

Jalalabad Clear 39°C 24°C	Ghazni Clear 30°C 13°C	Kandahar Clear 37°C 19°C	Mazar Clear 32°C 22°C	Herat Clear 30°C 14°C	Bamayan Clear 20°C 5°C	Kabul Clear 30°C 15°C
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Daily Outlook
Weather Forecast

Carter Rules out Change in Troops' Drawdown Plan

WASHINGTON - US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter on Friday ruled out any changes in the troops' withdrawal plan in view of the recent increase in terrorist attacks in and outside Kabul.

"With respect to the force presence in Afghanistan, no change there. The US President did decide earlier this year to sustain the presence at 9,800 through this year, in order to be able to provide the most advisory and assist capability to the Afghan security forces, along with our coalition partners, that we could," Carter told reporters in San Diego, California. The plan made two years ago, is to



draw down to a Kabul-based presence by the end of next year, he said. Of course, and very importantly, continue both from the United States and the coalition, to make substantial contributions to the support of the Afghan security forces. After all, it is the Afghan security forces that are going to keep the peace and keep the Taliban on the ropes in the long run, he noted.

The President, he said, has indicated that he wants to look again at the counter terrorism dimensions of that, and other dimensions. And that he would be doing that in the course of the ... (More on P4)...(8)

Kabul Rally Lauds ANSF Performance



KABUL - A number of Kabul residents and civil society activists on Saturday staged a rally on Airport Road, lauding the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) performance in fighting anti-government elements and maintaining law-and-order in the war-ravaged country.

The activists and residents of the capital city walked along Airport Road and handed out flowers to the security forces. They said insurgent groups should lay down their arms and join the peace process in Afghanistan's hour of need.

"Where should we raise the voice that people want peace," challenged the rally participants.

"We want to get our message out through theater and music," said Samai Daraee, a ... (More on P4)...(9)

Higher Education Standards Being Improved: Momand

KABUL - Concerted efforts are being made to improve the quality of higher education in public and private-sector universities, the minister concerned says.

Higher Education Minister Farida Momand said quality higher education was central to the progress and prosperity of a country. No nation could make progress without a sound system of education, she added.

Addressing a graduation ceremony at the Bakhtar University in Kabul on Friday evening, the minister noted three decades of conflict had badly damaged higher education,



like other sectors, in Afghanistan. But in recent years, she explained, a lot of progress had been made by public and private-sector educational institutes. Although many students had made it to universities, the quality of education needed to be improved, she

acknowledged. Her ministry was trying to boost higher education standards in the country, she said, asking private-sector universities to focus on better teaching standards. In the absence of quality education, she argued, graduates could not make ... (More on P4)...(10)

Strongmen's Refusal to Pay Taxes Hits Revenue Collection Drive

KANDAHAR CITY - A large number of strongmen refuse to pay taxes, scuttling government efforts to collect or jack up its revenue, authorities say. In an exclusive interview with Pajhwok Afghan News, Revenue Director Azim Khan Ahmadzai economic activity had decelerated in recently months.

The directorate receives taxes based on income-generating activities and sends the money thus collected to the central government via banks. Following the withdrawal of foreign troops and provincial

reconstruction team's windup, he says, the number of logistical and construction firms in Kandahar has considerably fallen.

The few companies still in operation often complain to the directorate of an absence of projects. In recent years, most of revenue came from these firms.

However, the official acknowledges, their income has drastically slumped and they



are trying to explore alternative income sources. Ahmadzai says they are faced with ... (More on P4)...(11)

Half of Kabul Residents Lack Access to Potable Water

KABUL - With the population reaching about 4.5 million people in capital Kabul, half of them still have no access to potable water.

A report by Pajhwok Afghan News about access to clean water was based on statistics obtained from Water Supply and Canalization department and the estimated Kabul population was provided by the Central Statistic Office (CSO).

The report shows there is huge difference between the ratio of increasing population in Kabul and their access to clean water in the past 14 years.

Dad Mohammad Baheer, head of Water Supply and Canalization department, told Pajhwok Afghan News currently 150,000 city's planned families and 105,000 city's unplanned families had access to potable.

Based on the department's estimates, around two and half million Kabul families had ... (More on P4)...(12)

Kabul Has no Viable Security Plan for Helmand: Speakers



LASHKARGAH - The government has no specific strategy for strengthening security in southern Helmand province, public representatives and civil society representatives complain.

In the absence of such a plan, insecurity was on the rise in the province, they said at the overnight launch of a movement called "How we can rescue Helmand" in Lashkargah. Mohammad Karim Atal, head

of the movement and the provincial council, noted deterioration of the security environment in recent months in Helmand in general and northern districts in particular.

The government's security plan for Helmand was far from clear, he alleged, stressing the rulers should have a well-defined position on the issue of national importance.

Atal called for enhanced coordination ... (More on P4)...(15)

Zabul Districts in Danger of Falling to Taliban



KABUL - Four districts of southern Zabul province would fall to the Taliban if additional security forces are not sent, warned the provincial council chief on Saturday.

