

(1) President Ghani ...

president appointed Sayed Hafizullah Hashemi as the member for the IEC, the statement added.

A source in the Chief Executive Office also confirmed to Pajhwok that Hashimi's appointment as IEC member was made today after thorough consultations among the stakeholders.

Two days back, the selection committee proposed the names of Hashimi, Abdul Qadir Zazai and Awal Rahman Rodwal to the president. One of them had to be selected for the job.

Hashimi refused to comment on his appointment.

Other candidate for the slot, Abdul Qadir Zazai, confirmed on his Facebook account that Hashimi had been appointed to the vacant IEC post.

He said: "The selection process for the position has been conducted in a transparent manner and I am satisfied. We are grateful to the President Ghani for appointing Syed Hafizullah Hashimi as a leadership member of the IEC."

Hashimi, a 47-year-old resident of the Alishang district of eastern Laghman province, has headed the Meshrano Jirga Secretariat, the United Nations Office in Kabul and the transport section of the Cabinet Secretariat.

A graduate from the Kabul Mechanical School, he received higher education at Nangarhar University's engineering faculty. However, he could not complete the course as a result of migration.

He received the bachelor's degree from the Washington D1 University before doing master in BBA. Hashimi can fluently speak Pashto, Dari, Arabic and English languages. (Pajhwok)

(2) Interior Minister Vows ...

Barmak sharply criticized corruption and misuse of authorities by some officials in the ministry and said no one will be allowed to interfere in the recruitment process of the institution.

"After this, no employee of the (interior) ministry can individually submit their recommendation to promote them or to hire them in a better position," Barmak said.

Barmak meanwhile talked about a case where a police force member misused his authority in Kabul on Friday evening.

"Last night in Klola Pushta Square (in Kabul), one of our police force members was drunk while he had this sacred uniform that we wear. Then he came on the street and did a mess. He was insulted there and a man came and took his gun when saw that the policeman is abnormal. The man beat him and then gave back his gun and told him to go back to the police vehicle," said Barmak.

At the same event, the deputy minister of interior Massoud Ahmad Azizi asked for more reforms and attention to administrative processes in the ministry.

The Ministry of Interior has been under harsh criticism for 'corruption' in recent months.

President Ashraf Ghani last week on Tuesday said at the 10th graduation ceremony of Afghan police forces from the national police academy that "hiring should be conducted based on the police's rules and regulations and no more personal recommendations should be accepted."

He warned MPs not to visit the Ministry of Interior for appointments or promotion of their relatives and friends in the ministry. He said if this happens, names and videos of those lawmakers will be aired by the media. Ghani also pointed out that bringing reforms in the police is needed in order for them to gain the people's trust. (Tolonews)

(3) No Unilateral Action ..

Centcom chief recognised Pakistan had already taken action against some of the militant groups that were of concern to the US. He also acknowledged the effectiveness of some of the recent actions taken by Pakistan.

He also conveyed COAS that US is not contemplating any unilateral action inside Pakistan but is seeking cooperation to tackle Afghan nationals who, in US view, use Pakistan's soil against Afghanistan.

For his part, Gen. Bajwa told Votel the "entire Pakistani nation felt betrayed" over the US statements. However, he insisted, Pakistan would continue to support peace efforts in the region despite being made a scapegoat.

The ISPR spokesman said that during the conversation with Votel, General Bajwa noted Pakistan was fully aware of U.S. concerns about the activities of Afghan nationals in Pakistan and that steps were being taken to counter them.

According to VOA, a US Central Command spokesman confirmed Votel's contact with Bajwa.

"U.S. Central Command is in continuous communication with the Pakistan military, including recurring conversations between General Votel and Pakistan Chief of Army Staff Bajwa," a statement said. "We value mutual understanding of interests and concerns that we need to consider that might lead to a positive path forward."

Pakistan will continue its antiterrorism efforts as well as support for peace efforts in Afghanistan. Gen Bajwa added. (Pajhwok)

(4) Central Bank ..

are in circulation in more than 13 provinces.

"I want to tell the people who use the currencies of the neighboring countries that they should use the Afghan currency in their daily business, because the fluctuation of foreign currencies is very high and they will suffer financial losses," Sayed Ishaq Alawi, general manager of money politics in Central Bank, told TOLONews.

Economic affairs analysts called on government to implement a suitable monetary policy to control the value of Afghan currency against foreign currencies in the local markets.

