

Quote of the Day

The history of all previous societies has been the history of class struggles.
Karl Marx

Govt. Vows to Hold Parliamentary Elections on Time

KABUL - Amid concerns over a delay in parliamentary polls, the Presidential Palace on Tuesday said elections will be held on time.

"Government is committed to bringing reforms in elections and it will try to hold the parliamentary elections at its scheduled time," said President Ashraf Ghani's deputy spokesman Shah Hussain Murtazawi. Meanwhile, some senators and political electoral watchdog officials said they were concerned over a delay in holding parliamentary elections in the country.



"Those who have best views should be introduced for the electoral commis-

sions. They should have a national view and views based on the national interest," said

Senator Nisar Haris. "Most of the members of the Electoral Commissions' Se-

lection Committee have warned they will not start work until the president's reform decree is sent to parliament. Overall, we are faced with an election stalemate," said Habib Shinwari, a member of Election Watch Organization of Afghanistan. According to a recent poll, a large percentage of Afghans have said they are not satisfied with activities of MPs and senators they have elected in the previous election and that they have warned they will not participate in the upcoming parliamentary polls. (ToloneWS)

Senators Concerned Over Mounting Insecurity



KABUL - Senators on Tuesday at a plenary session of the Meshrano Jirga (Upper House of Parliament) expressed their deep concerns over mounting insecurity across the country. They said that government should not keep silent on the issue. They alleged that negligence of the National Unity Government (NUG) led to Monday's suicide attacks. Two deadly attacks took

place within hours of each other on Monday.

The first, on Monday morning killed two people and injured many more when a ministry of education staff bus hit a roadside mine in Kabul.

The second incident took place on Monday afternoon in Nangarhar when a suicide bomber rammed his rickshaw into a bus carrying Afghan National Army recruits. ...*(More on P4)...(1)*

MoPH Holds Workshop to Promote RMC Approaches



KABUL - The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) on Tuesday held the first Respectful Maternity Care (RMC) National Planning Workshop to foster a shared understanding of the problem of disrespect and abuse in maternity care.

MoPH officials engaged partners and stakeholders to mutually identify mechanisms to promote RMC approaches within existing services for mothers and children, the ministry said in a statement.

The workshop was attended by nearly 70 participants from MoPH, the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled.

Representatives of professional associations, donors, international and local non-governmental organizations, UN agencies, USAID's HEMAYAT- Mothers and Children Thrive Afghanistan project, and other stakeholders in the field of maternal, newborn, and child health were also in attendance.

Respectful Maternity Care is considered to be an essential component of quality maternal and newborn health services. The approach helps reduce or eliminate disrespect and abuse by healthcare workers during birth.

Disrespect and abuse are known to be a significant barrier to increasing the number of women who choose to deliver at a facility. Disrespect and abuse may include care given without providing the patient with a sense of dignity, without consent, without confidentiality, or with discrimination, abandonment or withholding of care and/or physical abuse. ...*(More on P4)...(4)*

Taliban Announce Launch of Spring Offensive



KABUL - A day after deadly attacks in Kabul and Nangarhar provinces, the resurgent Taliban on Tuesday announced the launch of their summer offensive codenamed 'Omari Operations'.

The summer operations would target US and NATO forces in the country, the militant movement said in a statement, as the Afghan conflict entered its 15th year.

More than 11,000 civilians were killed and injured in 2015, with the current year promising to be even bloodier. The outfit described fighting against the "evaders" a holy war its fighters would continue to wage.

Named after the group's founder Mullah Mohammad Omar, whose death was announced last year, the offensive had been approved by Taliban's leadership.

Some weeks back, the rebel outfit rejected a call from the Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG) involving Afghanistan, Pakistan, the United States and China is trying to join peace talks.

On Sunday, more than a dozen Afghan National Army recruits were killed in a suicide attack in the Surkhrod district of Nangarhar. Some education officials were killed in the Bagrami district of Kabul. (Pajhwok)

Govt. Set 2-Month Deadline to Fill Vacancies in Ministries

KABUL - Expressing concern over 25,000 vacant posts in ministries, the Wolesi Jirga gave the government a two-month deadline to fill the vacancies.

The lower house on Monday summoned the ministers of education and public health and also the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC) commissioner to brief lawmakers on vacant government posts. "It think a two-month deadline should be given



to the ministry of education, public health and all other ministries to fill the vacancies," second deputy speaker Nimatullah Ghafari said. "There are 25000 vacancies lying vacant in the

ministries and most of the posts are lying vacant in the ministry of education and the public health. Main causes of the issue should be identified," lawmaker Asadullah Sadati from central Daikun-

di province said. "The ministry of education needs another 13000 staff and the public works 2096. Officials should explain why the posts remain vacant," MP Daud Kalakani said.

A lawmaker from northern Balkh province, Abbas Ibrahimzada, said the situation stemmed from government leaders' internal rivalries as each party was trying to appoint their own people.

"Of total 12766 vacant posts, 1904 have been filled in ...*(More on P4)...(2)*

USAID Recognizes Afghan Entrepreneurs in the North

MAZAR-I-SHARIF - The USAID has appreciated its 35 Afghan partners in public-private alliances in the northern region for investing millions of dollars to expand their businesses and create hundreds of jobs.

