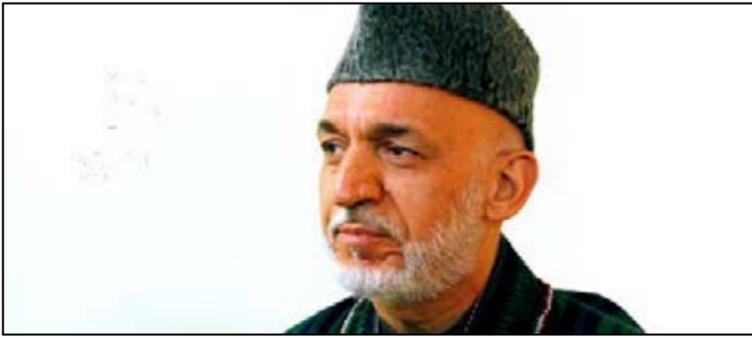


Karzai Seeks Joint Action against Daesh, Backs Talks with Taliban

KABUL - Central Asia countries should join hands to ward off the threat posed to the region by the Islamic State, also known as Daesh, former president Hamid Karzai has said. Addressing a news conference in Astana on the sidelines of the Eurasian Media Forum on Friday, he called for unified action against the terrorist group before it strengthened its presence in the region. Daesh is a foreign conspiracy in Afghanistan, the ex-president was quoted as saying by local TV channels. He



reiterated: "It (Daesh) is an entirely foreign project, the project of powers with designs in our part of the world." He called narcotics a complex issue whose roots lay beyond Afghanistan and Central Asia, saying strong international mafia members made a fortune from the illicit drug commerce. Addressing Sultan Nazarbayev University students and teachers, Karzai lamented the Afghans continued to pay a heavy price in the war on... (More on P4)...(12)

Govt. under Pressure over Helmand's War Strategy

KABUL - The Afghan government is under increasing pressure from residents and elders in volatile Helmand and has been urged to expand military action against insurgents in the province. This comes amid an increase in Taliban activity - in what is perceived to be a move on their part to seize control of the entire province. Embattled troops are currently fighting the Taliban in Musa Qala, Greshk, Sangin, Marjah and other key areas. Residents blasted government over its poor management of the war in the vulnerable region, saying that Taliban action has been ongoing for months but that very little solid action has been evident on the government's part to retake areas already under control of the militants. They said that the Taliban insurgency has so far disrupted people's lives and hundreds of locals have been displaced due to the ongoing war. "Concerns have heightened among residents ... (More on P4)...(16)

106 Girl Students with Itchy Skin Evacuated to Hospital

FARAH CITY - Over 100 girl students of a high school have been evacuated to hospital with itchy skin in western Farah, an official said on Saturday. Education Director Ghulam Sarwar told Pajhwok Afghan News the student started complaining of a pruritus-like skin condition that was possibly caused by a poisonous spray in the school's ground. Public Health Director Dr Abdul Jabbar Shaeq confirmed more than 100 students had been brought to hospital. The girls were poisoned by a dangerous gas



prayed inside the school, he indicated. Suraya, an 8th class student, said: "It was early morning. We were in our class and suddenly heard complaints of itching from students, who rubbed their skins. We felt the same problem and then we were taken to hospital." Having recovered from her itchy skin to some extent, she said initially two students complained of skin infections and later growing complaints came from others as well. (Pajhwok)

Badakhshan Insecurity Leads to Increase in Poppy Cultivation

FAIZABAD CITY - The counter-narcotics director for Badakhshan says insecurity has led to an increase in poppy cultivation and relapse of 95 percent of rehabilitated drug addicts in the northeastern province. Mohammad Quaid Affendi recalled the illicit crop was cultivated on 1,246 hectares of land in Argo, Kisham, Tashkan, Khash and Juram districts last year. But this year, 4,050 hectares of land has been sown with poppies. Speaking at a gathering, attended by journalists, religious scholars, farmers and common citizens,



he highlighted the harmful effects of poppy. He acknowledged a possible increase in poppy cultivation this year. "Poppy cultivation and opium processing in insecure areas of the remote province, where police could not reach, involves mafia members," alleged the counter-narcotics director. Despite eradication efforts and an investment of millions of dollars, he lamented, the government could not succeed in preventing poppy cultivation. It was insecurity that paved the ground for the cultivation of the plant, he explained. Abdul Razzaq, a grower ... (More on P4)...(13)

Work on Road, Bridge Projects Launched in Khost

KHOST CITY - Construction work on a USAID-funded road and a bridge has been launched in the southeastern province of Khost, officials said on Saturday. The seven kilometers road - linking Khost City with Ghulam Khan dry port - and the 120-metre bridge on ShamalRiver are being built at a cost of \$3.5 million. Governor Hukam Khan Habibi said financial support for the projects had been promised by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Provincial council head, Abdul Wali Wahidzai, asked the Ministry of Public Works to ... (More on P4)...(17)

