

<b>Jalalabad</b> Clear 36°C 19°C	<b>Ghazni</b> Clear 25°C 9°C	<b>Kandahar</b> Clear 36°C 16°C	<b>Mazar</b> Clear 33°C 19°C	<b>Herat</b> Clear 35°C 17°C	<b>Bamayan</b> Clear 17°C 4°C	<b>Kabul</b> Clear 28°C 12°C
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UN Official

# Afghan Conflict Looks Set to Intensify

KABUL - Wrapping up a week-long mission, a senior UN human rights official on Tuesday said the conflict in Afghanistan looked set to intensify as insurgents tested the strength of security forces "hoping to gain leverage in future negotiations." Ivan Šimonović, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, visited Kabul and eastern Nangarhar and central Kapisa province during his seven-day trip, a report published on the UN News Centre said. "On the one hand, there are new opportunities for peace talks that would have been ... (More on P4)...(8)



## Regional Intelligence Behind Nangrahar Massacre: Daesh

KABUL - A member of Daesh group strongly condemned Nangrahar massacre on Wednesday and blamed regional intelligence for the devastating bombing. Talking to Pajhwok Afghan News from undisclosed location, Maulvi Abdul Rahim Muslim Dost--a self-proclaimed leader of Daesh, rejected Daesh involvement in Nangrahar massacre. "We strongly condemned the attack and Daesh never kills civilians and innocent people", he claimed. Dost blamed regional intelligence agency ... (More on P4)...(9)

## Relatives of 31 Hostages Hold Blood Drive to Support Jalalabad Victims



KABUL - Civil society activists and relatives of the 31 kidnapped travelers on Tuesday organized a blood drive in Kabul to provide support for and express solidarity with the victims of last week's suicide bombing in Jalalabad. Both the activists and grieving family members, set up in large tents, said they were donating blood and calling attention to the plight of those impacted by the deadly suicide bombing in order to expose the evil of terrorism and promote ... (More on P4)...(10)

## Taliban Announce Launch of Spring Offensive

KABUL - Afghan Taliban announced launching of spring offensive codenamed "Azam" (Determination) amid Afghan government assurances that the country's security forces were strong enough to meet all challenges effectively. Zabih Ullah Mujahid, Taliban spokesman, in a press release to Pajhwok Afghan News said the spring offensive would commence from Friday's evening throughout the country. Taliban had already won the 13-year long battle in Afghanistan which had forced foreign troops to withdraw from the country,

the statement said. "Foreign forces have announced to withdraw but they have their presence in some parts of the country and also take part in some military operations," Mujahid added. Taliban, he vowed would continue with their operation till complete departure of foreign troops from Afghanistan. The main targets, he reiterated would be occupation forces, especially their military bases and government installations, intelligence and security forces. He directed militants to avoid civilians casualties during the operation ... (More on P4)...(12)



## Afghanistan Passing Thru Critical Phases of History: Samoon

KABUL - Afghanistan is in the most challenging period of its latest history of last 13 years from political, social, economic and security perspectives, the Samoon Movement said in a statement released on Wednesday. In a statement to Pajhwok Afghan News, the movement said at a time when there has been a drastic decrease in international community's financial support, responsibility of state security has fully been taken over by the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and general public is faced with a number of uncertainties about future of Afghanistan. In this state of ... (More on P4)...(11)

## Key Suspect in Farkhunda's Death Arrested

KABUL - The National Directorate of Security (NDS) has detained another suspect in connection with Farkhunda's brutal murder - this time the motorist who drove over the deceased. An NDS official told TOLONews on condition of anonymity that the suspect, Baryalai, was the person who drove the car over Farkhunda. After driving over her he continued accelerating, dragging her body under the car. The source said Baryalai, who is from Kapisa province, is also suspected of having been part of the group that then threw Farkhunda's body into the Kabul River where they set her alight. After the incident, the suspect apparently sold his car and fled Kabul to his village in Kapisa, the NDS official said. Farkhunda, a 27-year-old woman, was beaten to death and burnt by angry mob a month ago on the false accusation ... (More on P4)...(14)

