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**Electoral Reform Process Being Accelerated: Abdullah**

KABUL - Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah Abdullah on Monday said he had reached an agreement with President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani on cleaning up the election system, and the reform process would begin tomorrow.

Chairing a meeting of the Council of Ministers, the CEO said elections were an essential process in a democracy. Without reforming the entire regime, the electoral exercise would not have any impact, he noted.

Without reforms, elections lose their importance and were perceived as a rigged by the people. Therefore, the government is trying to reform the system so as to restore public trust in the democratic exercise, remarked the CEO.

He said the slow pace of reforms had angered some notable figures and alienated them from the government. He, however, reaffirmed the government’s commitment to reforming the system, promising no one should doubt.

Earlier, the Wolesi Jirga had rejected two presidential decrees on election reforming, blaming the process. The hiring of new commissioners was one of the major points of the government’s reform agenda.

But the sitting commissioners insisted they could not resign. (More on P4)

**U.S. Official Concern over Rising Casualties Among Afghan Troops**

KABUL - U.S. officials are becoming concerned over rising casualties among Afghan forces.

A Daesh-affiliated group and continued presence of ties among Afghan forces are becoming growing concerns for U.S. officials. The head of the enterprise, Wald Tarnin, said the organization has worsened the situation over the last six years.

The Taliban killed more than 5,000 Afghans last year and wounded another 14,000 – and the casualty rate is climbing this year. He told this to reporters in Kabul on Monday.

In one year, Afghan forces suffered roughly double the number of casualties that we suffered in 15.