Clashes Ongoing Near Kunduz City: Officials

KUNDUZ CITY - The Kunduz city, in the north of Afghanistan, came under Taliban attack hours after the group announced its so-called spring offensive, local officials said.

The attack was launched on the outskirts of Kunduz city at 2am on Saturday, said Enamuddin Rahmani, a spokesman for Kunduz police.

"Taliban started the attack on Kunduz city from different directions last night at around 2pm, but they faced with a strong response by security forces and their attack was foiled," Rahmani said. "Sporadic clashes are ongoing in some parts of the outskirts of Kunduz city."

"Security forces are ready to protect the people. The residents should not be worried," he reiterated.

Some families were displaced after the conflicts started, residents said.

"I am living in Chele Mazar area (on the outskirts) of Kunduz city. We have been displaced and clashes are ongoing," said Sher Khan, a Kunduz resident.

Head of Kunduz Provincial Council, Safiullah Amiri, said the situation is "worrying" and that it needs "proper attention" by the local and central government.

"We call on the local and central government to bring the situation under control; otherwise we will once again witness a tragedy," he said, referring to the fall of Kunduz city to the Taliban in 2015. (Tolo news)

US Praises ICC's Decision to Reject Afghanistan Probe

WASHINGOTN - A panel of judges at the International Criminal Court has rejected a request to proceed with investigating possible war crimes and crimes against humanity in Afghanistan, including those allegedly involving U.S. armed forces and the CIA.

This is in response to a request from ICC prosecutor Fatou Bensouda in 2017, a prospect that U.S. officials have strongly criticized.

In their unanimous decision released Friday, the judges said that the prosecutor's request is within the court's jurisdiction and the crimes are of sufficient gravity for it to consider the case. But it said that it was ultimately rejecting the request because "the current circumstances of the situation in Afghanistan are such as to make the prospects for a successful investigation and prosecution extremely limited."

The decision noted that the prosecutor hasn't been able to secure cooperation from the parties, making it very unlikely the probe would succeed. A significant amount of time has passed since many *...(More on P4)...(8)*

Taliban Governor for Helmand Succumbs to Wounds

LASHKARGAH - Taliban's shadow governor for southern Helmand province Mullah Sharafuddin has succumbed to his wounds, the government says, a claim rejected by the rebel group.

Local officials say Sharafuddin was injured in an airstrike by foreign forces in Musa Qala district two weeks back. Omar Zwak, the governor's spokesman, told Pajhwok Afghan News Sharafuddin had been injured on April 1 in Bazaar area.

He said Taliban's media official Hafiz Rashid was among five others killed. Sharafuddin was critically wounded in the raid, he said, adding the shadow governor succumbed to his wounds in the Bahramcha area of the province.

According to Zwak, the Taliban governor for Kandahar province is currently leading the fighters in Helmand as well.

But Taliban spokesman Qari Yousaf Ahmadi rejected the government's claim and said Mullah Sharafuddin was alive and busy conducting his activities. (Pajhwok)

Elected Loya Jirga Participant Bashir Sapi from Laghman Killed

KABUL - A youth representative and an elected member of the Consultative Loya Jirga from eastern Laghman province was killed by unknown assailants on Saturday, an official said.

The victim, Bashir Sapi, was gunned down by unknown attackers before noon, said the spokesman for Laghman governor, Asadullah Dawlatzai.

He said the governor, Mohammad Asif Nang, had condemned the incident and ordered security and detective organs to find and arrest the killers.

Naqibullah, a resident of Laghman, told Pajhwok Afghan News that Sapi was busy working at his home garden in Sultan Ghazi township when came under attack from the assailants.

Sapi, who failed in the Wolesi Jirga elections from Laghman, was chosen to participate in the Consultative Loya Jirga on peace in Kabul. He also headed a youth organization in Laghman. (Pajhwok)

Eight Taliban Insurgents Killed in Farah Clashes

KABUL - At least eight Taliban militants were killed and nine others wounded in clashes between the insurgents and the Afghan forces in western Farah province, a military official said on Saturday.

Hashmatullah Ahmadi, a spokesman for the Afghan military in Farah told Ariana that the Taliban militants attacked an army outpost on the main highway of the province on Friday night but faced "resistance" by the Afghan forces. According to Ahmadi, at least three Afghan soldiers were also wounded in the incident.

A number of the Taliban's vehicles were also destroyed during the clashes with the Afghan forces, he added.

