

**(1) No Peace Until ...**

could be taken so far.

Sidiqi believed peace and stability would not return to Afghanistan until Pakistan took real action against militants and terrorists. (Pajhwok)

**(2) Afghanistan's 2019 ...**

areas and in polling centres that are relatively secure and accessible. This should be kept in mind when reading the four provincial observation reports. Even so, they provide key clues as to what the likely themes and controversies will be in the coming weeks. All four observation reports describe election day as it took place in the respective provincial capitals. In Kandahar city, security was much better than anticipated (although there were a few security incidents). Turnout, however, was still low – according to all interlocutors, it was significantly lower than the 2018 parliamentary election. Taloqan city in Takhar had faced a week-long power outage and the shutdown of telecommunication and internet networks on election day, which hampered communications and reporting for all involved. This was also the case in Herat and Zabul. Turnout in Taloqan was again observed as low. In Wardak, even in Maidan Shahr, polling seems to have been heavily affected by Taleban attacks, so much so that even the relatively low turnout reported by the IEC looks like it may well be inflated. In Balkh, finally, Mazar-e Sharif was secure, but turnout reported to be extremely low compared to the parliamentary election.

The observed low turnout, even in provincial capitals that were relatively safe, was across the board. It was blamed on fear of the Taleban making good on their threats of violence and on disappointment with the government in particular and the electoral process in general. In most provinces, there had also been a noticeable lack of campaigning and accompanying local political jockeying. This was particularly noticeable in Kandahar. In Herat – as will be reported on separately – local figures of influence only came out at the last minute out in favour of their favoured presidential candidates. Another factor may have been the absence of organised transport, which in other presidential elections was often provided by campaign teams or local candidates who were running for the simultaneous parliamentary or provincial council election.

In all places where people did come out to vote, observers noted some problems with the Biometric Voter Verification (BVV) process, resulting in the sending away of some voters who had registered but whose names could not be found on the lists or whose QR code was not accepted. The IEC's decision in the middle of the day to allow people to vote without BVV in these cases means that there are now, again, several categories of votes. There is already confusion and disagreement over whether they will be tallied as valid votes or not.

Of all the four provinces observed, Kandahar seems the most likely candidate for closer scrutiny. As a populated province, it brings in a large number of potential votes and the turnout figure as released by the IEC seems inflated, compared to what was observed. (1) Separate AAN reports are forthcoming about how the elections went in Herat, Zabul, Bamyan and Daikundi. (AAN)

**(3) Work Launched ...**

that the new hospital would be built on seven acres of land in four stories.

He said the National Procurement Authority (NPA) has signed the project contract worth 357.6 million afghanis with Sefat Construction Company and the project would take three years to complete. (Pajhwok)

**(4) Khalilzad Meets ...**

Taliban delegation deliberated for more than an hour over issues related to peace talks.

The meeting was held to restore trust between the two sides and was not a formal huddle.

US foreign office said Khalilzad has been in Islamabad for a long time and added the meeting with Taliban was not held for the purpose to restart US, Taliban talks.

The Taliban have not talked about the recent development. (Pajhwok)

**(5) Afghan's Torture ...**

a rumor that the man was engaged in a fight with local people over a family issue and he was seriously injured or killed", the source said. (Pajhwok)

**(6) Presidential Vote ...**

urging the election watchdogs and representatives of candidates to share real results on social media in coordination

with IEC. (Pajhwok)

**(7) Pakistan-Taliban ...**

said that it was time to make all possible efforts for an early, peaceful resolution of the conflict in Afghanistan, according to a statement issued by Pakistan's foreign ministry.

He said that Pakistan would continue to support all efforts to achieve permanent peace in Afghanistan which was essential for Pakistan's own social-economic development and progress.

He reiterated that there was no military solution to the complex situation in Afghanistan, saying an inclusive peace and reconciliation process, involving all sections of the Afghan society, was the only, practical way forward.

According to Qureshi, US-Taliban talks had now laid a firm ground for achieving a sustainable peace deal in Afghanistan.

"A pacific settlement of the conflict would lead to a significant reduction of violence, end of bloodshed and long-term peace, stability and prosperity for future generations of Afghanistan," he said.

He hoped that the currently paused peace process would restart at an early date.

A statement issued by the Taliban said that they discussed relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan, political issues and peace.

