

### (1) ERC Recommends...

requirement, the members of the electoral reform commission unanimously decided to accept more work and refer its recommendation to the government in less than two months so that the timeframe for the parliamentary vote is announced soon," she added.

The ERC was formed earlier this month after multiple delays on account of disagreements between President Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah over its leadership and broader membership. It now seems the commission, which is currently operating out of Abdullah's office, is trying to make up for lost time. Saqib maintained that ERC members plan to work seven days a week so that they can make their reform recommendations as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, some commentators have suggested the ERC's push to expedite the reform process is politically motivated. "If ERC members are influenced by their political leaders, naturally, the members will be facing obstacles ahead," Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan (FEFA) Executive Director Mohammad Yousaf Rashid told TOLONews. "But if they make efforts to deal with the process as a national process, and take advantage of the experience and recommendations of other institutions, then the outcomes will be constructive and they will not face challenges," he added.

Civil society groups have emphasized that the ERC's work should be conducted transparently. "To protect the sovereignty of the Electoral Reform Commission, our recommendation is that the door of the relevant commission be kept open for civil society institutions and media to monitor their meetings and the decisions that are made shouldn't be hidden from the people and civil society institutions," activist Humaira Saqib said on Monday.

The ERC officially started work last Wednesday and since then it has conducted four meetings. The commission has split into two committees, with one evaluating the legal framework of the election commissions and the other the structural framework of the election commissions. (Tolonews)

### (2) Haleem ...

mitment to protecting the Afghan constitution.

"The important job of the president is to protect the constitution," Ghani said. "But for this purpose the president needs a fully authorized and level-headed and reliable Supreme Court which of course emerges on the basis of the law."

In addition, Ghani said that the main aspect of the new Chief Justice's job should be the will of Allah, satisfaction of the Afghan nation and their confidence in the judicial system.

Ghani also touched on the implementation of reforms in various institutions by pledging full cooperation with the Supreme Court initiatives on reforms.

"I hope that the judges in the country accomplish their task with a clean conscience and wisdom," Ghani said.

The newly appointed chief justice also addressed the ceremony and thanked Ghani for having trusted him enough to appoint him to the position. He asked Ghani to be cooperative with him so that he could work effectively for the rule of law and in making the judicial system accessible to the people.

Haleem pledged to use all available resources to implement justice and to fight corruption.

Haleem has worked in the legal sector since the mid-1980s and has an illustrious career history behind him.

Among the positions he has held over the years includes Deputy Director of Legislation at the Institute of Legislative Affairs; Professional member of International Law of Legislation and the Institute of Legislative Affairs Department; General Director of Legislation at the Institute of Legislative Affairs; Deputy Administrative Minister (2009-2010) and Deputy Minister of Justice for Legal Affairs (2010-2014) among others.

He was awarded his Bachelor of Art in Law and Political Science from Kabul University in the early 1980s. (Tolonews)

### (3) AGO Still...

on Monday, the Attorney General's Office announced that the police arrested two of the defaulters at the airport while they were seeking to travel to the United Arab

Emirates (UAE).

"Two of the defaulters of the Kabul Bank on whom a travel ban was slapped have been arrested at the airport," Attorney General spokesman Basir Azizi said on Monday. "They owe 12,000 USD debt," he added.

In addition, the Attorney General's Office has said that its probe into the alleged embezzlement of millions of dollars by Ministry of Urban Development & Housing Affairs officials is near completion and that the results will be communicated to the public in full.

Regarding the embezzlement case, Azizi indicated the initial findings of probe suggest more than just the six officials may have been involved. The case largely turns on alleged corruption in the ministry's contracting and licensing processes. (Tolonews)

### (4) Governors Urge...

proving coordination on the zone level. Nangarhar, Laghman and Kunar governors after the meeting said they had discussed on mutual threats to the eastern zone and improving local governance.

Kunar Governor Eng. Wahidullah Kalimzai said that they prepared a list of security problems in the eastern provinces and then shared them with the Presidential Palace. To a question, Kalimzai said: "We demanded the central government to increase the number of border protection forces, because increasing the force was important for security."

Salim Khan Kunduzi, the governor of Nangarhar province, said the meeting also discussed to resolve problems in military and civil sectors in the eastern part of the country.

Laghman governor Abdul Jabbar Naimi said that they would utilize all available facilities to eliminate threats that challenging the security of the three provinces. (Pajhwok)

### (5) Saudi Arabia ...

Meanwhile, a source close to the Taliban delegation said Pakistani officials, who briefed the Saudi authorities on the Murree sitting, had facilitated the latest round of future negotiations.

