

Balkh Airstrikes Leave 21 Militants Dead: MoI

MAZAR-I-SHARIF - At least 21 Taliban militants have been killed during an airstrike in northern Balkh province, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) said on Wednesday.

The air raid was conducted on the outskirts of Chemtal district early Wednesday which resulted in the killing of at least 21 Taliban militants. Some of the insurgents' weapons and ammunition were also destroyed, a statement from the MoI said.

Provincial Police Spokesman, Sher Jan Durani confirmed the airstrike in Chemtal district and said Special Forces dispatched from capital Kabul had carried out the air offensive.



He didn't provide more information about the air raid.

However, Chemtal district Chief, Abdul Matin Khwajazada, said there was a clash erupted between Afghan Special Forces and militants in the district at around 4am. The clash lasted a few hours.

According to Khwajazada, the clash was also followed by aerial bombardment. He put the death toll at 12 Taliban militants killed and 15 others injured. Civilians and security personnel suffered no casualties in the air raid.

The Taliban are yet to comment about the airstrikes. (Pajhwok)

In Jawzjan, Women Addicts Turn to Prostitution

SHIBERGHAN - Civil society activists have voiced grave concern at the rising number of women drug addicts in northern Jawzjan province, saying at times they turn to prostitution in quest of narcotics.

Sadrudin, a civil society activist in Shiberghan, says such females are suffering from a double whammy: Addiction and prostitution. The penniless women do drugs with male junkies, with whom they have sex more often than not for the sake of drugs. If these women from Jawzjan and other provinces are not paid serious attention, the undesirable culture of addiction among them would increase, he warns. "Their addiction can have bad consequences for other women."

Haji Alisher Intizar, another civil society activist, also notes an upward trajectory of addiction among women in Jawzjan, where some of the drug-dependent females have reportedly come from other parts of the country. He asks the officials concerned to take remedial measures to prevent the bad practice spreading in society. Drug-reliant women commit illicit acts such as ... (More on P4)... (15)

Afghans Edge out UAE in First Twenty20



DUBAI - Afghanistan has beaten the United Arab Emirates by 11 runs in the first of three Twenty20 internationals at the International Cricket Council Academy in Dubai.

Afghanistan won the first of three Twenty20 internationals with United Arab Emirates, prevailing by 11 runs at the International Cricket Council Academy in Dubai.

The Afghans, having won the toss, posted 161 for six on the back of strong contributions from Mohammad Shahzad (38), Mohammad Nabi (26), Karim Janat (25) and Najibullah Zadran (31 not out from just 10 balls), while Mohammad Shahzad took three for 34. Although Rameez Shahzad top-scored with 49 for the hosts, his dismissal at the end of the 19th over all but ensured victory for Afghanistan, for whom Janat claimed three for 31. Besides Rameez's contribution, Rohan Mustafa (25) and Shaiman Anwar (34) aided a total of 150 for seven. (SBS)

1 Dead, 17 Wounded As Bus Flips Over in Herat

KABUL - One passenger was killed and another 17 were wounded, including women and children, in an accident in western Herat province, an official said on Wednesday.

The governor's spokesman, Ghulam Jilani Farhad, told Pajhwok Afghan News a passenger bus flipped over on the road between Herat City and Adraskan district due to technical fault on Tuesday night. A youth died and women and children were among 17 others wounded in the accident, he said, without giving further details.

Meanwhile, Herat Zonal Hospital spokesman Mohammad Rafiq confirmed receiving one dead body and 17 wounded people at around 10pm. The injured included women and children. Three of them are in critical condition. (Pajhwok)

Afghan Police Officer Shoots Dead Foreigner in Kabul

KABUL - An Afghan police officer has shot and killed a foreigner at a security checkpoint outside the Kabul airport, a security official says.

