

Quote of the Day

Personality can open doors, but only character can keep them open.
Elmer G. Letterman

US Keeping Large Force in Afghanistan to Defeat IS: Obama

WASHINGTON - The United States is keeping a large force in Afghanistan to defeat ISIS, the US President Barack Obama said Thursday.

"In Afghanistan, one of the reasons that I decided to largely maintain our current force posture was so that we could keep eliminating ISIL's presence there," Obama told reporters at a Pentagon news conference after a meeting with his national security team to review the progress made in the fight against ISIS.

"We delivered another blow last month when we took out a top ISIL leader in Afghanistan, Umar



Khalifa," Obama said. Recently Obama announced his intention to keep 8,500 American troops in Afghanistan by January next year as against 5,500 decided earlier. Obama said every time there is a terrorist attack he feel disappointment, because he would like to prevent all of them. "That's true not just when the attacks are in Europe or in the United States. When you read stories about attacks in Lebanon, or Iraq, or Afghanistan, or distant parts of the world that don't get as much attention, they get my attention," he said. The US, he said, is constantly pushing ...*(More on P4)...(1)*

HIA Delegation Expected in Kabul to Resume Talks



KABUL - A delegation of the Gulbadin Hekmatyar-led Hezb-i-Islami Afghanistan (HIA) is expected to arrive in capital Kabul over the next two days for the resumption of peace talks.

The HIA and the government representatives held protracted peace talks in Kabul and the parleys lasted about two months and the two sides reached a draft agreement.

The High Peace Council (HPC) handed over a copy of the draft agreement to the HIA delegation to deliver it to HIA leader Hekmatyar, but the process hit a snag after Hekmatyar proposed some minor changes to the draft agreement.

HIA political affairs in-charge Dr. Ghairat Baheer told Pajhwok Afghan News ...*(More on P4)...(3)*

UN SRSG Calls on Gen. Raheel Sharif



RAWALPINDI - Special Representative of UN Secretary General in Afghanistan Ambassador Tadashi Yamamoto, on Friday called on Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif at General Headquarters. During the meeting, matters related to security situation in Afghanistan and prospects for peace with particular emphasis on reconciliation process in Afghanistan were discussed, press release of ISPR stated. The newly appointed UN Special Envoy appreciated successes of ongoing operation Zarb-e-Azb and acknowledged the sacrifices and efforts made by Pakistani security forces for achieving peace and stability in the region. *(APP)*

First-Ever Model UN Conference Launched in Kabul

KABUL - President Ashraf Ghani on Thursday said he would hand over the country's affairs to the youth before retiring as president.

The president was speaking at a function marking the first-ever Model United Nations or MUN conference arranged by the youth in Kabul.

The president reiterated his government's resolve to involve the youth in government.

The conference "Simulation of the United Nations" was arranged by the Young Intellectuals Association at the Presidential Palace Hall, where President Ghani, deputy CEO,



first lady, some other government officials and several ambassadors were present.

Ghani said he was optimistic about the country's future: "Hope, intentions, solidarity, empathy and belief in equality of women and men can be seen in each and

every one's face here," the president told the event participants.

"You are a generation that will connect Afghanistan to the other world, and I know you are able to represent your country very well."

He hailed the event and its organizers and the ...*(More on P4)...(2)*

China-Mooted New Counterterrorism Alliance Unveiled

KABUL - Afghanistan, China, Pakistan and Tajikistan have formally launched their four-nation counterterrorism alliance, media reports say.

Top commanders from the participating countries gathered in the Chinese city of Urumqi for the inaugural leadership meeting on Wednesday before announcing the new mechanism, known as the Quadrilateral Cooperation and Coordination Mechanism (QCCM) in counterterrorism.

Afghan Ministry of Defence spokesman Maj. Gen. Dawlat Waziri told reporters in Kabul on Thursday that Afghan Army Chief Gen. Qadam Shah Shahim represented Afghani-



stan at the alliance meeting that conferred on terrorism and counter-terrorism efforts.

