

Spanish Embassy in Kabul under Attack: Afghan, Madrid Officials

KABUL - Insurgents have launched an attack on a Spanish embassy compound in Kabul Friday, Afghan officials said, following reports of gunfire and a massive car bomb in the centre of the city. It was not immediately clear if there were casualties. "The embassy has been attacked. We are gathering details," a foreign ministry spokesman in Madrid told AFP, information that was confirmed by the Kabul police. The embassy is in Sherpur in central Kabul, where a huge car bomb struck during rush hour on



Friday evening, followed by ongoing bursts of gunfire in an assault that comes as the resurgent Taliban escalate attacks against government and foreign targets. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack, but said the target was a foreign guest house. It was not immediately clear if the guest house was inside the embassy premises. Spanish news agency Europa Press reported that President Mariano Rajoy had been informed, citing government sources. Spain had nine troops left in Afghanistan as of December 2015, according to official NATO figures. (AFP)

US Sergeant Jailed for Taking Bribes from Afghan Aid Contractors

WASHINGTON- US Army Sergeant Ramiro Pena, who was sentenced to 24 months in prison for taking bribes, used the bribe money to purchase a Harley Davidson motorcycle, which he now has to forfeit along with the Rolex and cash, according to the US Department of Justice. The United States sentenced Army Sergeant Ramiro Pena to 24 months in prison for taking bribes from humanitarian aid vendors in Afghanistan in exchange for supply contracts, the US Department of Justice said in a press release on Thursday. "Pena admitted that he and his supervisor... were responsible for contracting with local vendors to purchase supplies to support humanitarian relief in Afghanistan," the release stated. "Pena admitted that he received from the vendors... a Rolex watch and \$100,000 in total bribe payments." Pena and his ... (More on P4)...(24)

'Russian Speaking' Woman Carries out Suicide Attack in Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD - An Afghan intelligence operative, a foreigner and her three children were killed in a bomb blast in eastern Afghanistan Friday, officials said. The incident happened in Jalalabad, the capital of Nangarhar province bordering Pakistan. A provincial spokesman, Atallah Khogyani, told VOA that the Afghan intelligence agency, National Directorate of Security (NDS), had detained a "Russian speaking" foreign woman and her three children, suspecting them of having links to militants. He said that while the detainees were being transported in a vehicle to the NDS office so they could be interrogated and properly searched by female police, the woman detonated explosives strapped to her body. There was no immediate claim of responsibility either from the Taliban insurgency, or pro-Islamic State (IS) militants who have allegedly set up strong bases in remote districts of Nangarhar. Locally referred to as Daesh (the Arabic acronym for IS), the extremist group is blamed for conducting some of the recent terrorist attacks in the Afghan border province. Local reports say U.S. drones as well as Afghan ground forces have repeatedly attacked its bases in the region, killing dozens of IS fighters. The Islamic State group controls large areas in Iraq and Syria, and concerns are growing the terrorist group is ... (More on P4)...(20)

Taliban Militants Intensify Activities in South

KABUL - Taliban militants have intensified activities in their former strongholds across Afghanistan over the past months. They stormed Kandahar airport on Tuesday night, triggering heavy fighting. The militants first occupied the airport Tuesday night and then stormed their targeted airport. In an online statement on Thursday, the militants said a group of their suicide bombers sneaked into the airport Tuesday night and challenged the Afghan and foreign forces, inflicting huge casualties. Taliban militants have also been fighting government forces in the neighboring Helmand province over the past several months, and they have claimed capturing Khanshin district in the



province. In an online statement on Thursday, the armed outfit claimed that Khanshin district was taken on Wednesday evening. But spokesman for Helmand province ... (More on P4)...(21)

Georgian Homeland Security Takes Lead in Search for Afghan Trainees

ATLANTA - Air Force officials say the Department of Homeland Security has taken the lead role in the search for two Afghan men who disappeared while training with the U.S. military at a base in south Georgia. Air Force Lt. Col. Chris Karns said Friday that Homeland Security, in coordination with the U.S. State Department, is leading efforts to locate the men. Air Force officials have said the men were screened before entering the U.S. and there's no evidence they pose a threat. Officials at Moody Air Force base near Valdosta said the men didn't report Monday to ... (More on P4)...(23)