Authorities have launched an investigation into the incident, which took place on Wednesday. Another foreigner was also injured in the incident. The nationality of the victims has not been announced. Police stepped up security measures at Kabul airport on Wednesday for the arrival of Afghan warlord Faryadi Zardad, who was deported from Britain after serving a jail sentence for torture. Scores of Zardad's supporters gathered at the airport to greet him. The people of Afghanistan have been suffering from violence and insecurity since the United States and its allies invaded the country as part of Washington's so-called war on terror in 2001. Many



parts of the country still remain plagued by militancy despite the presence of foreign troops. The military invasion removed Taliban from power, but the militants still push to wrest control over the war-ravaged country. (Press TV)

2 Militants Killed by Own Explosives in Kabul

KABUL - Two militants were killed after explosives they possessed went off on Wednesday in capital Kabul.

The blast took place in the limits of the eight police district of Kabul at about 5pm. A police official in the area said three militants wanted to attack the police building. The explosives they possessed went off before they could reach their target, he said, adding two of the attackers were killed and the third wounded.

The injured person was taken to a hospital, the source said. No one else got hurt in the incident. (Pajhwok)

2 Drug Labs Destroyed, 15 Smugglers Nabbed in a Week

KABUL - Counter-narcotics police personnel have detained 15 individuals in connection with 12 drug-trafficking cases in different provinces besides destroying drug-producing laboratories this past week.

A statement from Counter-Narcotics Justice Center (CNJC) said on Wednesday the individuals detained hailed from Nangarhar, Kandahar, Paktia, Kunduz and Kabul provinces. It added 5,240 kilograms of

morphine, more than 668kg of opium, 4,477kg of hashish, 300 litres of acid, 1,100kgs of solid chemical materials, 165liters of alcoholic drinks, 14 mobile phones and seven vehicles were recovered from detainees. During the period, two drug-producing laboratories were also destroyed in eastern Nangarhar province, according to the statement, which gave no further details of the raids. (Pajhwok)



21 Militants Killed in Helmand Operation

LASHKARGAH - Local security officials on Wednesday claimed 21 militants have been killed and six others injured during an operation in Lashkargah, the capital of southern Helmand province. Lt. Col. Mohammad Rassoul Zazai, the spokesman for 215th Maiwand Military Corps in Helmand, told Pajhwok Afghan News, that Afghan air forces targeted militants' hideouts in Bushran area of the 3rd police district of Lashkargah on Tuesday night.



He said 21 militants were killed and six others wounded during the air raid supported by Afghan commando forces. Some weapons also seized by the Afghan forces during the

joint operation. Afghan forces have significantly advanced their operation and soon some security posts would be deployed in the area ... (More on P4)... (16)

Outlook Horoscope

Aries (Mar. 22-Apr.20)



Someone in your group of friends or social network may catch your eye in a way you never noticed before. Enjoy the flirtatious vibe, but understand the difference between playful banter and real affection. Feeling those butterflies in your stomach is always exciting, but a lasting relationship is built on so much more than chemical attraction.

Taurus (Apr.21-May 20)



In light of the past few days of excitement, you might want to take a moment to slow down and collect yourself. Speak kindly and tread softly; do something sweet like mailing a funny card to someone who could use a smile or calling a friend who needs a supportive ear. Although the mood is mellow today, you may encounter a fascinating individual who peaks your interest but is best seen as a fleeting flame.

Gemini (May 21-June 20)



The whirlwind slows, and it's time to take personal inventory. You may want to linger to admire and appreciate the possessions that make you feel happy today. Keep in mind that things are just material, but human connections transcend the physical. Although nurturing emotional bonds is the underlying theme now, nothing stays still for long around you. A creative connection between sexy Venus.

Cancer (June 21-July 20)



Strong emotions are more fleeting than you think today. The soothing Moon comes home to rest in your sign now, putting you in touch with your deepest feelings. You may feel extra affectionate and a little bit needy, but try not to let yourself slip into a possessive attitude or exhibit jealous behavior. However, you could lose the magic if you hold on too tightly.