"The Central Bank is unable to solve this problem because the branches of the bank in provinces are not working properly. It is the responsibility of the Central Bank to maintain the stability of Afghan currency," said Romal Attal lecturer in a private higher education institution in Kabul.

The Central Bank says that country's businessmen over-indebtedness to neighbors and the trading deficit of more than 90 percent in the country are the main reasons that Afghanis have not been promoted throughout the country.

According to the Central Bank statistics at the moment more than 26 billion Afghanis are in circulation in the country economy.

Last week, the Central Bank said the fall of Afghan currency against foreign currencies is temporary and that the value of the country's currency will strengthen in the near future.

The bank has injected over \$2.2 billion USD into the country's market to prevent the increase of prices of goods on the local market, officials said last week.

In the past few days the Afghan currency has dropped to 70 Afs for one US dollar. Central Bank injected over \$500 million USD as an additional amount in to the treasury and the money raised gross foreign exchange reserves to over \$8 billion, officials of the bank said. (Tolonews)

(5) Afghan Forces' ..

Ghazni, Uruzgan, Herat, Faryab and Jawzjan provinces, the ministry said. The ministry said several hideouts of terrorists and their weapons were destroyed during the military operations.

The ministry did not mention about possible casualties to security forces or civilian in the operations. The mission included six special operations and nine clearance operations in eight provinces, the ministry said. The Afghan Air Force conducted 93 flights during this mission.

Taliban has not commented on the report so far. (Tolonews)

(6) Balkh Tribal ..

Abdul Jabar Jamal, a tribal elder and head of the Sadat Social Association. "The rise value of foreign currencies (Against Afghanis), the increase in insecurity in different provinces, the rise in food prices and so on are the results of these (political) issues which have made life difficult for the people," Jamal added.

Other participants of the gathering meanwhile blamed the government leaders for the increase of Taliban and Daesh presence and insecurity in parts of the country.

"The continuation of this situation is by no means in favor of the country and the people," said Mukhtar Ahmadi, member of Afghanistan Youth Parliament in Balkh. "The incumbent situation will affect investment, jobs, education, civil activities, freedom of expression and the rights of people." This comes as government and Jamiat have so far held five rounds of talks until last week. The talks however have not yielded the required results to end the rift between President Ashraf Ghani and Atta Mohammad Noor.

Last week on Thursday Noor said at an event that he is still waiting for Jamiat-e-Islami Party's decision regarding his fate but stated he is not afraid of either the president or the CEO Abdullah Abdullah. Relations between the two have continued to worsen. Thursday was the fifth day of government and Jamiat talks over the Ghani-Noor saga.

Some residents of Balkh on Friday

claimed that crime incidents and number of illegal armed men have mounted in the city of Mazar-e-Sharif. Members of Balkh Provincial Council said the illegal armed men attempt armed robberies and create disorder in the city.

However, Balkh Police Chief Gen. Sayed Kamal Sadat he has assigned all police chiefs in Mazar-e-Sharif City to take action against armed men in the city. (Tolonews)

(7) First Shipment...

Kabul to welcome the arrival of the shipment.

The agriculture minister said the 2,440 tons of wheat will be stored in government storages in Ghazni, Nangarhar, Herat, Laghman, Kandahar, Helmand and Kabul provinces.

He said Afghanistan has purchased 100,000 tons of wheat from Uzbekistan which have been stored in government storages in north and north-eastern provinces including Balkh, Baghlan, Kunduz, Badakhshan and Takhar.

"We want to store 3,000 tons of wheat in Helmand, 2,000 tons in Ghazni, 18,000 tons in Herat, 15,000 tons in Kandahar, 63,000 tons in Kabul, 1,000 tons in Laghman and 8,000 tons in Nangarhar," he said.

At the same event, Charge d'Affairs of India in Afghanistan, Alok Ranjan Jaha, said the new route, Chabahar Port, will provide the opportunity for a greater trade in the region.

"Afghanistan is a landlocked country. It is its international right to have access for trade which is being denied by a particular country in the region and it is very important for India, Afghanistan and the region beyond to make sure that this new trade route flourishes, develops and gives all our countries in the region more opportunities for greater trade," he said.

The shipment is part 1.1 million of wheat pledged by India to Afghanistan in 2002. More than 700,000 tons of wheat has already been supplied to Afghanistan which is part of the 110,000 tons that will arrive to the country in one year. (Tolonews)

(8) The Ingeniously...

of the United Nation Security Council.