NDS Official Killed in Nangarhar Blast

JALALABAD - Local officials in Nangarhar said a National Directorate of Security (NDS) official was killed in a suicide attack in the eastern province on Friday morning. Nangarhar governor's spokesman Atallah Khogyani told TOLONews that there is no information about the exact location of the incident, but NDS officials have confirmed that it occurred near their office in the province. Khogyani said the attack occurred when NDS officials were chasing a car carrying foreign nationals and when they get close to the car, a foreign national woman stepped out of the car and detonated her explosives near the NDS vehicle, which left one of the officials dead. Sources say that the foreigners in the vehicle were Russian nationals and that three Russian children have been killed in the blast. (Tolonews)

Afghanistan Cricket Team Shift Home Base from Sharjah to Noida

KABUL - Afghanistan cricket team's home base has been shifted from Sharjah to the Shaheed Vijay Singh Pathik Sports Complex in Noida after the cricket board signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Board of Control for Cricket in India. Afghanistan cricket team has shifted its home base from Sharjah to the UPCA stadium in Noida where they will play their matches and practice after an MoU was signed today in this regard. (Afghanistan Keen to Play International Cricket in



Pakistan) According to the Memorandum of Understanding with BCCI and Greater Noida Industrial Development Authority, the Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) will be able to utilise the facilities of the Shaheed Vijay Singh Pathik Sports Complex, which has successfully hosted a Ranji Trophy game between Uttar Pradesh and Baroda. (Anurag Thakur Tweets ... (More on P4)...(22)



Afghan girls play cricket at a stadium in Herat province. Despite the lack of funds and having no proper cricket pitch, Afghanistan has seen an extraordinary rise in cricket in recent years. (Xinhua/Sardar Karimi)

Outlook Horoscope

Aries (Mar. 22-Apr.20)

Restlessly spinning your wheels does nothing to soothe your impatience today. You're ready to start a new project even if complications arise before you shift into second gear. The fiery Sagittarius New Moon invigorates your 9th House of Adventure, giving you the green light to go ahead. Unfortunately, demands on your time may prohibit you from making much progress now.

Taurus (Apr.21-May 20)

You're drawn to explore unfamiliar issues that don't normally concern you. You grow excited about venturing into the mysteries of the mind, investigating new ideas as the philosophical Sagittarius New Moon conjures up intrigue in your 8th House of Transformation. Unfortunately, metaphysical interests pull you away from more practical concerns.

Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You imagine that people are expecting too much from you now. The cheerful Sagittarius New Moon rattles your 7th House of Partners, indicating your need to be seen in the most positive light by others. Seek ways to improve a significant relationship by taking it in a new direction; your willingness to become a better version of yourself initiates powerful personal growth. Delving deeper into your own psyche produces surprising results.

Cancer (June 21-July 20)

You believe you can eliminate old habits with a snap of your fingers. The truth is that wellness begins with acting on the simplest lifestyle decisions. The optimistic Sagittarius New Moon emphasizes your 6th House of Health, reminding you how easy it is to improve your diet by eliminating foods that offer empty calories with little nourishment value.

Leo (July 21-Aug. 21)

You might not be able to contain your energy today, especially if you're stuck at a desk in an office. Fortunately, you could ease your anxiety by participating in sports, even as an engaged spectator. You can temporarily forget about your current responsibilities while being totally absorbed in the heat of the competition, now that the fiery Sagittarius New Moon activates your 5th House of Fun and Games.

Virgo (Aug. 22-Sep 22)

A strong yearning to retreat into your past can distract you from the present moment. However, you're motivated to recover a memory that has particular relevance while the open-minded Sagittarius New Moon illuminates your 4th House of Roots today. Unfortunately, your thoughts might be so vague now that you wind up frustrated rather than comforted. Although looking in the rear-view mirror sounds appealing,

Libra (Sep 23-Oct. 22)

Rambling philosophical discussions with close friends or associates take your mind off more serious problems today. The feisty Sagittarius New Moon stimulates your 3rd House of Communication, creating an "anything goes" atmosphere in your interactions with others. Unfortunately, these high-spirited conversations won't necessarily change anything right away.