Taliban's former deputy foreign minister Mullah Abdul Jalil and former ex-governor of Kandahar Mullah Mohammad Hassan Rahmani met Saudi officials at Pakistan's request. Some Pakistani officials also visited Riyadh to join the meeting.

The delegation held thoroughgoing discussions with top Saudi and Afghan officials, including Haji Din Mohammad, on the agenda of the dialogue.

One Afghan official confirmed Haji Din Mohammad's visit to Saudi Arabia and his meeting with the Taliban delegation and representatives from their Qatar bureau. However, he refused to give further details of the meeting. Taliban representatives from the Qatar office might participate in the second round of discussions, he hoped. (Pajhwok)

### (6) Salma Dam ...

gate and start of filling of the reservoir.

Amit Kumar Mishra said in a statement from the filling of the 20 kilometers long and 3.7 kilometers wide reservoir with a huge storage capacity would take nine to 12 months.

Salma dam is a \$ 300 million hydroelectric and irrigation project being constructed on Hari Rud River in Chiste Sharif district, with objectives of 42 MW power generation and irrigating 80,000 hectares of land.

It is flagship infrastructural project of India's developmental assistance programme to Afghanistan, the statement added.

The project includes construction of 107.5 m high and 550 m long rock-filled dam and other typical components of the hydroelectric power project such as spillways, a powerhouse, switchyard and a transmission line.

The statement said that the dam had faced several logistical constraints and security challenges contributing to a delay of several years and is now expected to be completed by mid-2016. (Pajhwok)

### (7) Details Surrounding...

members and points of agenda.

"This round of talks was scheduled to be held in China, but now Pakistan wants the talks to be held in Pakistan. We expect that this dialogue will be held on the basis

of the agreement in the first round of talks," said Qasimyar. Meanwhile, a number of former Taliban commanders have said that the continuation of peace talks are meaningless without a ceasefire.

"Peace talks should stop the war in Afghanistan and should prevent the continued killing of civilians in the country. Continuation of the talks coinciding with war and bloodshed has no worth and is reason to stop the war," said former Taliban commander Abdul Salam Raketi. (Tolonews)

### (8) All Resources ...

governmental organisations (NGOs)," she promised.

During the last two days, she has found many administrative departments in provincial capital and districts did not have any building. She promised to bring about positive changes in the lives of people with the help and cooperation of the local residents. "There was some opposition in the beginning, but this is a society's right to agree or disagree regarding some issues. In a democratic government the people have the right to express their agreement or disagreements."

Muradi said even those elders that had expressed disagreement over appointment would work in bringing the province out of the trouble. Nasrullah Sadeqizada, lawmaker from Daikundi, complained the government did not pay heed to their requests and had imposed the new governor on them. (Pajhwok)

### (9) Saleh Announces...

"The fact is that the enemies are the foreigners who strive to divide the people of Afghanistan by name, language and so on to score points for themselves and to provoke people's sentiments against each other," Saleh said on Monday. "They want to use a weak Afghanistan for their own benefits," he added.

Saleh maintained that Afghanistan's enemies believe the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) lack backing from the international community and can be easily defeated.

The stated principles and objectives of the memorandum of understanding are to defend the independence and territorial integrity of the country, protect the Afghan flag, defend the principles and values of the Constitution and fight against all kinds of discrimination.

"Defending the nation's sovereignty, national unification, national flag, territorial integrity, political activities and civil freedoms are our job," Green Trend member Sayed Abdul Hadi Hedayat told TOLONews. "The raising of other flags alongside the national flag means the division of Afghanistan." (Tolonews)

### (10) German-Funded ...

building will house the district governor's office.

Key government departments such as education, finance, agriculture, district court, rural development and municipal offices will be housed in the building. In addition, 15 offices, a conference hall, a kitchen and sanitary facilities provide 50 civil servants with a better working environment. Abdul Rashid Ibrahim, the governor's representative, said at the opening ceremony: "The people of Raghistan will benefit from the building as the district civil servants will provide better services to the population."

Ibrahim and Rustam Khan, Raghistan's district governor, were joined by 100 civil servants, head of the District Development Assembly (DDA), Community Development Council (CDC) chief, as well as religious leaders and elders.

The construction of the building is aimed at providing local communities with better government services. The building is a new point of contact for the district population which faces social, cultural and economic challenges.

Improved facilities will support the district's civil servants in providing the necessary services to the inhabitants. As a consequence, the profile of Raghistan's district government can be strengthened.

The financial means came from the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). As part of the Afghan-German Cooperation programme, the RCDF is implemented by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. The RCDF provides support for its

Afghan partners' development priorities both on provincial and district levels in six of Afghanistan's northern provinces. (Pajhwok)

### (11) USAID Launches ...

vocational school or university degree, are participating in a series of mentoring and practical activities, in order to develop the knowledge and skills that will lead to senior positions in government, the private sector and civil society.