From January, 2018, Kazakhstan chairs the meeting of the United Nation Security Council. This council is an important part of the United Nation, and significant debates over peace and world security are followed by it.

This video was released at late last night in social media like YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Vk and received the appreciation of youth. The recorded video by these young students has been so far viewed by thousands of visitors, and has been re-released by several other social media users.

Hafizulla Qaderi is the fourth year student in technical engineering university in Astana city of Kazakhstan. He explains about his idea of recorded video that as a young Afghan he grew up in a war-torn country and is disappointed that why his country and people should struggle with these adversities.

Qaderi says that why Afghan people, like other people on earth, should not live in peace. He emphasizes that through this video he is able to raise his voice and ask the world for help. This creative Afghan student has said that by knowing the position of Kazakhstan in United Nation Council, he dared to raise his voice and request the Kazakhstan to use this opportunity and set Afghanistan peace as a priority.

Saber Rasouli, Qaderi's classmate and university fellow that the video is made by his innovation, too has said he observed closely the successful role of Kazakhstan in peace making process in Syria and reached to this belief that this country can have an effective role in Afghanistan peace subject. Rasouli says that the video addresses Nur Sultan Nazarbayev, the president of Kazakhstan and Donald Trump, the United States President. He explains that he could not imagine that their action would be welcomed this much, but contrary to his imagination, many youth have contacted them and supported their movement.

These creative Afghan students declared that they are responsible to work for their country, deliver their message of peace to the world, and ask the world to cooperate Afghanistan in the process of bringing peace. The Afghanistan youth, either inside or abroad, have done numerous symbolic actions to attract the attention of the world for helping in peace making process and terminating conflicts in Afghanistan. The efforts have been welcomed enthusiastically; however, the provision of peace and termi-

nation of war is still a dream for the young people who have been born and grown up in war.

Here, in addition to High Peace Council in Afghanistan, many associations have been established that work for providing peace in Afghanistan. Most of these foundations try to assist to this process by giving awareness to the people. (PR)

(9) First-Ever ...

before permitted to be sold and exported outside the country.

Ahmadi said the lab cost \$50,000 provided by the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL). "In this lab the saffron quality will be tested. And about 18 tests will be conducted."

He said the lab, besides assessing quality, would also specify diseases and pests at saffron fields and would help deal with them.

Meanwhile, Governor Mohammad Asif Rahimi, said the lab would help prevent the misuse of Afghanistan's saffron by other countries and global countries would trust Afghanistan saffron more than ever. "International countries will be now convinced and satisfied that Afghanistan saffron is the best on global level."

"The lab's inauguration is a step that will enable us to certify Afghanistan saffron and convince the world about its quality."

Meanwhile, agriculture officials said more than 10 tonnes of saffron was produced in Herat this year against last year's 6.5 tonnes. (Pajhwok)

(10) High-Level ...

with the delegation, Khogyani said.

Gulab Mangal said he immediately sent a professional delegation to the incident area after the shootout to thoroughly investigate the issue. The governor also asked the MoD team to comprehensively investigate the Achin incident.

Brig. Gen. Abdur Rashid Qaderi, head of the MoD delegation, assured the incident would be fully investigated and the results shared with the governor's house and with the central government. (Pajhwok)

(11) Taliban Out to...

the Pashtuns complained to the Taliban against the Hazaras. The militants, subsequently, kidnapped 11 Hazara tribesmen.

The governor alleged the insurgent actions paved the ground for tribal conflicts in the area. The Taliban had also closed down the road to the Hazara-dominated Nekhtai locality of the district.

He said: "Two days back, the people of Sherzad and Nekhtai areas came to my office and said our issue is legal, which the Taliban are trying to convert into a tribal problem."

But Hassan Yousafi, a provincial council member, asked the government to solve the issue as soon as possible.

Noor Mohammad, a resident of Qarabagh, said the issue had been left unresolved so far and they wanted the government to take steps to defuse tensions between the two tribes.

Mohammad Arif Noori, the governors' spokesman, said the local administration had been trying to resolve the dispute through a tribal jirga.

For his part, Taliban's spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said they never fueled tribal tensions. "We have brought both sides together many times to solve the issue according to the Shariah but the problem still persists." (Pajhwok)

(12) At Least 4 ..