The Taliban has not made a comment about the incident yet. It comes as the insurgent group has announced their spring offensive operation aimed to target the Afghan security personnel across the country. (ATN)

Outlook Horoscope

Aries (Mar. 22-Apr.20)

Children may be a part of your day today, Aries. You might attend a party for children or a larger gathering that includes them. At some point you might even be telling them a story. This will probably be as much fun for you as for your audience, who are likely to be very appreciative. Don't be afraid to ham it up a little - they'll love it!

Taurus (Apr.21-May 20)

Books that you may have received as gifts could have you thinking deeply about spiritual or philosophical matters today, Taurus. Your mind is quicker than usual, so you can probably grasp some rather complex ideas. Your practical side could bring up doubts as to the applicability of what you're learning, but don't worry about that. This should be-

Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Your level of physical and mental energy is high today, Gemini. You may have been overindulging in food and drink lately, and so you could spend much of the day working out at the gym. Take a good book to read in the sauna, because you will also want the mental stimulation. At the end of the day you will feel good about yourself and ready to overindulge some more!

Cancer (June 21-July 20)

A memory, dream, vision, or meditation could trigger a rush of spiritual energy, Cancer. As a result, you might want to jot your experiences down so you won't forget them. Try not to dwell on it too much. This isn't the time to be reclusive! The process won't stop. The insights should continue to come. Keep up your studies and meditation and you will go on grow-

Leo (July 21-Aug. 21)

A message from a friend could make your day, Leo. The good news may involve travel, money, or a love relationship. There could also be an intellectual matter that you're anxious to look into, perhaps for the purpose of writing or teaching. A journey, possibly related to education, could be in the offing, perhaps with friends. A busy and stimulating day is definitely ahead.

Virgo (Aug. 22-Sep 22)

The planetary energy leaves you in a contemplative mood, Virgo. A lot of different possibilities have opened up for you recently, and you're trying to figure out which is the most appropriate now. Sometimes it's better to let things churn around in your subconscious for a while, and this could be one of those times. Forget it for now and have fun.

Libra (Sep 23-Oct. 22)

Talk of traveling to distant and exotic places could come up at a gathering of family and friends, Libra. Some of the talk is pure fantasy, but there are a few people among you who are genuinely serious about their plans. Are you considering going away for a while? If so, you might listen to what your friends have to say. It would certainly be fun if all of

Scorpio (Oct.23-Nov.22)

Career matters may be put on hold for a few days, Scorpio, but your professional future probably won't be far from your thoughts, even in the midst of time spent with family and friends. You want to improve your financial situation, and a number of possibilities have come up. Don't mull them over too much now. You don't want to neglect your loved ones. Relax and enjoy their company today.

Sagittarius (Nov.23-Dec.20)

So many fascinating ideas have come your way over the past few days that your mind is spinning. Some of what you've heard could be so radical that it will take some time to make sense of it. You could also want to memorialize your thoughts, perhaps by making some notes or writing an article. Watching TV might get your mind off it all and help you relax a little. Go to it!

Capricorn (Dec.21-Jan19)

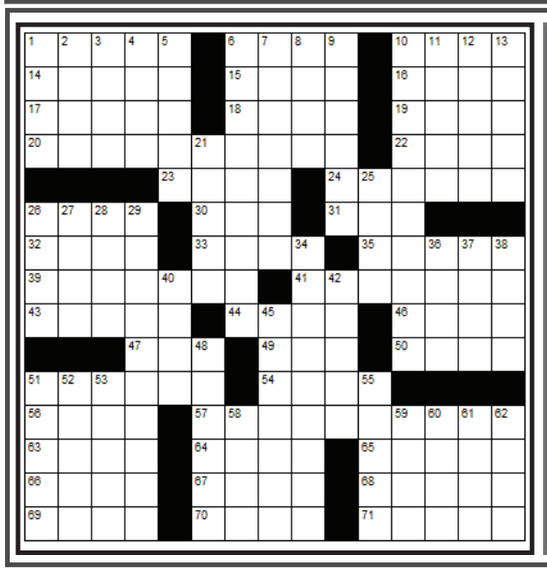
A deep, intimate conversation could take place today between you and a romantic interest, Capricorn. If this is a casual relationship, it may suddenly become more. If you're involved but not committed, you could reach an understanding. If you're already committed, there may even be talk of marriage. The end result of this conversation should be happiness for both of you. Cel-

Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb.18)

This morning you may wake up from a dream with many inspiring new ideas. If you're into creative activity of any kind, you will want to jot these ideas down, as well as possibilities for bringing them to the rest of the world. This could be through music, painting, writing, or any kind of art form. Don't be surprised if your style changes a little. If nothing else, this demonstrates versatility!