Coming Soon to Afghanistan: Pepsi Products

KABUL - Afghanistan Beverage Industries Limited - a mineral water company in the country - signed an agreement with Pepsi Company to introduce its products in Afghanistan. The signing ceremony was held in Dubai where officials from the Afghan Consulate in Dubai, a number of Afghan businessmen, officials from Afghanistan Beverage Industries and Pepsi Company participated. The participants at the event welcomed the move by the two companies and said it will help strengthen investment and job markets in Afghanistan. "This contribution is not only important for Pepsi but for Afghanistan as well. Pepsi wants to have ... (More on P4)...(18)

Kabul University Lecturer Detained by NDS

KABUL - A lecturer at the Sharia and Law faculty of Kabul University has been detained by intelligence officials, an official said on Tuesday. A Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) spokesman confirmed the arrest of Maulvi Maroof Rasikh by National Directorate of Security (NDS) officials, but had no information why the lecturer was detained. He said the lecturer was not detained on the campus and they did not know the reason behind his arrest, saying the ministry had launched its investigation to know the reason. NDS officials could not be reached for comments, but it is said that Rasikh has been detained on the charge of having links with extremist groups. Meanwhile, a student of Kabul University, who wished anonymity, said Rasikh was directly and indirectly promoting extremism on the campus. (Pajhwok)

21 Militants Surrender in Baghlan: Official

PUL-E-KHUMRI - Some 21 Taliban militants renounced violence and surrendered to the government in Baghlan province Saturday, the provincial governor said. "The former rebels denounced the hostility and joined the peace and reconciliation process. They were active members of Taliban. And they handed over 21 rounds of assault rifles to security authorities in Pul-e-Khumri city Saturday morning," governor Satar Barriz told



Xinhua. The surrendered were active in Dushi District of Baghlan, he said. With the former insurgents' surrender, peace and stability would be further strengthened in several parts of the province, 160 km north of Kabul, the governor noted. Taliban militants fighting the government have not made any comments yet. Since mid-2010, more than 10,000 Taliban militants have laid down ... (More on P4)...(14)

Taliban Shadow Judge for Jawzjan Killed

SHIBERGHAN - A Taliban's shadow judge for northern Jawzjan province was killed along with his three guards during a clash with security forces on Saturday, an official said. In Baghlan, 20 militants joined the peace process. Mohammad Raza, the governor's spokesman for northern Kunduz province, told Pajhwok Afghan News the Taliban judge for Jawzjan was killed in Qazan Narwi of Manjigak district around 1:30pm. He identified the slain Taliban judge as Abdur Rahman. The Taliban have not yet commented on the incident. Elsewhere, a 20-member rebel group had been operating against the government in Doshi district of northern Baghlan province joined the peace process. ... (More on P4)...(15)

13 Militants Dead in Jawzjan Air and Ground Offensive

SHIBERGHAN - At least 13 Taliban have been killed and eight others, including group leader Qari Niamatullah, arrested in northern Jawzjan province, an official said on Saturday. Mohammad Reza Ghafoori, the governor's spokesman, told Pajhwok Afghan News security forces successfully repulsed an overnight rebel attack on their check-posts. In the ensuing clash, 13 guerrillas were killed and eight others detained by the security personnel, who also had air support, the spokesman said, adding the detainees included Taliban's group leader. But Taliban spokesman Zabihullah ... (More on P4)...(19)

Outlook Horoscope

Aries (Mar. 22-Apr.20)



Getting your message across requires a considerable investment of time and energy. Nevertheless, nothing is more important now than ensuring your words are clearly understood. Conversations require careful listening to avoid confusion in financial matters, especially involving shared property. But you can miss the point and throw a negotiation into reverse gear if you are too impatient.

Taurus (Apr.21-May 20)



You may desire more than you receive from a friend or partner today, but don't assume that he or she knows your heart. Shy behavior won't help you realize your dreams, so take a chance and describe exactly what you want in detail. You might have already stated your needs more than once already, but the past is past. If you crave emotional satisfaction.

Gemini (May 21-June 20)



You can't decide whether to look forward to what's next in your life or to reevaluate what just happened. Circumstances may offer you the chance to take one more review of your recent past so you don't have to redo a task that you thought was finished. If you begin a new project, double-check the fine print to avoid further complications. Paying extra attention now can save you time and energy later.

Cancer (June 21-July 20)



It seems as if people want to play games when you need to be serious today; however, they grow contemplative when you are ready for fun. Your mental flexibility is necessary to adapt to the current frustrating conditions. Fortunately, you stand to learn more than you expect if you can make attitude adjustments on the fly.

Leo (July 21-Aug. 21)



The unwanted fallout from recent overindulgent behavior may create conflict at home today. But it's tempting to let your pride get the best of you and turn this minor problem into a personal issue. Push past your initial reaction and participate in the conversation as an active listener before angrily defending yourself. Practicing sensitivity, rather than hostility, can turn the situation around.