"This program will empower young women," said Dilbar Nazari, Afghan Minister of Women's Affairs. "They are honing their skills and building confidence in their ability to make informed decisions that lead to sustained social change in their homes, communities, and country." The program is conducted in close partnership with the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Higher Education.

Program participants were selected through an open and transparent process by a Participant Selection Committee comprised of eight professional men and women from government, civil society, public and private sectors.

In the next two months, the program will be offered to over 800 women from Kabul, Jalalabad, Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif and Kandahar. By 2019, 18,000 high-achieving, young educated women representing all 34 provinces will have participated and honed their leadership skills.

"USAID is partnering with the government of Afghanistan, the private sector and civil society to achieve what technology, ingenuity and progress have now made possible: An Afghanistan where the most vulnerable are lifting themselves up and contributing to a stable, resilient democratic society," said Lida Hedayat, USAID PROMOTE Women's Leadership Development Deputy Chief of Party. (Pajhwok)

### (12) Over a Dozen ...

had been destroyed in the air assault.

Security forces and Taliban locked in heavy clashes in Tigraran locality of the district for four days and finally the military post in the locality fell to insurgents with more than 100 security forces held captive by the group.

However, provincial Police Chief accused Afghan Local Police (ALP) and border police for their alleged surrender to Taliban in Warduj district.

Gen. Baba Jan absolved police and blamed on Nazirullah Shah, a senior border police official in the north and ALP for reaching a shameful deal with the enemy and handing them over a strategically important base in the north.

He, on his facebook wall questioned the surrender of border police and ALP commanders at a time when they did not run short of weapons and other equipments. (Pajhwok)

### (13) Mafia Groups...

struction of the Sher Khan Port residential township.

Amruddin Wali, deputy provincial council head, said what has been done so far by the government was not satisfactory. "Kunduz residents suffer from the conflicts and the government should focus more on security and later on development as well."

Mohammad Amin, a local elder, said unless security was ensured there would be no chance for reconstruction efforts.

He said Dasht-i-Archi district and Gortapa locality was in control of Taliban and people were getting killed for different reasons there. "Kunduz residents do not need any construction or development. Their only need currently is security."

The governor said illegal gunmen were the roots for all problems in the province and without controlling them no security would be ensured.

Around 7,000 illegal gunmen and 2,400 insurgents are active in the province, contributing to the insecurity of Kunduz. (Pajhwok)

### (14) Kabul Urged ...

the two sides.

"We have conveyed our reservations with regard to Pakistani construction to the central government in Kabul to take action," Shareq said.

Afghan forces were capable of providing security, enjoying complete support from the local communities, he said, adding his top priority was curbing corruption, improving health facilities and

education and reducing the gap between local communities and government.

Shariq, who took over as governor about one and a half month ago, said the people had great trust in security forces to maintain security in the area. "I will never allow any official to neglect his/her responsibility and I have assigned a specific time period to complete tasks and then submit a report," he added.

He urged local communities to extend support for controlling administrative corruption in the province. Foreign aid, he said, had declined in the recent past, yet he was employing all resources to keep up the pace of reconstruction projects.

The governor promised continued efforts for improvement in the education sector and support for better relations among the tribes. He asked the departments concerned for consensus on developing the province. (Pajhwok)

### (15) 22 Killed in ...

erupted during the music programme. All victims were civilians, he added.

Salman, an eyewitness, said: "Scores of gunmen arrived at the wedding party and everyone opened fire. Twenty people including two minors were injured, three of them critically. The firing led to a gunbattle at 8:00pm.

Dr. Nazir, a worker at Deh Salah district clinic, said four wounded persons were brought to the hospital. But Baghlan Civil Hospital spokesman Dr. Shah Mohammad Hafia said 22 people including two children were killed in the incident.

He said that six injured persons were shifted to Baghlan Civil Hospital while the two critically injured were referred to Kunduz hospital.

Deh Salah district is one of the central districts in Baghlan and Shah Shan village is around an hour drive from the district center.

Gunmen who had illegal weapons killed three brothers' ages between 25 and 37 because of old family disputes some two weeks back in Aandrab area of Banu district.

Shah Jehan, member of Aandrab provincial council, blamed Afghan Local Policemen commanders for inflicting casualties on civilians. (Pajhwok)

### (16) Mullah Yaqoub...

break-away group of the Taliban known as Fidayee Mahaz issued a statement stating that Mullah Omar died 24 months before.

Fidayee Mahaz claimed that there are strong evidences to prove the death of Mullah Mohammad Omar, the supreme leader of Taliban.

