

Jalalabad Clear 32°C 19°C	Ghazni Clear 24°C 9°C	Kandahar Clear 36°C 20°C	Mazar Partly Cloudy 28°C 17°C	Herat Partly Cloudy 32°C 14°C	Bamayan Clear 17°C 6°C	Kabul Clear 25°C 13°C
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Weather Forecast Brought to You by MTN Afghanistan

Tajik, Turkmen Leaders Call for Speeding up Construction of TAT Railway

DUSHANBE - Tajik President Emomali Rahmon and his Turkmen counterpart Gurbanguly Berdimukhamedov met on the sidelines of the 7th World Water Forum in Daegu, South Korea, on Sunday, the Tajik presidential press service said Monday. The sides discussed a wide range of issues related to state and prospects of further expansion of bilateral cooperation between Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. Rahmon and Berdimukhamedov also exchanged views on trade, economic, transport, energy and cultural coop-



eration between their countries. They noted that the construction of the railway Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Turkmenistan (TAT) need to be speeded up and to implement all the agreements signed between the two countries. A memorandum of understanding on the railway connecting Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Turkmenistan was signed by presidents of the three nations in Ashgabat on March 20, 2013. The first track of the cross-border railway was laid in July 2013, which is expected to be completed in 2015. (Avesta)

Khalifa Foundation Distributes Aid to 2,000 Families

Over three days, aid items including food, blankets and household supplies were distributed to families in various areas.

KABUL - The Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation has distributed aid relief to 2,000 underprivileged families in the Nimruz province in the southwest of Afghanistan, a region beset with scarcity of drinking water where most of the population live below the poverty line. The aid campaign was implemented in coordination with the Humanitarian and Development Assistance Attache linked with the UAE Embassy in Kabul. Over three days, aid items including food, blankets and household supplies were distributed to families in various areas. Beneficiary families, local officials, and senior tribal leaders praised the organisation's efforts in helping the disadvantaged in Kabul. (Wam)

Regional Nations Fighting Proxy War in Afghanistan: MoFA

KABUL - Head of strategic studies at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Faramarz Tamanna on Monday announced that regional harmony and solidarity was critical in the move to restore long term peace



and stability in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, a number of religious scholars have said optimism over Pakistan's help to bring the Taliban to the negotiation tables was a mistake. They claim that fundamental reforms in the structures and strategies of the High Council of Peace (HPC) should first take place.

At a meeting held jointly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, HPC and religious scholars in Kabul on Monday - under the theme "Mobilizing Public Mindset for Peace" - scholars emphasized that Pakistan was not honest in its attempts to get the Taliban to the negotiation tables. They warned the government not to trust Islamabad.

"What the regional countries have resorted to in recent years has been to accuse Afghanistan of being behind the problems in the region and of being the creator of all problems in Afghanistan," religious scholar Jaffar Qondozi said. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs raised the issue of the proxy war by regional countries in Afghanistan. MoFA said that to restore peace in Afghanistan, regional countries must put aside their economic and political issues.

"The fact is that today I do not trust the neighboring countries. We should have a clear understanding of who we are going to talk to and meet with about reconciliation," Faramarz Tamanna said. Despite these issues, the Afghanistan High Peace Council HPC is still optimistic about the peace talks with the Taliban.

"New ideas have emerged about peace and the President (Ashraf Ghani) and the Chief Executive (Abdullah Abdullah) are both trying for..." (More on P4)...(15)

Torkham Scale's Income Increases after Inquiry

JALALABAD - Income from the Torkham scale has increased and corruption decreased after a delegation started monitoring the facility in eastern Nangarhar province on the border with Pakistan, a public representative said on Sunday.

Speaking at a gathering at the Governor's House here in honour of the provincial council members, the council chief, Ahmad Ali Hazrat, said the monitoring by the delegation had resulted in increased income of the weighbridge.

The delegation includes provincial council members and officials. Suhrab Qaderi, a PC member who leads the delegation, praised for the monitoring team for reducing corruption at the scale.

The delegation has been tasked with investigating corruption at the scale and introducing to judiciary organs those found guilty. The delegation has referred four Public Works Ministry employees to the attorney's office for failing to combat corruption at the scale after they were deployed there as observers.

Deputy Governor Mohammad Hanif ... (More on P4)...(8)

Afghan Missions Abroad Serve as Inns for Aging Diplomats

KABUL - Afghanistan is though relatively small country but it has over 1,000 diplomats, with majority of them have been appointed on nepotism basis, findings by Pajhwok Afghan News (PAN) show.