Virgo (Aug. 22-Sep 22)



Your logic is very convincing today, but you could do more harm than good if others aren't ready to hear what you have to say. Luckily, your self-restraint helps you find just the right words at the right moment. However, it takes more than mere facts to make your point now. People want to feel heard and they won't budge until you let them know that you care about their opinions.

Libra (Sep 23-Oct. 22)



You peacemakers are given a wonderful opportunity to exercise your communication skills by building bridges between opposing sides of a conflict without getting run over in the process. But instead of saving the entire world, you may need to retreat to save your own skin if the stress becomes unbearable today. It's admirable to be of service, but you must fight to stay centered or there won't be any energy left.

Scorpio (Oct.23-Nov.22)



Powerful feelings are bubbling up toward the surface and they can flood over the top without much warning today. Obviously, putting yourself in an emotionally pressurized situation increases the likelihood of an explosion. Thankfully, you can reduce tension by focusing strictly on the facts and steering far away from needless drama. Sometimes the truth isn't as complicated as you think.

Sagittarius (Nov.23-Dec.20)



Your attention is pulled in multiple directions today, providing more stimulation than you need. Avoid the temptation to jump at every offer that comes your way just because they all sound like fun. Small distractions can lead to big complications that throw your entire day off track. Obviously, you don't have enough time to follow every interesting idea to its conclusion; choose only those that are of the highest priority to your heart.

Capricorn (Dec.21-Jan19)



A supportive friend may encourage you to live out your dreams today while someone else you admire is more negative. But it's your life and ultimately you're the only one who decides which goals to pursue. Either way, it's not worth the effort to rationally debate a critic, since your idea either works for you or it doesn't. The advice you attract now could be more confusing than practical.

Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb.18)



A small dose of optimism is constructive as you attempt to overcome someone's resistance today. However, navigating the interpersonal dynamics is tricky because people may not be forthcoming with their thoughts. You aren't usually drawn into everyone else's dramas, but you might be more than willing to interfere now, especially if you think you can help.

Pisces (Feb.19-Mar.20)



It's a mixed blessing being naturally sensitive to subtleties that others can't even perceive. But trusting your intuitive feelings is recommended now, since your radar is so keenly attuned. However, it's not necessary to tell people what you're actually picking up today because they may not be open to your perspective, especially if they didn't ask for your opinion.

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-66.

Across: 1. Small slits, 6. FFFF, 10. Arrange in a container, 14. A woman whose husband is dead, 15. A neutral color, 16. Distinctive flair, 17. Spanish for "Friend", 18. Spurs, 19. Type of cereal grass, 20. Supporter of royalty, 22. Provisions, 23. Affaire d'honneur, 24. Vomiting, 26. Minor quarrel, 30. Make lace, 31. Chart, 32. Smell, 33. Bucolic, 35. Stairs, 39. Anticipate, 41. Honorable, 43. Swift, 44. Venician magistrate, 46. Buckeye State, 47. 52 in Roman numerals, 49. Air movement device, 50. Not a single one, 51. Subvert, 54. Took flight, 56. Gumbo, 57. Act of doubting, 63. Placed, 64. Angers, 65. Marsh plant, 66. Feudal worker, 67. Squad, 68. Daunts, 69. Clairvoyant, 70. Dines, 71. Shooting sport.

Down: 1. Travelled through water, 2. Large luxurious car, 3. Norse god, 4. Roman robe, 5. Epee or saber, 6. Very smart, 7. Feebleness, 8. Crazes, 9. Scheme, 10. Discernment, 11. Assumed name, 12. Desert plants, 13. Leg joints, 21. Good-looker, 25. Sitcom set in Korea, 26. Wealthy man (British slang), 27. False god, 28. Not aft, 29. Sponge, 34. Conformities, 36. Reflected sound, 37. Anguish, 38. Blackthorn, 40. Blend, 42. Basic belief, 45. Quirky, 48. Produce a literary work (archaic), 51. Bottoms of shoes, 52. An edict of the Russian tsar, 53. Salt water, 55. Narrow-waisted stingers, 58. Component of urine, 59. Heavy, durable furniture wood, 60. Doing nothing, 61. Leer at, 62. Where a bird lives.

Yesterday's Solution: amass, booth, chase, cogent, compendium, confront, digest, drive, entry, extent, fate, flexible, force, fuels, gripe, groan, hare, kindly, kiss, locker, mere, north, press, querulous, reach, rely, rite, rook, salary, scope, select, simile, skill, soil, south, squawk.

SCOPERCSKILLF
INORTHOGQJAO
MGROANNSOUTH
IBOOTHFHFEAFC
LOCKERRULRMWE
EXTENTOSEUAHK
ENTRYSNAXLSIC
DIGESTTLIOSNO
RKRSYLLABUSEG
IKINDLYRLSAUE
VKPRESSYELERN
EREACHASELECT
COMPENDIUMYWY