The News that has published this story under the name of Rahimullah Yousufzai, a renowned Pakistani journalist who has been reporting on Afghanistan for more than 20 years and on Taliban since its establishment, further states that Mullah Mansoor desire to lead the Taliban but he is facing criticism from several other Taliban leaders.

According to The News, those who oppose Mullah Mansoor back the selection of Mullah Mohammad Yaqoub and consider him as a legitimate and worthy successor to his father, Mullah Mohammad Omar.

The News further quotes its sources that a conclave was organized among senior Taliban leaders in which Mullah Omar's younger brother Abdul Manan also took part.

It reports that the meeting decided to give the leadership of Taliban to Mullah Mohammad Yaqoub if his father's death is confirmed. (KP)

### (17) Train Kids in ...

to study different subjects against their choice.

He said Afghans in the past also did not encourage music and a musician was called a barber, a name widely used for poor people. Music is banned in schools because Afghanistan is an Islamic country and most of scholars oppose it.

But the Afghanistan National Institute of Music (ANIM) was the only venue that trained orphans and teenager girls in music. ANIM Director Dr. Ahmad Naser Sarmast told Pajhwok Afghan News his institute was currently training 175 students including children.

There were only three girls in the institute learning music in 1991, when the war had not broken out in Afghanistan, but now the number has increased to 50. "It is the first time in Afghanistan that a

large number of girls learning music together with boys in the same class."

Tens of boys and girls have graduated from the institute, which reopened in 2010 after years of closure due to war and violence.

Islamuddin Piroz, director of Music and Arts at Kabul University, said that parents should note their children's interests from childhood and support them in learning. Graduates from the faculty of arts should also train children at the kindergarten level. (Pajhwok)

### (18) Poor Medical...

Niazi further shared details that all health specialists were available and the daily out patients department (OPD) reached to around 800 patients. He urged the community to donate blood so that the hospital blood bank serve the patients properly. (Pajhwok)

### (19) Pakistani Military...

Provincial Governor of eastern Kunar province said that the Pakistani military stopped firing rockets into Afghanistan after the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) recently summoned the Pakistani Ambassador in Kabul over the issue.

Ahmad Shekib Mustaghni, a MoFA spokesman said at the time the government is determined to settle the issue with Pakistan. "The attacks resulted in the killing of four civilians, including a woman, and two others who were wounded," he said.

"The Pakistani Ambassador promised the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs to share the concerns of Afghanistan with his respective government"

Pakistan first launched cross-border attacks on Afghan soil - in the eastern provinces - in 2010.

Pakistani officials have long denied the attacks, or claimed they were in response to attacks by militants originating in Afghanistan. Since the establishment of the National Unity Government, the attacks have however, decreased considerably. (Tolonews)

### (20) Helmand Farmers...

"We don't have exact survey but have noticed heavy cultivation of basil this year," he added.

The basil crop has good return in terms of money abroad therefore farmers have given preference to cultivate the crop, he said, adding that directorate of agriculture has developed good plans to focus on the cultivation of basil since it could be a better replacement of opium.

Ahlullah, a farmer of Nawa district, said: "Half acre of land can produce at least 500 kilograms of basil. Farmers have cultivated basil without any proper support from the government." Haji Kochi, a farmer, said that 4.5 kilograms of basil could be sold at the rate of 2,000 Pak Rupees. "Basil crop has good market and demand with higher price than other crops," he added. (Pajhwok)

### (21) Yet to Hear...

criticized comments by Republican candidate Donald Trump about senator and 2008 Republican presidential nominee John McCain, a war veteran, saying presidential debates deserved better. (Reuters)

### (22) Obama Challenges...

its key strongholds following a major offensive by AU troops - with Ethiopian troops and their local allies credited with doing much of the fighting. While the United States does not have boots on the ground, it carries out frequent drone strikes against Shebab leaders. (AFP)

### (23) Turkey has...

operating with us should be protected," the report quoted Davutoglu as saying. The two countries also have agreed to speed up training and equipment delivering to a desired level, he said, noting that more cooperation with the coalition forces will be available including the use of Incirlik airbase in Turkey. Davutoglu also said the Kurdish Democratic Union of Kurdistan (PYD) in northern Syria could "have a place in the new Syria" if it does not disturb Turkey, cuts all relations with Syrian regime and cooperates with Syrian rebels. Turkey has agreed to allow manned and unmanned U.S. warplanes to launch air raids on the IS extremist group from airbases on Turkish soil. (Xinhua)

### (24) Saudi-Led...

troops, witnesses said. Military sources said 11 rebels, five civilians and four loyalists were killed. In Marib to the east of Sanaa, rebels launched an offensive against loyalist positions, residents said. (AFP)