Qari Yousaf Ahmadi, Taliban's spokesman, tweeted five soldiers had been killed and two others wounded in an attack in the Torabi Hotal area of Greshk.

A day earlier, the Ministry of Defence said at least 76 militants were killed in military operations in eight provinces in the past 24 hours. Three key Taliban commanders -- Ehsanullah, Haidar and Qahraman -- were among those killed. (Pajhwok)

(13) Afghanistan Beat ...

three other occasions. In the last edition, they lost to eventual champions the West Indies in the quarterfinals. Pakistan could face a stiff challenge from Afghanistan after having lost to them in the final of the U19 Asia Cup. But the player to watch in this group could be 16-year-old off-spinner Mujeeb Zadran, who not only grabbed five for 13 against Pakistan in that final, but also made a sensational entry into senior international cricket grabbing four for 24 against Ireland in Sharjah for a player of the match debut. (Tolonews)

HIV/AIDS Cases Increase In Kandahar:

KANDAHAR - Provincial Public Health officials in Kandahar, in the south of Afghanistan, have said that the positive cases of HIV/AIDS have slightly increased in the province.

Figures from the provincial public health directorate show that 107 cases of HIV/AIDS have been reported in the province since 2010. Women and children are also among those infected with the virus.

In 2016, the department registered 18 cases in the province while they registered 20 cases of HIV/AIDS in 2017.

"In past eight years from 2010 to 2017, we registered 107 HIV/AIDS cases including 11 women, 92 men and 4 children," Humyun Rahmani, head of HIV Control Department of Kandahar, told TOLONews.

He added: "In 2016, we registered 18 cases of HIV/AIDS and in 2017 we registered 20 cases of HIV/AIDS. Among them were two women."

Kandahar residents meanwhile urged Public Health Directorate to mount public awareness on the diseases.

"The performance of HIV/AIDS departments in the public health directorate is poor. We ask them to increase public awareness about the harms of the disease and the ways it infects people," Hamidullah, a resident of Kandahar, said.

According to Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS information on website of the organization, there were at least 36.7 million people worldwide living with HIV/AIDS at the end of 2016. Of these, 2.1 million were children (younger than 15 years old).

An estimated 1.8 million individuals worldwide became newly infected with HIV in 2016 - about 5,000 new infections per day. This includes 160,000 children (younger than 15 years). Most of these children live in sub-Saharan Africa and were infected by their HIV-positive mothers during pregnancy, childbirth or breastfeeding.

Currently only 60 percent of people with HIV know their status. The remaining 40 percent (over 14 million people) still need to access HIV testing services.

As of July 2017, 20.9 million people living with HIV were accessing antiretroviral therapy (ART) globally, up from 15.8 million in June 2015, 7.5 million in 2010, and less than one million in 2,000.

One million people died from AIDS-related illnesses in 2016, bringing the total number of people who have died from AIDS-related illnesses since the start of the epidemic to 35.0 million.

Human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) is a spectrum of conditions caused by infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). The HIV spread through sexual activity, infected needles, pregnant women with AIDS. (Tolonews)

Govt-Taliban Peace Parleys Underway in Turkey: Source

KABUL - A quadrilateral meeting of peace negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban launched on Saturday in the capital Istanbul of Turkey, a reliable source said.

A participant of the meeting confided to Pajhwok Afghan News that the gathering initiated on Saturday and would last for three days (until Monday).

The source, wishing anonymity, also shared a few photos of the gathering with Pajhwok, saying the peace gathering was held in cooperation from the Turkish government.

He said the peace dialogue was being attended by the Taliban's Qatar Office members, Mullah Mohammad Rasoul splinter faction members, the Afghan government representatives and the Hezb-i-Islami Afghanistan (HIA) members. The Taliban side's participant included Rahmatullah Wardak, from Rassoul group, Mullah Rauf and Abdul Halim, from the HIA, Haji Dawajan Ahmadzai and Homayoon Jarir and on behalf of the Afghan government was Dr. Basir, envoy of the High Peace Council (HPC) head, Karim Khalili.

He said there were earlier similar meetings held in Turkey between the sides last year, but media was kept in the dark about them. The meeting comes as reports suggest the Turkish government has proposed Taliban to open a political office in the country. A spokesman for the HIA, Mohammad Nadar Afghan, confirmed the gathering to Pajhwok. However, he said, Homayoon Jarir and Dawajan Ahmadzai had not participated in the gathering on behalf of HIA. (Pajhwok)