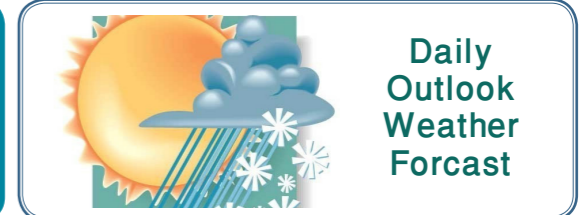


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Nangarhar Drone Operation Kills 250 Insurgents in Past Month

JALALABAD - Nearly 250 Taliban and Daesh insurgents have been killed in 17 drone strikes by foreign troops in eastern Nangarhar province in the past month, local officials said on Tuesday.

Ahmad Zia Abdulzai, Provincial Governor spokesman has said the operation was launched in Haskamina, Achin, Nazyan, Khoghyan and Sherzad districts of the province and most of the victims were "Daesh insurgents".

"According to the National Directorate of Security (NDS) in Nangarhar in the past month 17 drone operations were launched in which 150 Daesh insurgents and nearly 100 Taliban insurgents were killed," Abdulzai said.



There were no civilian casualties during the operations, he said. Meanwhile, a number of provincial

civil society activists were optimistic over the drone operation in the province and said that "this is the best way to eliminate the insurgents."

"The drone attacks are the best operations to eliminate the insurgents and we witnessed in the past month that such operations launched in other districts have resulted in a decrease in insurgent activities and it has also helped ground force operations," a civil society activist, Asadullah Delawari said.

The drone operations are in addition to a large-scale military operation that was launched in three districts of Nangarhar nine days ago to clear insurgents, said officials.

The operation was launched in Hesarak, Sherzad and Khoghyan districts of the province which borders with ...*(More on P4)...(10)*

Population Census Law Seen in Need of Amendments



KABUL - A coalition of civil society groups on Tuesday said President Ashraf Ghani had assured them that the population census law would be amended and the word "Afghan" written in national identification documents.

The Wolesi Jirga or lower house of parliament approved the population census law in July, 2013 and then endorsed by the president. Some Wolesi Jirga members had protested against the way the census law was passed. They had claimed the measure was approved despite a lack of quorum.

Several civil society and political groups had staged protests ...*(More on P4)...(11)*

20 Urban Development Ministry Officials under Investigation



KABUL - The Attorney General Office (AGO) on Tuesday said 20 more officials of the Ministry of Urban Development were under investigations for their alleged involvement in administrative graft.

AGO spokesman Basir Azizi told journalists in Kabul recently 20 officials of the ministry accused of corruption were under investigation. He added their initial interrogations showed that the 20 officials were accused of selling apartments, and township licenses and embezzlement of millions of dollars of government's money.

He did not clarify how much

anomaly were carried out but said that their cases would be referred to the relevant courts over the next week.

Two month back also President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani suspended six officials of the ministry on accusation of irregularities and barred them from travelling abroad.

The six officials include Ahmad Nawaz Bakhtyar, Mohammad Amin Qane, Ahmad Shah Himat, Mohammad Amin Amin, Gul Rahim Zyarmal and Sayed Aman Sadaat. The AGO spokesman said the cases of the six officials have been completed and referred to the relevant court. *(Pajhwok)*

In Badakhshan, Defence Counsel up Against Odds

FAIZABAD - Defence counsel in northeastern Badakhshan province complain they cannot properly plead cases of their clients, particularly petitions concerning violence against women, due to threats from warlords and other influential figures.

Subsequently, the attorneys allege, women's rights continue to be trampled in the backward province. Taking up front on these powerful gunmen is fraught with dangers. Thousands of such cases have been disposed, but not without risk.

Some of the lawyers, living in a shelter house called Abode of Peace, are fighting cases of violence on behalf of inmates. The take a calculated risk in raising their voices for oppressed women, who have left their homes as a result of domestic tensions.

Maryam Amwaj, Abode of Peace head, says they have the services of three defence attorneys at their disposal. They are fighting a legal battle for the protection of women who have been dragged to courts. Set up four years ago, Abode of Peace offers shelter to about 50 women and girls forced from homes by a variety of threats.

In an exclusive interview with Pajhwok Afghan News, she claims: "Our lawyers have been threatened several times over the telephone. In one instance, a rival party threatened a defence lawyer with death if he continued to plead the case of a woman inmate." Insecurity, particularly in districts, is another source of concern for the lawyers. An incident has to be adjudicated in the district where it occurs, but poor security and the presence of local strongmen and warlords hamper such litigation in a number of districts.

"We have no law and no one to rely on in pursuing our rights. Ob security is also absent," she remarks, explaining cases of runaway girls, separation and engagement refusals cannot be pleaded in line with the law in district courts -- thanks to the undiluted power of warlords.

Judges are unable to decide women's cases, which are often filed in the main provincial court. It is a long-drawn-out process, because such ...*(More on P4)...(16)*

Govt's 'Double Agents' More Dangerous Than Insurgents

KABUL - Following comments made this week by the Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah on the "presence of enemy spies within Afghan government ranks", a number of analysts raised the issue on Tuesday, saying these "double agents" are more dangerous than insurgents.

They said Afghanistan will not witness stability unless all such "agents" are ousted from government.

"Agents inside the government are like guiding lights for the enemy," Dawood Kalakani, a member of parliament, told TOLONews.