Scorpio (Oct.23-Nov.22)

You may question the value of your contribution to a project at work as the excessive Sagittarius New Moon exaggerates the potential of your 2nd House of Self-Esteem. You might feel so overconfident about being successful one moment that you reach out too far and throw yourself off balance. However, maintaining your equilibrium is the surest way to lift your spirits and empower.

Sagittarius (Nov.23-Dec.20)

You're over the Moon with enthusiasm, even if you don't have any special plans scheduled today. You're cruising for excitement while the adventurous Sagittarius New Moon buzzes your 1st House of Self. However, it may be easier to conjure up an innovative idea than to turn it into tangible results now. Thankfully, you can increase your chances of getting what you need if you don't automatically assume you deserve it.

Capricorn (Dec.21-Jan19)

You're uncharacteristically eager to rush blindly into a new project before you know all the details. Nevertheless, you're probably missing pertinent facts now that the exuberant Sagittarius New Moon stirs up mischief in your 12th House of Secrets. There's no need to make any life-changing decisions today; in fact, intentionally slowing down your progress buys you more time to consider.

Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb.18)

You're irrepressibly excited about your plans for the rest of the year as the visionary Sagittarius New Moon wires your 11th House of Groups. The thought of making memories with friends and family emboldens you to fill your calendar with even more activities. However, you could grow so busy that you end up exhausted from all of the fun.

Pisces (Feb.19-Mar.20)

New career trajectories are opening up for you, revealing the possibility of altering your life path. However, you might be struggling to let go of old dreams as the current ones grow in significance. The aspiring Sagittarius New Moon transforms your perspective of your 10th House of Status, showing you where you are blocked in your current professional development.

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-66 indicating starting points for clues.

Across: 1. Persists, 6. Sleeveless garment, 10. Ailments, 14. Cancel, 15. Within, 16. Half-moon tide, 17. Magazine, 19. Quash, 20. Treeless plain, 21. Consumed food, 22. Reflected sound, 23. Mystic, 25. Aromatic solvent, 26. A promiscuous woman, 30. Freeload, 32. Maybe, 35. Provide commentary, 39. Per, 40. Trader, 41. Featured, 43. Herringbone, 44. Environment, 46. Feudal worker, 47. Ancient Hebrew vestment, 50. Wooden shoe, 53. God of love, 54. Delay, 55. Cavort, 60. Violent disturbance, 61. Destroy completely, 63. Greek letter, 64. Implored, 65. Roof overhangs, 66. At one time (archaic), 67. Brittle, 68. Closes violently.

Down: 1. Trips around a course, 2. Foment, 3. Achy, 4. Journey, 5. Ceases, 6. 7 in Roman numerals, 7. Bivouac, 8. Train depot, 9. Lacquered metalware, 10. Habitual, 11. Bloodsucker, 12. Wood shaping machine, 13. Trail, 18. Morning moisture, 24. Donkey, 25. Heron, 26. Resorts, 27. Past tense of Leap, 28. Murres, 29. Thermoregulator, 31. Zero, 33. Bitter, 34. Rind, 36. Beers, 37. Small slender gull, 38. Sea eagle, 42. Incapacitate, 43. Tavern, 45. A young eagle, 47. Creepy, 48. Earlier in time, 49. Owl sounds, 51. Frequently, in poetry, 52. Tall woody plants, 54. Cuts off, 56. By mouth, 57. Magma, 58. Bit of gossip, 59. To tax or access, 62. Actress Lupino.

Yesterday's Solution: accuse, active, balls, blood, blunder, breakfast, build, callow, chick, come, crash, dour, essence, frown, hamster, haunted, hurry, leer, list, manger, mental, needless, people, perfect, program, quake, rampant, rash, rode, scum, seal, secret, seek, sent.

B R E A K F A S T T H Z Q
L M A N G E R C T O U G H
U H A M S T E R Q E R X F
N P E O P L E S E C R E T
D P A S C A L L O W Y N E
E R C H D R N A C T I V E
R O C O A Q A T B U I L D
T G U R M U C S T R A I N
A R S T R E N H H A Q S B
L A E S F R N T I S U T L
E M F R O W N T E C A O O
N E E D L E S S A D K R O
T P E S S E N C E L E Y D