation the city will become more beautiful," said Kunduz Mayor, Najibullah Omorkhel.

As the city's appearance slowly improves, so too is the mood of the people as many say that with these changes, people could one day lead a normal life. (Tolo news)

Hanyu Wins History Making Gold, Ledecka Stuns in Super-G

PYEONGCHANG, South Korea - Japan's Yuzuru Hanyu made Olympic figure skating history with a strong - and expected - performance in the men's free skate.

Meanwhile, Ester Ledecka of the Czech Republic stunned everyone, including herself, by winning the gold in the women's super-G.

On a busy Saturday at the Pyeongchang Games, Switzerland's Sarah Hoefflin won the women's slopestyle skiing event, Norway was victorious in the women's cross-country relay, and Slovakia's Anastasiya Kuzmina won the women's 12.5-kilometer mass start biathlon.

Other events in which medals are scheduled to be awarded include: men's 1,000-meter and women's 1,500-meter short-track speedskating, women's skeleton and men's large hill individual ski jumping.

In Gangneung, Hanyu became the first man to repeat as Olympic champion since Dick Button in 1952 after also winning in Sochi in 2014. He also won the 1,000th gold medal in Winter Games history.

"This is the best day of my skating life," he said. "My tears were from my heart. I can find one word and that is 'happy.'"

He held off Japanese teammate Shoma Uno and Spain's Javier Fernandez for the victory.

A gracious Hanyu told Fernandez that he wished they both could have won.

"I told him, 'Yes, Yuzu, but only one can be champion. Only one can have the gold medal,'" Fernandez said.

In Jeongseon, Ledecka simply couldn't believe she was No. 1 on the videoboard standings moments after crossing the finish line.

Her time of 1 minute, 21.11 seconds was just 0.01 seconds faster than Austria's Anna Veith, the defending Olympic champion. While Veith was one of the favorites, the

22-year-old Ledecka was a low-ranked competitor who is a part-time ski racer and part-time snowboarder.

She's now an Olympic champion.

"Is this a kind of mistake?" Ledecka said when asked what immediately went through her mind. "OK, they're going to change the time. I'm going to wait for a little bit, and you're going to switch and (add) some more seconds."

Nope, not quite.

American star Lindsey Vonn, who tied for sixth in her Pyeongchang debut, echoed the sentiments of Ledecka - and just about everyone else. (AP)

Turkey Denies Use of Chemicals in Syria's Afrin, Says Accusations Baseless

BEIRUT, ANKARA - Turkey never used chemical weapons in its operations in Syria, and takes the utmost care of civilians, a Turkish diplomatic source said, after Syrian Kurdish forces and a monitoring group accused it of carrying out a gas attack in Syria's Afrin region.

"These are baseless accusations. Turkey never used chemical weapons. We take utmost care about civilians in Operation Olive Branch," the source said.

Syrian Kurdish forces and a monitoring group said the Turkish military carried out a suspected gas attack that wounded six people in Syria's Afrin region on Friday.

The source also described the accusations of wounding six civilians through a suspected gas attack as "black propaganda".

Turkey launched an air and ground offensive last month on the Afrin region, opening a new front in the multi-sided Syrian war, to target Kurdish fighters in northern Syria.

Birusk Hasaka, a spokesman for the Kurdish YPG militia in Afrin, told Reuters that Turkish bombardment hit a village in the northwest of the region, near the Turkish border. He said it caused six people to suffer breathing problems and other symptoms indicative of a gas attack.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights told Reuters that Turkish forces and their Syrian insurgent allies hit the village on Friday with shells. The Britain-based war monitoring group said medical sources in Afrin reported that six people in the attack suffered breathing difficulties and dilated pupils, indicating a suspected gas attack.

Syrian state news agency SANA, citing a doctor in a Afrin hospital, said Turkish shelling of the village caused choking in six people.

On Feb. 6, the United Nations called for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Syria. Since the onset of the conflict in 2011, the YPG and its allies have set up three autonomous cantons in the north, including Afrin. Their sphere of influence expanded as they seized territory from Islamic State with U.S. help, though Washington opposes their autonomy plans as does the Syrian government.

U.S. support for Kurdish-led forces in Syria has infuriated Ankara, which views them as a security threat along its frontier. Turkey sees the YPG as terrorists and an extension of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) that has waged a three-decade insurgency on Turkish soil. (Reuters)