"The Afghan government



should first clear this line of enemies, because they are more dangerous. These agents know all the secret ways which the enemy can use to damage the people of Afghanistan."

He said that in fact the so-

Presidential Remarks against Pakistan Widely Welcomed

KABUL - Praising the presidential remarks that Pakistan is fomenting violence in Afghanistan, a number of Afghans have urged the government to register a strong complaint with the UN Security Council and cut all ties with the neighbour.

Afghan government in the past one decade had tried to build good relations with Pakistan and obtain help in ensuring peace in Afghanistan. However, relations between



the two countries deteriorated despite efforts by former president Hamid Karzai and incumbent President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani to improve ties. Continued shilling from Pakistani territory into Afghanistan and bloody attacks inside the country especially in Kabul forced Afghan government to show strong reaction. ...*(More on P4)...(14)*

Number of Drug Addicts Reaches 200,000 in Balkh



MAZAR-I-SHARIF - Civil society groups campaigning against drug abuse on Tuesday said the population of drug addicts had reached above 200,000 individuals in northern Balkh province.

They said if the government did not take practical steps to prevent the unprecedented use of drugs, the situation would threaten social life.

Khat Naw, a civil society group, on Tuesday arranged a gathering at the meeting hall of the provincial Agriculture Department. The group's members urged the government and common people to support them in their campaign against the drug abuse.

Civil society activists from various groups and local officials also attended the gathering.

Khat Naw official Abdul Qadir Misbah told Pajhwok Afghan News on the sidelines of the gathering that their survey revealed more than 200,000 individuals were addicted to

drugs in the province. He said women constituted 30 percent of the addicts, who included children and adults, lashing out at the government for what he said pursuing a wrong policy over the past 13 years to prevent drug smuggling, trade and poppy cultivation.

Misbah said the population of drug addicts sharply increased during the last two or three years.

The activist urged participants of the gathering to play their part in preventing the use of drugs through social ways. He believed a campaign produced good results if initiated from own home and village.

Meanwhile, Counternarcotics Director Mohammad Rahim Rahman told Pajhwok Afghan News they were trying to prevent smuggling, cultivation and use of narcotics in the province. He said Balkh had been poppy-free over the past six years. The official acknowledged the number ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

Committee to Protect Journalists Established



KABUL - A committee comprising major government institutions and journalists' associations has been established aimed at preventing violence against journalists, deputy minister for information and culture on Tuesday.

Speaking on the second day of a media expo in Kabul, Sayeda Mujhgan Mustafavi said the committee included journalists' associations, Ministries of Information and Culture, Defence, Interior, National Directorate of Security (NDS) and Attorney General Office (AGO).

She said the committee was tasked to support journalists and prevent violence against media-people. The committee, she said, would also investigate cases of the journalists who were killed in different incidents in the past. During the past ten years, more than 49 journalists, including 12 foreign journalists have been killed in Afghanistan in several security incidents. Mujib Khalwatgar, ...*(More on P4)...(17)*

Improved Security Paves Way for Uplift Projects in Jawzjan

SHIBERGHAN - Expressing satisfaction with the improved law and order situation in northern Jawzjan province, the provincial council head on Tuesday said the way had been paved for implementation of welfare projects.

Speaking to Pajhwok Afghan News, Maulvi Abdul Hai Hayat said the projects in the past 14 years despite better security have not been implemented in a way people expected.

He said there were no asphalted roads in ten districts and residents grappled with a lot of challenges.

He expressed optimism that with the new administration in place, security in the province has improved and implementation of the projects did not face any hurdles.

"The development projects were not much before. Now we are optimistic about more uplift schemes to be implemented," he added.

He said recently the government has embarked on construction 10 schools, constructing part of the Jawzjan University, and asphalted of Shiberghan - Qosh Tapa road that is 40 kilometres long.

Another important project in the province, Maulvi Hayat said, was construction of a grand mosque and a technical institute. The mosque would be ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

Afghans Call to Boycott Pakistan's Products

KABUL - A number of Afghan residents called to boycott Pakistani products by starting campaign on social media.

They said that they are ready to endure hunger but would not use Pakistani products anymore; a country which send terror and violence to Afghanistan.

After President Ghani's press conference on Monday calling on Pakistan to end its undeclared war with Afghanistan, Afghan people take a decision to not use any of Pakistani products.

"No people have suffered more from Pakistani misadventures than the Afghans," Muhammad Rafiq, Kabul inhabitant said.

Meanwhile, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry considered people's demand applicable, emphasizing they have also found alternative ways against it.

The chamber of commerce noted that Pakistan has always ...*(More on P4)...(13)*

Taliban's Shadow Governor Detained

MEHTARLAAM - Afghanistan's intelligence agency - The National Directorate of Security (NDS) has detained Taliban's so-called governor for Qarghai District of eastern Laghman province.

A statement issued by NDS on Tuesday states that Maulawi Esmail alias Abdullah and Ghairat was arrested with one of his aides from the jurisdiction of Laghman's neighboring Nangarhar province.

According to the statement, Maulawi Esmail had hand in planting landmines, assassinations and other destructive activities.

A video released by the spy agency shows a man identified as Esmail, admitting his links with Taliban.

"My name is Mohammad Ismail S/O Zainuddin, I joined Taliban about seven years before, under the leadership of Maulawi Ezatullah, I was a group commander, after being a group commander for three years I worked four years as the governor for Qarghai District." He said.

NDS statements usually do not contain exact date of the achievements but they come after recent activities. (KP)