

Jalalabad Clear 39°C 18°C	Ghazni Clear 28°C 12°C	Kandahar Clear 37°C 187°C	Mazar Partly Cloudy 31°C 19°C	Herat Clear 34°C 17°C	Bamayan Clear 18°C 7°C	Kabul Clear 27°C 6°C
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Taliban Using Mosques, Civilians' Homes as Trenches in Helmand: Officials

LASHKARGAH - Local security officials on Saturday said the Taliban militants used civilians' houses and mosques as their trenches in Nawa district of southern Helmand province. Two days back, Helmand security officials said they had launched operation to retake control of Nawa district from Taliban. Brig. Gen. Abdul Hadi Tarin, deputy commander of 215th Maiwand Military Corpse in Helmand, while speaking to a press conference, told Pajhwok Afghan News that large number of militants suffered casualties during the ongoing operation in Nawa. He did not provide exact figures, but said the Afghan forces took control of Ainak area of the district from the militants. "The Taliban placed hun-



dreds of bombs on roads, houses and mosques of areas we have captured from them, we would not advance

until we demine these areas," he said. Acting commander for 505th Bost Police Zone in Hel-

mand, Brig. Gen. Abdur Rahim Chakhansori said the Afghan forces were careful during the operation in or-

der to prevent civilian casualties. The Taliban turned people's ...*(More on P4)...(6)*

Azizi Bank Gets Recognized at the Diplomatic Night



KABUL - Azizi Bank received an award for its significant efforts in developing the banking culture in Afghanistan from India Empire in New Delhi on 7th April at a glamorous event. India Empire is a diplomatic magazine which covers the political, ambassadorial & consular diaspora of all the countries having its embassy or consular office in India. The magazine also covers the various initiatives taken by institutions across the globe that have an important contribution to the country's growth. The award was

received by the President and CEO of Azizi Bank - Mr. Mohammad Salem Omaid from Mr. Chaudhary Birender Singh, Senior Cabinet Minister, Govt. of India in the presence of dignitaries from Afghanistan, Ambassadors & Consular Generals from 11 nations. Speaking on the occasion, HEs the Deputy Minister of Women Affairs & the Deputy Minister of Information & Culture, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan spoke about the women empowerment initiatives taken in the country ...*(More on P4)...(7)*

Inquiry Launched Into Death of Journalism Student



KABUL - The Chief Minister of Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province, Pervaiz Khattak, on Friday announced that a judicial inquiry will be held into the killing of a journalism student at Abdul Wali Khan University in Mardan, a town in the KP province. "A great atrocity has been committed. I think this is barbarity. If our young generation gets so infuriated that they start killing people, then I think our country and society will start moving in a very bad direction. Everyone will rise and say 'this person has said something wrong, let's kill him'. This is totally wrong," Khattak said. "I spoke to the Home Secretary and said that he should send me the case so we can begin a judicial inquiry into it. We have already taken a decision about this. I support everything that all of you have said. There must be a proper inquiry and due punishment should be imposed, so that no-one can dare to take such a step in the future. We have to make this case an example," he said. Reuters reported that a heated debate over religion with fellow students broke out at the dorm on Thursday ...*(More on P4)...(8)*

Afghan Forces Clash with Taliban in Ghazni, 20 Rebels Dead

KABUL - At least 20 militants and three soldiers were killed in an armed clash between the Taliban group and Afghan security forces in Ghazni province, officials said on Saturday. Ghazni deputy police chief, Assadullah Shujae said that last night around 20 insurgents attacked over Afghan forces in Deh Yak district of Ghazni province in order to take control of the district. After fierce clashes which left 20 Taliban militants and three soldiers dead, Afghan troops forced militants to retreat, police official added. While confirming the dead of nine militants, Taliban claims they have killed six soldier in the attack. Ghazni is among the volatile provinces in the central-east part of the country where the anti-government armed militant groups are actively operating in a number of its districts including Deh Yak, Qarabagh, Nawa, Giro and Gilan. (Agencies)

'Mother of All Bombs' Killed 94 ISIS Fighters: Official



KABUL - At least 94 Islamic State fighters were killed when the US military dropped America's most powerful non-nuclear bomb on ISIS targets in Afghanistan, an Afghan official said Saturday. "The number of Daesh fighters killed in the US bomb in Achin district jumped to 94, including four commanders," Nangarhar provincial spokesman Attaullah Khogiani told CNN, using an alternative name for ISIS. "Our team is in the area and

they are doing clearance, so the figure might change as they find more bodies," said Dawlat Waziri, a spokesman for the Afghan Ministry of Defense. The initial toll given by Afghan officials for Thursday's strike was 36. A statement released Friday through ISIS' media wing, Amaq News Agency, said none of the terrorist group's fighters were killed or injured. CNN cannot independently confirm the number of casualties. The GBU-43/B Massive Ordnance Air Blast Bomb (MOAB), nicknamed

the "mother of all bombs" for its extraordinary force, was dropped at 7:32 p.m. local time Thursday, according to four US military officials with direct knowledge of the mission. The strike targeted a network of fortified underground tunnels that ISIS had been using to stage attacks on government forces in Nangarhar province, near the Pakistan border. The blast destroyed three underground tunnels as well as weapons and ammunition, but no civilians were hurt, Afghan and US officials said. (CNN)