## No Money Taken from Foreign Spy Agencies: Presidential Palace

KABUL - Afghan presidential spokesman Ajmal Obaid Abidi has said that neither the government has taken any money from foreign spy agencies recently nor have these agencies paid the presidential palace. According to Abidi, President Ashraf Ghani has not asked any country or agency for funding, and the practice of giving money to the Presidential Palace by foreign agencies has ended - this includes money from the U.S, UK and Iran. "The president is committed and believes on transparency and accountability; hence, the presidential palace has neither received any money from



Iran or any other sources, nor will it ask in the future," Abidi said. Concerns were raised a while ... (More on P4)...(13)

## Afghan-Pakistan Industrial Show Opens in Balkh



MAZAR-I-SHARIF - Pakistan on Wednesday said it was trying to hold a joint exhibition of industrial products with Afghanistan and Tajikistan in the capital of northern Balkh province. This was stated by Khurshid Murid, the economic counselor at the Pakistani Embassy in Kabul, after inaugurating a joint Pakistan-Afghanistan exhibition at a hotel in Mazar-i-Sharif. Forty stalls have been displayed at the four-day joint show, with 25 stalls showcasing Pakistani products and the remaining Afghan products. Pakistani traders have put on display construction materials, food items, ... (More on P4)...(15)

## Religious Leaders Urge Nation to Support Afghan Forces

KHOST CITY - Latest wave of terror attacks, killing of civilians and security forces, and kidnapping are against the teachings of Islam, religious leaders in south-eastern Khost province said, urging masses to actively support the country's valiant security forces. Maulvi Shah Mohammad Mohammadi, head of religious leaders' council, called attacks against the teachings of Islam and humanity which harmed civilians. "Islam does not allow killing or harming anyone without a decree", he remarked. Mohammadi made it clear that

attacks in Nangarhar, Badakhshan, Mazar-i-Sharif, Khost, Helmand and Kandahar an unforgivable act and stressed people to extend their all out support to Afghanistan's security forces. Maulvi Mohammad Zadrán, head of Mujahidin Islamic unity council, criticized religious leaders for hiding truth from the people. "One side, religious leaders call militants as martyrs while on the other, religious leaders call security forces as martyrs and ghazis. It is high time to issue an agreed decree to declare group of one side ... (More on P4)...(16)

## Committee Formed to Probe Allegations Against NSC



KABUL - The National Security Council (NSC) on Wednesday formed a committee to investigate the Paktika governor's allegations that NSC advisor had distributed \$200,000 to the families of Islamic State (IS) fighters in the province, a statement from the Presidential Palace said. The decision was made during NSC meeting held on Tuesday night, which was chaired by President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, the statement added. Deputy NSC advisor briefed the house ... (More on P4)...(17)

## NSC Create Information Centre for Enhanced Coordination

KABUL - The National Security Council (NSC) on Wednesday created a new information centre aimed at building close coordination for operation purposes among various security organs. The Presidential Palace said in a statement, the centre-- armed with state-of-the-art technology, was inaugurated by President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani. Speaking on the occasion, the president said the centre would



be of immense importance during special operations for coordination among various security organs and foreign troops. Gen. ... (More on P4)...(18)

## Zabul Police Chief Pledges Reforms, Fighting Graft

QALAT - The newly-appointed police chief for southern Zabul province on the first day pledged tangible reforms in police ranks and fight graft. Mirwais Nawrozi, who was appointed as police chief some days back, officially resumed his work in presence of local officials and elders. It was his priority to ensure security throughout the province and facilitate development works such as construction of



schools, hospitals and other projects, he added. He said his other priority would be rooting out graft and bridging the gap between police and the public. Meanwhile, Gen. Raziq, Kandahar police chief while introducing Mirwais Nawrozi warned that insurgents might increase their activities and the security forces should be ready to thwart any eventuality. (Pajhwok)

## Taliban in Pakistan Successfully Test-Fires Indigenous Missile

KABUL - The Pakistani Taliban group - Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has claimed to have successfully test-fired an indigenously developed missile named Omar-1. The group has released a video which shows the assembly of the missile and its successful launch.

TTP spokesman Mohammad Khurasani said "It can be easily assembled and dissembled in accordance to the situation." Khurasani further added that the effectiveness of the specially-designed missile would certainly surprise the targeted enemy. "With the ... (More on P4)...(19)