He said Shahim also held fruitful meetings with Chinese military

officials and discussed with them issues of mutual interests, including Beijing's military assistance with Kabul. China has recently provided Afghanistan ...*(More on P4)...(6)*

Iran, Afghanistan Hold Political Consultations Meeting

TEHRAN - Senior Iranian and Afghan officials in a meeting in Tehran held a new round of political talks. During the meeting, the two sides discussed ways to eliminate obstacles hindering expansion of bilateral relations and mutual cooperation in different fields, including Afghan refugees residing in Iran and expansion of trade ties and implementation of the agreement on development of Iran's Chabahar port.

High-ranking Iranian and Afghan officials in a meeting in Tehran in early 2016 conferred on drawing a roadmap for the further development of bilateral relations and cooperation between the two countries. The issue was raised in a meeting between Iranian Foreign Minister ...*(More on P4)...(4)*

US Not to Pay Pakistan \$300m Reimbursement Because of Haqqani Network

WASHINGTON - Pakistan will not receive \$300 million in military reimbursements from the United States due to Islamabad's lack of action against the Haqqani terrorist network operating from its safe havens in Pakistan.

A US official has said the Pentagon Chief Ash Carter has decided not to tell Congress that Pakistan was taking adequate action against the Haqqani network. "The funds could not be released to the Government of Pakistan at this time because the Secretary has not yet certified that Pakistan has taken sufficient action against the Haqqani network," Pentagon spokesman Adam Stump quoted by Reuters said on Wednesday.

The \$300 million comes under the Coalition Support Fund (CSF), a U.S. Defense Department program to reimburse allies that have ...*(More on P4)...(5)*

Intense Clashes Underway in 2 Kunduz Districts

KUNDUZ CITY - Intense clashes were underway on Friday between security forces and Taliban militants in Imam Sahib and Qala-i-Zal districts of northern Kunduz province, officials and residents said. Imam Sahib district chief Amanuddin Quraishi told Pajhwok Afghan News hundreds of armed militants attacked security posts near the district centre last night.

As a result of the attacks, he said, Nawabad area on the western outskirts of the district centre fell to the Taliban and a fierce clash was ongoing there.

The district chief said if security reinforcements did not reach the district on emergency footing, the district could collapse.

Quraishi said so far three security personnel had been killed and two others injured during the clash. He said 15 militants had also suffered casualties. Meanwhile, in ...*(More on P4)...(7)*

Moscow Checking Reports About Russian Pilot's Capture in Afghanistan

MOSCOW - Russian diplomats are checking media reports about the capture of a Russian citizen by Taliban militants in Afghanistan, the Foreign Ministry said Friday.

According to the reports, a Pakistani MI-17 helicopter, which was heading to Russia for repairs, made an emergency landing on Thursday in the Afghan province of Logar, a ministry

statement said. The crew members, including its navigator S.K. Sevastyanov, a Russian national, were captured by the Taliban militants, the statement said.

The Russian embassies in Islamabad and Kabul are in close contact with the authorities of Afghanistan and Pakistan to organize the release of the Russian, the ministry said. The MI-17 ...*(More on P4)...(8)*

Pakistan Seeks Help in Crew Recovery After Copter Crash

KABUL/PUL-I-ALAM - Pakistan has asked NATO and Afghanistan authorities to help in the recovery of the helicopter crew reportedly taken hostage by Taliban militants after their helicopter crash landed in central Logar province. The Pakistani MI-17 helicopter crashed in the Azra district of Logar province on Thursday and Taliban militants

took the crew, including former Pakistan military officers and a Russian, hostage.

Azra district chief Hamidullah Hamid told Pajhwok Afghan News the helicopter made hard landing in Obakhti area, 40km from the district centre. He said six Pakistani officials and one Russian were onboard the helicopter. He said ...*(More on P4)...(9)*

Political Differences Should Not Impact Security: Gen. Nicholson

KANDAHAR - NATO and US forces top commander in Afghanistan Gen. John Nicholson on Thursday said the Taliban could not win through the war and should appear for talks.

The alliance resolute support commander arrived in Kandahar City, the capital of southern Kandahar province, along with a delegation that included Afghan Defence Minister Gen. Abdullah Habibi and Interior Minister Taj Mohammad Jahid.

The delegation held talks with the Kandahar governor, military of-



officials and public representatives from Kandahar, Helmand, Uruzgan and Zabul provinces about the security situation in the zone.

Gen. Nicholson said the Afghan forces had many achievements this year and they proved effective leadership in the ...*(More on P4)...(10)*



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