The findings reveal that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) has over 1,400 personnel who serve in missions abroad, Kabul and across many provinces. Afghanistan has 60 political missions across



the world. Analysts believe having 1,000 diplomats in a country with 27 million inhabitants is a huge figure compared to other countries in the region and their active diplomatic involvement in the world. ... (More on P4)...(7)

Insecurity in Provinces Prevents Prosecutors from Going to Work

KABUL - A group of prosecutors gathered outside the Commission for Addressing House Complaints building in Kabul on Sunday in protest over their growing concerns for their safety in the provinces.

According to them, President Ashraf Ghani's legal adviser recently ordered them to visit provinces and resolve issues in those areas. However the prosecutors have re-



fused to go citing insecurity as the reason. "We don't have any problem visiting provinces, but government must ensure our safety. How can we ensure our safety. ... (More on P4)...(9)

Mother Dies after Hearing Her Son is among the 31 Hostages

KABUL - An 80-year-old mother has died of a heart attack after hearing the news that her son was among 31 bus passengers abducted about two months ago in Zabol province.

Safar Ali, the woman's 70-year-old husband, who came to Kabul from Malistan district, Ghazni, told TOLOnews that his wife had a heart attack about 10 days ago after being told, belatedly, that her son was among the hostages kidnapped while traveling along the Kabul-Kandahar highway on February 24.

"My wife had heart disease, and she didn't know about our son's abduction," Ali said. "She died of a heart attack on hearing the news. I may also die one day here in this [protest] camp."

Meanwhile, a mother of three, whose husband is also among those abducted, warned that if her husband is not released soon she will set herself on fire.

"As long as the passengers are not released, I will not leave ... (More on P4)...(10)

Minister-Designate for Culture Found Dual Citizen

KABUL - Minister-designate for Information and Culture, Abdul Bari Jehani, has been found holding dual nationality, the Wolesi Jirga secretary said on Monday.

Abdul Rauf Inami told Pajhwok Afghan News they had vetted documents of all the 16 newly-introduced cabinet nominees.

He said the documents of all, except Jehani, were ac-

ceptable to the national assembly until his American nationality was confirmed cancelled by the authorities concerned.

The remaining 16 ministers-designate were introduced to the lower house for a vote of confidence by the second vice president earlier this month.

Inami said they had sent letters to the Ministry of Foreign ... (More on P4)...(11)

Protest Held for Swift Recovery of Kidnapped Passengers

KABUL - Some university students in capital Kabul on Monday staged a protest in front of parliament house demanding swift recovery of 31 abducted passengers. They warned to launch series of demonstrations if the government failed to take immediate action for the release of kidnapped Hazara men. The passengers were picked up from two buses nearly two months ago on the road between southern Kandahar province and Kabul in the Shahjoy district of



southern Zabol province. The men were returning from Iran when masked gunmen, believed to be members of the so-called Islamic State group, kidnapped them at gunpoint. ... (More on P4)...(12)

Taliban Reject UNAMA Report on Civilian Casualties

KABUL - Taliban on Monday categorically condemned the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) recent report showing a continuing trend of record high civilian casualties, with deaths and injuries from ground engagements in Afghanistan remaining the leading cause.

A statement released by the UNAMA said on Sunday that, with the release of UNAMA's findings from the first quarter of 2015, UNAMA called on all parties to the conflict to recognize and act to prevent harm to civilians. "With the seasonal resump-



tion of higher levels of conflict-related violence, the United Nations urges all parties to the conflict to take all necessary measures to protect civilians," said Nicholas Haysom, the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan and head of UNAMA.

In a statement to Pajhwok Afghan News, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid rejected the UNAMA report and alleged that "casualties from Afghan government forces are shown less while foreign troops are totally cleared. "The report is nothing but a pack of

partiality and propaganda campaign against Taliban," Mujahid added.

In the first three months of 2015, civilian casualties from ground engagements rose by eight per cent compared to the same period in 2014. Ground fighting between pro-government forces and anti-government elements caused 521 civilian casualties, with 136 civilians killed and 385 injured. Haysom said UNAMA was particularly concerned about the impact on civilians of further conflict-related operations by the Afghan National Security Forces and anti-government elements ... (More on P4)...(13)

Soldiers' Beheading Confirmed in Badakhshan Fighting

FAIZABAD - An unconfirmed number of officers of Afghan National Army (ANA) have been detained for demonstrating laxity following reports of casualties suffered by 33 ANA soldiers, with some of them gone missing, in intense fighting in the Jurm district of northeastern Badakhshan province, the Ministry of Defense (MoD) said on Monday.

According to a statement from the MoD, some army officials had been detained and

a high-powered team sent to the area to investigate the incident thoroughly.

Around 200 militants led by Maulvi Amanuddin, Taliban's shadow governor, stormed ANA posts in Khastak area of Juram district last Friday.

Twenty militants, including foreign fighters, were killed and 17 others wounded in the ensuing battle, the statement added.

It added that 33 ANA personnel, with some of them were killed, ... (More on P4)...(14)