The USAID-funded Assistance in Building Afghanistan by Developing Enterprise (ABADE) program held a ceremony on Sunday in Mazar-i-Sharif, the capital of northern Balkh province, to recognize the contribution of a select group of companies that in collaboration with the ABADE program invested more than \$3 million in expanding their busi-



nesses to create 700 new jobs over the next several years, the agency said in a statement on Tuesday. These investment partnerships span the full range of productive activity. Some work in food manufacturing and agribusiness, others work in clothing and furnishings production, construction materials production, metal ...*(More on P4)...(5)*

US Special Representative, Gen. Raheel Discuss Afghanistan



KABUL - A top US diplomat and the Pakistan army chief have conferred on reconciliation efforts in Afghanistan.

US Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard G. Olson met Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Gen. Raheel Sharif in Rawalpindi on Monday.

The overall regional security situation with particular reference to Afghanistan came under discussion during the meeting at the army headquarters. Ol-

son praised Pakistan's fight against the scourge of terrorism, a statement from the InterService-Public Relations (ISPR) said. Both Pakistan and the United States are part of the Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG), which also included Afghanistan and China. The four-nation group, trying to bring lasting peace to Afghanistan, has held four rounds of talks to bring the Afghan government and the Taliban to the negotiating table. (Pajhwok)

Police Killed in Insider Attack in Kandahar

KANDAHAR - At least five members of Afghanistan's border police force were killed in an insider attack in the southern province of Kandahar close to the frontier with Pakistan when a colleague opened fire on them before fleeing, officials said on Tuesday.

"Late last night, a border policeman opened fire on his colleagues and killed five of them. He crossed the border and went to Pakistan," Sameem Khapalwak, a spokesman for the provincial governor, said by telephone.

He said an investigation had begun into the incident, which occurred in the Wesh area of Spin Boldak district not far from Afghanistan's porous southern border with Pakistan.

A border police official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said seven police had been killed in the attack and the perpetrator had gone over to the Taliban.

The Taliban, who launched their spring offensive on Tuesday, said separately their forces had killed seven border police in the same district and seized a quantity of weapons and other equipment. Insider attacks, by soldiers or policemen firing either on other members of the Afghan security forces or on international forces in Afghanistan, have been an increasingly common feature of the 15-year war. (Reuters)

Analysts Blame Regional Players for Peace Talks Deadlock

KABUL - A number of experts believe that the countries involved in Afghanistan's peace process are working for their own interests only. They said that if government does not devise effective mechanisms for peace, the peace efforts will not yield any results.

"Insincerity of global and regional players - everyone wants to get to their own goals in Afghanistan's peace process - is one of the reasons behind the failure of peace talks," said Nasrullah Stankzai, a professor at Kabul University.

A number of analysts however lashed out at government's policy towards Pakistan.

"The government's peace methods and policies are completely ambiguous and ineffective," said Tahir Hashimi, another Kabul University professor.

This comes just hours after the Taliban announced their spring offensive.

"The Taliban's spring offensive is aimed at creating terror and it's not a new thing," said Shah Hussain Murtazawi, a deputy spokesman for President Ashraf Ghani, in reaction to the Taliban's announcement Tuesday of their spring offensive.

He said that Afghan security forces have also kicked off their offensive under the title of Shafaq and they have an upper hand over the militants. The High Peace Council (HPC) meanwhile is hopeful that the Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG) of Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and US will bring ...*(More on P4)...(7)*

Rula Ghani to Receive Asia Foundation Lotus Leadership Award



WASHINGTON - In recognition of her efforts to improve the quality of life for women in Afghanistan, First Lady Rula Ghani has been selected for the prestigious Lotus Leadership Award of Asia Foundation.

The first lady would be presented the award along with Carnegie Corporation at a glittering function in New York on May 11, a press release said on Tuesday.

"Afghan women are increasingly aware of their rights and hold political positions, but they are still limited by unemployment and illiteracy," the statement added.

Lotus Leadership Awards are presented to outstanding individuals and organizations having made significant contributions to the well-being of women and girls in Asia.

The Asia Foundation ...*(More on P4)...(3)*

Civilians Vulnerable Victims of Suicide Bombing in Afghanistan

KABUL - Civilians often pay high prices in the war-zones, particularly in Afghanistan as considerable number of the victims of three suicide bombings elsewhere in the country over the past seven days were civilians, according to officials.

Since beginning this month, three suicide bombings have rocked Parwan, Kandahar and the eastern Nangarhar province. About 12 recruits of national army were killed and 26 others injured in the latest one occurred outside Nangarhar's provincial capital Jalalabad city on Monday, according to defense ministry's statement.

However, local officials in Jalalabad put the number of casualties higher than reported by defense ministry, saying 13 people including 12 army recruits and the bomber had been killed and 40 others including 26 army recruits and 14 civilians sustained injuries, some in critical condition.

President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, in a statement blamed the enemies of Afghanistan for the deadly attack ...*(More on P4)...(6)*

NUG Leaders Asked to Fulfill Commitments



KABUL - The Council of Protection and Stability in Afghanistan on Tuesday called on the National Unity Government's (NUG) leaders to fulfill their promises, warning that unless they do so the new party will announce its stance towards government - after consultations with the people.

"Members of the council had a meeting today [Tuesday] where they decided to push government to implement its commitments," said the council spokesman Massoud Trishwal.

He added: "The NUG's activities are clear in the agreement signed between its leaders therefore they have to do what they committed." ...*(More on P4)...(8)*