Ata Jan Haqbayan told Pajhwok Afghan News in an exclusive interview in Kabul that Zabul was one of the provinces that had been without adequate security during the past 13 years.

He said the four districts --- Daichopan, Naw Bahar, Shamulzai and Atghar --- were

among the most insecure districts and had been surrounded by insurgents. He said if the government did not pay heed and increase the number of security forces in Zabul, the four districts would fall.

"The threats outweigh the number of police in Zabul. Around 30 policemen are assigned to each of these districts. With the current police numbers, it is very difficult to ensure security in these far-flung districts," he added. ... (More on P4)...(17)

Daesh Closes Schools in Achin District

JALALABAD - Residents in Achin district of eastern Nangarhar province have said that militants associated with Daesh have warned teachers against teaching at schools in the areas they have seized control of.

Residents claim that Daesh believes those getting an education at schools will serve in various government institutions in the future. A job which Daesh believes could inflict harm on the group.

Referring to the reports, Nangarhar education department has also confirmed that Daesh



has closed down at least six schools in Momand Dara area of Achin district. Officials claim that 41 teachers were sent home by Daesh after their schools were sealed off by the group.

"Daesh has closed schools

and looted teachers' homes. Daesh claims these teachers have links with the government," a tribal elder from Nangarhar, Kamin said.

"Daesh has closed high schools in Momand Dara and ... (More on P4)...(13)

Kandahar Council Warns Corrupt Officials of Action

KANDAHAR CITY - The Provincial Council (PC) of southern Kandahar province has warned of taking strict action against officials involved in corruption.

Kandahar PC head Haji Sayed Khan Khakrizwal told a meeting that a large number of residents complained about rampant corruption in provincial government departments.

However, Khakrizwal did not name any department to be the hub of graft but vowed to initiate strict measures against officers who were in connivance in direct or indirect corruption. The provincial council would produce evidences of officials' corruption, he said, adding that they would be introduced to relevant organs.

He said that they had also exchanged views on prices of food items during the meeting. (Pajhwok)

Govt. Urged to Launch Military Operation in Warduj District



KABUL - Ahmad Naveed Firotan, spokesman for the governor of Badakhshan province has urged the central government to immediately launch mili-

tary operation in Warduj district.

While talking to Khaama Press on Saturday, Firotan said that border police recently ... (More on P4)...(16)

Hundreds of Children in Kabul Receive Free Hearing Aids

KABUL - Bayat Foundation with the closer cooperation of the Starkey Hearing Foundation have launched its second round of distribution of hearing devices as free to 800 people in need in Kabul the capital city of Afghanistan.

Officials of both foundations have said, "the following hearing devices has

been distributed after fourth period of checkups were made from the patients." In the following donation efforts are made to distribute hearing devices to those who cant hear due to several issues, the program will enable them to hear the voices of their surroundings.

Head of Bayat Foundation Eng, ... (More on P4)...(18)

Afghan Forces Capture Taliban's Badakhshan Centre

FAIZABAD - Afghan forces have captured a Taliban's military centre in Warduj district of northeastern Badakhshan province, allowing reconstruction work to resume on key bridge destroyed by floods, an official said on Saturday.

The governor's spokesman, Ahmad Naveed Frotan, told Pajhwok Afghan News the rebels' centre was captured during a midnight operation in Kazda area of the district after three militants were killed and two others injured.

"This was an important centre of Taliban because they controlled several areas from this centre. The insurgents ... (More on P4)...(14)

Ukrainian Hostage Freed in Afghanistan: Russia

MOSCOW - Dmytro Bilyi, a Ukrainian who was being held prisoner by Afghan militants, has been freed with Russian help, the Russian foreign ministry said in a statement on Saturday.

The ministry said that Bilyi had been freed "as a result of active efforts of Russian authorities in close co-operation with the Afghan side", without giving further details.

The statement also said that Russia was ready at any time to hand him over to Ukrainian representatives in Afghanistan. Ukrainian authorities confirmed in early August that Bilyi was being held hostage after he posted a video appeal on the internet. He had worked in Afghanistan for a construction company for ten years, Ukrainian media reported at that time. (Reuters)

6 Security Men Accused of Negligence in Jalrez Carnage

KABUL - Six security officials of central Maidan Wardak province were found demonstrating negligence in the tragic Jalrez incident.

Mohammad Yousuf Pashtoon, the president's advisor and member of the investigative team, told reporters that Jalrez massacre was not an incident that occurred all in sudden, but it took place because of negligence of security officials of the province.

Without revealing the names of the accused officials, Pashtoon said officials of the National Directorate of Security (NDS) had already warned security officials about the imminent attack but no arrangements had been made to avert the attack.

Almost two months earlier, Taliban insurgents attacked several Afghan Local Police (ALP) posts. Insurgents overran a dozen post and killed 24 ALP members.

Some of the ALP corpses were decapitated and burned. The incident sparked protests and brought under severe criticism the government amid calls for a deep investigation into the attack.

The ... (More on P4)...(19)