

Quote of the Day

A sound mind in a sound body is a short but full description of a happy state in this world.

John Locke

Afghan-Turkmenistan Accords Signed in Kabul

KABUL - President Ashraf Ghani on Thursday met with his Turkmenistan counterpart, President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow, and with various ministers from both countries witnessed the signing of bilateral agreements ranging from education through to energy supply.

At least five accords were inked at an event at the Presidential Palace in Kabul, which was attended by high-ranking government officials from both countries.

Addressing a joint press conference after the signing ceremony, Ghani said that he and Berdimuhamedow also discussed numerous issues relating to trade, transit and economic development as well as security issues.



Ghani was clear in his speech that Afghanistan considers Turkmenistan a "brotherly" neighbor.

He went on to announce that Berdimuhamedow had agreed his country will increase electricity supply to Afghani-

stan five-fold. In addition, Ghani said that the issue of electricity from Afghanistan ... (More on P4)...(1)

Abdullah Meets Turkmen President, Hails Bilateral Ties



KABUL - Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah met with Turkmenistan's President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow on Thursday afternoon in Kabul.

Abdullah called Berdimuhamedow's trip a vital step towards strengthening and expanding the relations between the two countries. "Turkmenistan is an old friend of Afghanistan and we have historic and

cultural ties between us," Abdullah said.

In addition, Abdullah welcomed Berdimuhamedow's promise to facilitate the peace process between the Afghan government and the Taliban.

The meeting came after Berdimuhamedow - on one of his rare state visits - arrived in Kabul on Thursday morning. He met with President ... (More on P4)...(2)

US Praises India's Role in Afghanistan



WASHINGTON - The Pentagon has praised India's significant contribution in the peaceful development of Afghanistan; calling on China to have an active part in Afghanistan.

India and Afghanistan signed a strategic partnership declaration in 2011, which formalized cooperation on governance, economics, commerce,

education, public administration, and security/law enforcement which said in a report submitted to the US Congress.

India would like to expand its role in the south Asia region, and accepts a regional arrangement for rebuilding efforts in Afghanistan with close cooperation of other nations. ... (More on P4)...(3)

Pakistan's President Inaugurates Pak-Afghan Highway

KABUL - The Pak-Afghan Highway would play a key role in bolstering ties between the countries along with opening new trade routes to the Central Asian and European countries, President Mamnoon Hussain said on Thursday, media reports.

Pakistan's Express Tribune reported that the president while inaugurating the Pak-Afghan Highway at Shagai Fort, stressed that the route would help the two countries enter a new era of progress and prosperity.

"The newly constructed highway could help cement people-to-people contact between the two countries," he said, adding that having cordial relations could help the two countries in resolving economic and administrative problems. (Pajhwok)

United States

Drugs Main Source of Financing Terror in Region

WASHINGTON - Acknowledging that drugs are the main source of terrorist financing in the region, the United States on Wednesday said it was also a source of stability and income for poor farmers, who were forced to grow the banned crop for the Taliban.

"We're all well aware that the Taliban has used it to finance itself, it's also a source



of stability and income for poor farmers, who are basically forced, many times, to grow it for the Taliban," the State Department spokesman, John Kirby, told reporters at his daily news confer-

ence.

Responding to a question, Kirby said it is not just as simple as an eradication program. "You have to be able to work on supplementing it for something else, and we have worked with Afghan authorities for many years about trying to find other crops that farmers can grow to make a good living, and there's ... (More on P4)...(4)

President Stresses Better Urban Services, Food Security

KABUL - President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani has underlined the need for better civic services, including food security and employment opportunities, in large cities.

Chairing a high-level meeting at the Presidential Palace late on Wednesday, Ghani was briefed on the implementation of development plans for Kabul and other major cities of Afghanistan.

After listening to the participants' views on enforcing the 21 projects identified by him, the president called the Kabul development strategy as effective and stressed ways of its implementation.

While calling for the delivery of efficient urban facilities and food security, the president said the authorities should determine what Kabul could offer its citizens and residents of other cities in economic, commercial and social terms.

He went on to suggest a mechanism for forging a public-private partnership to ensure the smooth provision of services and even-handed development. He also proposed a comprehensive evaluation of the opportunities for improving areas all around Kabul. ... (More on P4)...(6)

Attack on a Journalist an Attack on Freedom of Expression: Mellbin

KABUL - After Afghan Journalists Safety Committee (AJSC) recorded 39 cases of threats and violence against journalists during the first half of 2015, EU Special Representative Ambassador Franz Michael Mellbin said that one attack on a journalist is an attack on Freedom of Expression in Afghanistan.

Today the 6-months report from the AJSC was publicized in which AJSC recorded 39 cases of threats and violence against journalists during the first half of 2015, reflecting a decline by 43% compared to the first six months of 2014 during which 63 cases were recorded.

One journalist was killed and another 4 wounded in this reporting period. Similarly, 19 journalists were beaten, 2 arrested and another 13 faced ... (More on P4)...(7)



Dostum in Sar-E-Pul, Urges Taliban to Down Weapons

SAR-E-PUL - Continuing his anti-insurgent mission in the north, the First Vice President Abdul Rashid Dostum arrived in Sar-e-Pul on Thursday after he cleared the northwestern Faryab province from armed insurgents.

Shortly after his arrival in Sar-e-Pul, he called on anti-government militants to lay down their weapons or be killed. In addition, he promised to clear the Balkhab district of the Taliban.

He stated that if President Ashraf Ghani gives him the go-ahead, his next step will be Kunduz - a



battle-weary province that has seen a number of districts fall to the Taliban in the past few months.

"I am talking to the president now, if he decides, I will clear the Kohistanat district in one or two hours," said Dostum, who was in Faryab for about four weeks. ... (More on P4)...(5)

ANSF Conduct Operations against Taliban across the Country



KABUL - Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) have started military operations in parts of Musa Qala district of Helmand province to recapture the area from Taliban insurgents, officials said on Friday.

Provincial spokesman Omar Zowak told TOLONews that Afghan forces have started a large scale operation in Musa Qala district and at the moment clashes are ongoing between the forces and the Taliban.

Zowak did not provide details about casualties.

On Wednesday officials from Musa Qala said that the area was in danger of collapsing into the hands of the Taliban.

There was however contradictory reports with some Provincial Council members

who said that Musa Qala had already collapsed to the Taliban. In addition they say insurgents have torched a clinic and a school.

The council members said on Wednesday "the insurgents have also stolen a radio system from the police forces".

But, Mohammad Jan Rasoulyar, Deputy Governor of Helmand has not confirmed reports of its collapse but said that heavy clashes continue and that by Thursday more than 150 Taliban insurgents had so far been killed.

The Afghan and foreign air forces are also supporting the ground forces in the battle field, according to the officials.

In addition, Taliban insurgents once again had retaken control ... (More on P4)...(8)

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