They discussed also Afghan refugees' health, education and facilitation of visa, according to the statement.

US-Taliban peace talks collapsed after US President Donald Trump declared them dead last month citing a deadly attack in Kabul. (ITV News)

**(8) Takhar on Verge ...**

neglect a huge disaster will happen.

"Takhar is a strategic province. It is on the verge of collapse. Several districts fall to the hand of insurgents," said Sayed Ulfat, a civil society activist.

"Taloqan City is under siege," said Nasir Rostae, a protester.

"Security forces have been deployed but they have not received the order to launch operations," said Nabillah, another protester.

However, a senior military official said that Taliban militants have been pushed back from the outskirts of the City.

General Yasin Zia, Afghan deputy defense minister who is leading the military operation in Takhar province, said that the security forces are conducting their operation with accuracy to avoid civilian casualties.

"As you can see, the security situation is normal. The enemies have retreated and there is no threat," Mr. Zia said.

"There is no threat over Taloqan City. A joint military operation is underway in the province and will continue until there is no threat," said Nusrat Rahimi, the interior ministry spokesman.

This comes as the Taliban militants have gained ground in parts of Takhar province including Khawaja Ghar, Baharak and Chah Ab district since several days and are fighting Afghan forces. (ATN)

**(9) 29 More Historic ...**

Palace is built 2,340 years ago during the Empire of Alexander the Great and is located in old Kandahar city.

According to history, Alexander the Great built 12 such palaces in this region but only Naraj Palace remains intact while the others had vanished.

Naraj Palace is also mostly damaged and only a hill of the palace could be seen as its sign.

There are still historical objects buried under the palace and some of them have been trafficked to foreign countries during the war. (Pajhwok)

**(10) Airstrikes Kill ...**

Nahr-e Saraj districts of Helmand and 1 Taliban militant was killed and another one was wounded in Qalat district of Zabul.

Similarly, the airstrikes killed 7 Taliban fighters in Baraki district of Logar and 4 other militants in Giro district of Ghazni.

The officials also added that the airstrikes destroyed a stolen Humvee Armored Personnel Carrier and a small cache of weapons. (Khaama Press)

**(11) Torsan Entertained ...**

if there is no rigging in the election.

Torsan has become famous recently after people created social media accounts in his name and photoshopped his pictures for mocking and uploaded them to these accounts. Some of the fake Facebook accounts are following. A fake facebook account in Torsan name shows Torsan is meeting with US Ambassador to Afghanistan John Bass in which the US envoy congratulates him on becoming the president of Af-

ghanistan. (Pajhwok)

**(12) Torkham: Speedy ...**

zero point must end, they stressed, suggesting the installation of another scanning machine for swift checking of vehicles.

He also demanded doing away with manual checking of loaded vehicles both by security forces and custom staff and suggested use of modern technology by installation of quality scanning machines. (Pajhwok)

**(13) Security Forces ...**

convoy was heading to evacuate the bodies and injured NDS personnel.

After the blast choppers reached the areas and bombed their targets. Fighting continued for several hours and tens of passengers and civilian stranded on main highway. (Pajhwok)

**(14) 104 Human ...**

operations against 34 networks and arrested 41 human traffickers.

The Ministry of Interior (MoI) also detected 122 human trafficking cases and detained 63 persons in connection with them and introduced them to judicial organs.

The justice minister 75 of the detainees had so far been sentenced to various jail terms according to the country's panel code.

He added cooperative institutions, the High Commission on Human and Refugee Trafficking had provided their support in areas of health, training and psychological to 1,050 victims and many had reunited with their families. The commission also provided health-care, psychological, social facilities to 8,600 returning refugees. (Pajhwok)

**(15) Balkh Disables ...**

was disabled and this number might double after four years.

"With every blast and suicide attack, the number of disabled and handicapped people grow," she noted.

More work was needed for bringing peace and stability to the country and ending the bloodshed and fighting, stressed Mohammadi.

She said people never trusted the abilities of disabled people and therefore this special segment of the society lived in difficult situation.

Latifa Talash, a resident of Khulm district, lost her leg and her face partly burnt as a result of the conflict, said her family members now did not pay attention to her disability despite being dependent on them most of the time. She said her uncles, cousins and other family members mocked her disability and created problems for her.

Latifa said she never surrendered to the difficulties and despite all challenges she started school and now she was in 10th class.