Pisces (Feb.19-Mar.20)

A few extra things need to be done around the house today, Pisces. A few more letters need to be written, a few more cleaning chores should be done, and you might still want to dress the place up a little. Your mood is very positive, and you should speed through these tasks with little energy drain. You will have plenty left for socializing tonight.



Across

1. Sired, biblically, 6. 12 in a foot, 10. Whine with snuffling, 14. Pueblo brick, 15. Filly's mother, 16. Hindu princess, 17. Young woman, 18. Quarry, 19. Twixt, 20. Unshackled, 22. Give as an example, 23. Sister and wife of Zeus, 24. Terrified, 26. Against, 30. A sizeable hole, 31. Cheer, 32. Drudgery, 33. Holly, 35. Sods, , 39. Burst inward, 41. Estrogenic hormone, 43. An ancient Assyrian city, 44. Fender blemish, , 6. Unit of land, 47. Unhappy 49. Caviar, 50. Require, 51. Get cozy, 54. Iridescent gem, 56. Winglike, 57. Fish seller, 63. Plateau, 64. Pearly-shelled mussel, 65. Freight, 66. Send forth, 67. Prig, 68. "Bye", 69. Eat 70. Feudal worker, , 71. Expire

Down

1. Hindu Mr., 2. Biblical garden, 3. Tiger Wood's sport, 4. Qualified, , 5. Fangs, 6. Endangered, 7. Provide commentary, 8. Algonquian Indian, 9. The best of times, 10. Typical crabs, 11. , emale demon, 12. Pieces 13. Anagram of "Debit", 21. Lukewarm, 25. A certain trade agreement, 26. Dogfish, 27. French for "Names", 28. Rewards for waiting, 29. Depict, 34. He fears foreigners, 36. Type of cereal grass, 37. Not aft, 38. Toboggan, 40. By mouth 42. Water vapor, 45. Ablation, 48. Render harmless, 51. Appointed, 52. Lacquer ingredient, 53. Indian antelope, 55. Neighborhood, 58. Hotels, 59. Zero, 60. Handle, 61. Prima donna problems, 62. Thorny flower, ,

Yesterday's Solution

P	O	E	T	S	■	F	R	A	T	■	S	O	P	S
O	R	B	I	T	■	B	E	M	A	■	O	P	A	L
E	C	O	L	O	G	I	C	A	L	■	N	E	R	O
M	A	N	T	R	A	■	E	T	C	■	G	R	I	T
■	■	■	■	E	R	A	S	E	■	A	W	A	S	H
S	T	A	G	■	■	U	S	U	R	E	R	■	■	■
M	O	L	L	U	S	K	■	R	E	S	I	D	U	E
U	R	S	I	N	E	■	■	V	O	T	A	R	Y	■
T	R	O	T	T	E	R	■	A	S	P	E	R	S	E
■	■	■	T	I	M	I	N	G	■	R	E	A	D	■
M	E	L	E	E	■	P	I	E	R	S	■	■	■	■
A	L	A	R	■	C	O	P	■	E	N	C	A	S	E
J	E	D	I	■	E	S	P	E	C	I	A	L	L	Y
O	M	E	N	■	S	T	E	M	■	D	R	E	A	R
R	I	N	G	■	S	E	R	E	■	E	D	E	M	A

price, , relief, rival
rubber senior, shelter
sting, stove, sweat,
, trial, trio, twice, gear
hilt, horn, , irritation, ,
laser, lone, lore, militia,
muggy,, , nail, naked, neatnight phone,
place, poodle,

C	O	R	R	U	P	T	H	B	P	E	H	C
M	R	K	L	A	V	I	R	L	R	L	I	O
A	Y	O	L	I	R	E	A	O	L	D	R	N
F	R	O	O	R	A	C	I	P	L	O	R	C
E	E	R	N	K	E	N	T	R	I	O	I	E
I	T	B	E	N	E	T	I	I	H	P	T	I
L	T	R	E	S	A	L	L	C	C	W	A	V
E	U	G	N	I	T	S	I	E	I	P	T	A
R	U	B	B	E	R	N	M	C	H	R	I	B
Y	A	L	E	D	H	A	E	O	I	S	O	L
S	W	E	A	T	E	K	N	A	L	B	N	E
X	M	U	G	G	Y	E	L	S	T	O	V	E
Z	N	I	G	H	T	D	I	V	I	D	E	U