AGA, Taliban Condemn MOAB Bomb Attack Afghanistan

KABUL - Afghanistan Governors' Association (AGA) and Taliban have condemned the US's GBU-43/B bombing also known as the Massive Ordnance Air Blast (MOAB) on Islamic State (IS) militants in eastern Nangarhar province, calling it an illegal act and against international norms. The US Department of Defense announced it had used the MOAB on IS or Daesh hideouts and tunnels in Achin district of Nangarhar province late on Thursday. Nangarhar officials said 94 Daesh militants including a number of their commanders were killed in the bombardment. The AGA strongly condemned the dropping of the GBU-43/B bomb in Achin district. A statement from the association received by Pajhwok Afghan News, said the bomb worth of millions of US dollars used in Achin never meant counterterrorism but the US turned Afghanistan into a laboratory of weapons test. "We strongly condemn this act of US which is against the international laws and violated human rights of our people, the US turned our country to their saber-rattling ground under slogans of ensuring peace and fighting terrorism," the statement said. The AGA said the usage of heaviest bomb was changing Afghans' mind to know the US as a domineering country. The governors association also criticized the Afghan government for supporting the attack. Separately, the Taliban also denounced the attack. A statement published by the rebel group said the recent act of the US in Afghanistan again proved savageness of that country. "This attack on Daesh hideout is not justifiable and we condemn it," the source said, adding elimination of Daesh rebels was the duty of Afghans. America can secure its borders if it worries about any groups," the Taliban said. (Pajhwok)

Cultural Commonalities can Help Boost Iran-Afghanistan Ties: Diplomat



KABUL - Iran's cultural attaché in Afghanistan referred to an art and culture exhibition jointly held by the two countries in Kabul and said paying heed to cultural commonalities can help promote the relations between the two neighbors. Speaking to the Tasnim News Agency, Reza Maleki said the exhibition, which opened in Kabul on Friday, includes a book fair attended by 60 Iranian and 30 Afghan publishers. He said more than 300 Iranian artworks have been put on display in the exhibition. The cultural attaché further emphasized that Iran and Afghanistan should develop practical and serious plans for further boosting the cultural ties between the two nations. Back in February, Afghanistan Acting Minister of Information and Culture Kamal Sadat had announced that Iran and Afghanistan would sign an agreement to set up cultural centers in the two countries, according to media reports. Sadat said Tehran and Kabul have taken the initial steps to establish the cultural centers, adding that the two countries' cultural centers would be launched in the cities of Mashhad and Herat. (Tasnim)

Major Issues Halting Hekmatyar's Return to Kabul Solved: HIA



KABUL - Hizb-I-Islami Afghanistan (HIA) on Saturday said major obstacles in the way of party leader Gulbadin Hekmatyar return to Kabul have been resolved with the help of government commission tasked to implement the peace process. HIA spokesman Qaribur Rahman Syed in an exclusive interview with Pajhwok Afghan News said Hekmatyar would surface in Kabul soon. He said major problems regarding the return of HIA leader had been resolved and a joint commission of the party and the government was honestly working on the other issues. He said efforts were underway to resolve other issues remaining as both the HIA and government commission had been working hard. Discussions over the release of HIA prisoners were underway and a party delegation would visit inmates in Bagram Prison next week, Syed said. Earlier, the HIA delegation met with the HIA prisoners in Pul-I-Charkhi Jail in Kabul. Last year, the HIA and the Afghan government signed a historic peace agreement. In line with the agreement, the government should release HIA prisoners and facilitate repatriated refugees. (Pajhwok)

13 Insurgents killed, 8 Injured in Sar-i-Pul Offensive

SAR-I-PUL CITY - At least 13 militants have been killed and eight others wounded during a newly-launched mopping-up operation in northern Sar-i-pul province, local authorities said on Saturday. Sar-i-pul Governor Mohammad Zahir Wahdat told reporters that 13 militants were killed and eight others wounded in southeastern Sayyad district of the province during security forces' operation ongoing from yesterday. Only one individual from the uprising forces suffered injuries in the operation, the governor added. But a government source at the front line in Sayyad district told Pajhwok Afghan News one pro-government public uprising member was killed and another Afghan National Army (ANA) personnel along with two security guards of the district administrative chief were wounded in the offensive. He added the government forces had not made any progress so far. Militants also had suffered casualties, but

he didn't have exact figures. Governor said a group of insurgents stormed security posts in Lati and Mirzaolang villages of Sayyad district, but the attacks were pushed back as the rebels faced stiff resistance from security forces. Efforts at seeking comments from local residents did not succeed. The Taliban confirmed the clash with security forces, adding that massive casualties had been inflicted on security forces in the district. The rebels claimed forcing security forces to retreat from the area and bodies of two slain soldiers remained lying at the scene. The Taliban insurgents alleged that a government chopper was hit by their rocket-shelling and that it did an emergency landing on the outskirts of Sar-i-pul city, the provincial capital. Mohammad Noor Rahmani, provincial council head, without providing the exact figures, said heavy losses were inflicted on militants in the district. (Pajhwok)