She said besides schooling she had learned how to weave carpet and through this way she arranged money for her expenses.

She asked the Taliban and the Afghan government to stop fighting and resolve the conflict through dialogue.

Another disabled woman Suraya also stressed that peace should be given priority than everything else in the existing situation.

"Peace talks were paused for the sake of elections and avert a crisis. People voted but now it looks a post-election crisis may emerge. Our demand is that peace should be given priority." She said the conflict only inhaled more and more Afghans every day. (Pajhwok)

**(16) Hard-Line Taliban ...**

UN General Assembly, told the American news outlet: "Now we are in a very good place to begin real peace negotiations. It was not all a waste. I think there are parts we can salvage," adding that they are analyzing what prevailed and what can be redeemed for future use.

He said the Taliban had said they would blow up polling stations but fourteen suicide attacks were prevented on the night before the elections alone. "On the day, (they) tried to launch 273 attacks, some did result in casualties in the case of security forces, but no civilians were harmed. I'm very proud of our security forces of being able to manage such a high-level of threats."

"We wanted to make sure the elections happened, and security was good, we focused on that and delivered on that," Mohib asserted. "We have re-created our country out of the rubble in the last 20 years. There was literally nothing there. The man-made infrastructure was destroyed. "Now Kabul looks like any other capital. People are connected, culturally sophisticated, tech-savvy. That is the biggest progress in the world, and we have the US to thank for that." (Pajhwok)

**(17) Russia Helping ...**

military soon tested a new land-based

cruise missile that would have been banned under the treaty.

Both Moscow and Beijing have warned that Washington's decision would only lead to a new global arms race.

This week, China debuted a range of new weapons including its much-touted hypersonic DF-17 missile. The weapon can in theory re-enter the atmosphere at several times the speed of sound and maneuver in such a way that none of the existing missile defense systems can intercept it.

Russia successfully tested its own hypersonic weapon, dubbed Avangard, last year.

Putin also said Thursday that China was ready to buy as much soy beans from Russia as it can produce.

"They are ready to buy from us as much as we can produce, but the issue is we are not ready for this now... not yet ready for such volumes," Putin said.

The remarks came as a raging trade war between China and the US has led Beijing to impose tariffs on soy beans coming from the US. (Presstv)

**(18) New Zealand ...**

New Zealand's aviation system, the government will also reimburse aircraft owners for a portion of the cost of installing ADS-B transponders. The ADS-B Transponder Grant will be available to approximately 4,000 general aviation operators in New Zealand.

"ADS-B technology will bring numerous safety benefits to our aviation system; we understand small aircraft operators will face cost obstacles," the minister said, adding these funding decisions work towards a future in which unmanned aircraft could be a part of the everyday life of New Zealanders. (Xinhua)

**(19) Indian Army ...**

the residents and scared people took refuge at safer locations and inside bunkers.

Media reports said a woman was killed and three others wounded in Neza Pir sector on Pakistani side of LoC due to firing from Indian side.

For the past several days there has been a consistent increase in cease-fire violations along LoC and International Border.

New Delhi and Islamabad accuse each other of resorting to unprovoked firings and violating cease-fire agreements. And both sides maintain their troops gave befitting reply to the other side.

LoC is a de facto border that divides Kashmir into India and Pakistan controlled parts. (Xinhua)

**(20) Turkey, U.S. Hold ...**

helicopter flights on Monday over the planned safe zone. Turkey also flies F-16 fighters jets in the area. (Xinhua)

**(21) Thailand, Myanmar ...**

in Myanmar.

Jurin said options including opening the bridge until midnight and upgrading quality of border markets are being discussed between Thailand and Myanmar.

The Department of Foreign Trade's latest data indicated that border trade between Thailand and Myanmar over the first eight months of 2019 was valued at 133.86 billion baht (4.396 billion U.S.dollars), marking an increase of 4.73 percent from the same period last year.

However, exports were only worth 68.9 billion baht (2.262 billion U.S. dollars), down by 4.1 percent, while imports accounted for 64.9 billion baht (US 2.131 dollars), up 16.08 billion.

Jurin said Thailand's main exports to Myanmar included diesel and refined oil, capital goods, construction tools and machinery. (Xinhua)

**(22) Hong Kong's Richest ...**

the political crisis disrupts business, particularly in retail and other services. The faltering economy is also suffering from China's slowdown and the trade war.

Further details about how the foundation's money will be used is pending discussions with the government.

Li and other real estate tycoons are facing pressure from China over the protests. State-run media organizations have criticized the city's property developers and blamed them for rising home prices.

Spiking home prices are «the cause of the disease of Hong Kong's social turmoil," state-owned Xinhua News Agency wrote in a commentary published last month.

Xinhua called on the city to take back land from developers and offer more affordable housing as a way of appeasing public anger.

«It's time for the Hong Kong develop-

ers to show their uttermost goodwill," wrote the People's Daily, the ruling Communist Party's official newspaper, in a separate commentary last month. The article urged Hong Kong developers to give their undeveloped land to the government.

«This is the only way to be responsible for Hong Kong's future, to «give young people a way out,"» the paper said, in a thinly-veiled dig at a phrase Li used during a speech in early September. Li at that time said he hoped that «those in power» could give young people «a way out» of the political turmoil.

One other developer, New World Development (NDVLY), recently said it would donate up to 3 million square feet from its land reserves for public housing. (Edition)

**(23) Court Papers Show ...**

obey the law. It does not mean we will extend." (Politico)

**(24) Finland Agrees to ...**

1891 and hundreds of items eventually became part of the collection of the National Museum of Finland.

President Donald Trump and Finnish President Sauli Niinisto acknowledged the sanctity of the items to the more than two dozen tribes with cultural connections to the Mesa Verde region, best known for hundreds of stone dwellings that early inhabitants constructed in cliffsides, said U.S. Interior Secretary David Bernhardt.

The agreement ensures the remains and items will be brought "to their proper resting place in the U.S," Bernhardt said.

Clark Tenakhongva, vice chairman of the Hopi Tribe, said tribes hope to receive the collection by early next year and would ensure funerary items are buried with the remains in the general area where they were taken, accompanied by a ceremony.

"I know we'll work together as the various tribes that have interest in them," Tenakhongva said. "And how we process them will be the most carefully thought out plan so that we don't do any more harm than what's already been done."

The exact burial location won't be publicized to prevent the site from being disturbed.

"They need to be returned there so they can safely return to the spirit world, in the next world," he said. "Hopi always believe, like most cultures and people, when you pass on you're going to return to God or Jesus. And we return back to the hands of the creator who brought us here."

The agreement comes as U.S. lawmakers have pushed for legislation to ban collectors and vendors from exporting Native American ceremonial items. The proposal would close loopholes that have stifled efforts to retrieve Native American items that have shown up on the auction block in Paris.

In 2016, French dealers were forced to halt the sale of a ceremonial shield from Acoma Pueblo, a Native American village west of Albuquerque. Leaders from the New Mexico tribe said the shield was taken from their village decades ago.

A federal court earlier this year called for the shield to be released to the U.S. Embassy in Paris so it could be returned.

Efforts to return the Mesa Verde remains and items started in 2016 when tribes associated with the park began working with the Finnish museum to identify the collection's human remains and funerary objects. An inventory was completed last year.

Federal officials must now craft a plan for the transfer of the remains and items to the tribes and pueblos.

The Hopi Tribe in northeastern Arizona was among those leading the repatriation effort. The other tribes with links to Mesa Verde include the Navajo Nation, which spans parts of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah; the Southern Ute and Ute Mountain Ute in Colorado; 19 pueblos, and the Mescalero and Jicarilla Apache tribes in New Mexico; and Ysleta del Sur Pueblo in Texas.

Navajo President Jonathan Nez said the agreement is a step in the right direction. "This is an unfortunate and longstanding issue that many tribes have dealt with including the Navajo Nation," he said.

E. Paul Torres, chairman of the All Pueblo Council of Governors, said tribal leaders look forward to the repatriation and referred to the cultural items as "the sacred living footprints of our ancestors" and vital parts of the legacy that tribes strive to leave for future generations.

The excavations more than a century ago by the researcher Gustaf Nordenskiöld resulted in his arrest in 1891 when he tried to export the collection. He was later released because no U.S. laws had been broken. Hopi officials said the case helped to sway public perception about the importance of protecting cultural resources. Later, the 1906 Antiquities Act was adopted, and Mesa Verde was established as a national park. (apnews)