Leo (July 21-Aug. 21)



Your charisma lights up a room today and you can't help but gather more than your fair share of admirers. However, it's important to set aside some time to be alone to recharge your batteries and reassess your direction. You Leos are natural performers, but even the best entertainers need a break from putting on a good show.

Virgo (Aug. 22-Sep 22)



Spending quality time with your friends acts as a tonic for your heart. Sometimes it's easy to forget when you're caught up in the daily grind just how much they mean to you, but now you're feeling an extra burst of gratitude and appreciation. Someone may even mistake your affection for flirting since it's tough to tell the difference between shallow desires and true connections today.

Libra (Sep 23-Oct. 22)



It's a sunshiny day when everyone seems to give you a friendly smile. You're no stranger to being popular, but you could end up engaging in some romantic intrigue today. This harmless flirtation is all well and good, but it's best to keep your heart from playing games. Trying to fill an emotional void with fleeting interactions will only make you feel emotionally drained at the end of the day.

Scorpio (Oct.23-Nov.22)



There's a sentimental feeling lingering in the air today, but you may feel like true affection is nowhere to be found. Do your best to acknowledge your emotions without wallowing in regret, and consider what you can do to rekindle your faith in relationships. There is always a risk of heartbreak, but the sweet rewards are worth the effort, regardless.

Sagittarius (Nov.23-Dec.20)



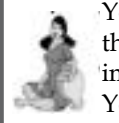
An everyday conversation may turn into a mind-opening and soul-energizing dialogue, and the resulting chemistry could have you wondering if this is the start of an exciting new relationship. Don't confuse infatuation with the real thing today. Listen to your intuition, and it will guide you to a love that is nourishing for your heart. Empower yourself before you give someone else your power.

Capricorn (Dec.21-Jan19)



If it seems like people are extra clingy today, they probably are feeling the planetary pull of the affectionate Cancer Moon. Your loved ones need you and you need them a little more than you might want to admit. Make a point to spend time with your closest allies and tell them how much you appreciate their supportive presence during the good and the bad times.

Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb.18)

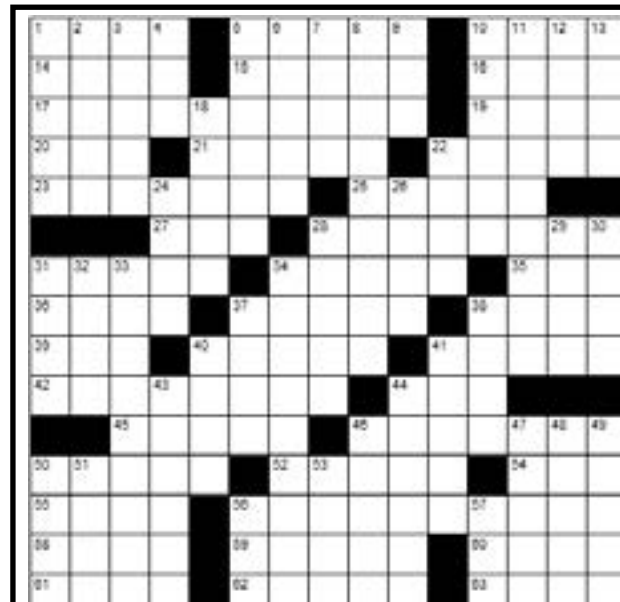


You may receive an extra creative boost from the cosmos today, and it's wise to allow your imagination to guide your lifestyle choices. You're typically not one to blend into the crowd, but now your quirkiness comes out in spades. You might enjoy rattling everyone's cages with your radical behavior but make sure you leave enough time to tend to your physical needs.

Pisces (Feb.19-Mar.20)



It's not always clear to you Fish what is real and what is fantasy, and today you may find yourself questioning if something was just a figment of your imagination. Be wary of a temporary loneliness driving you to look for connection everywhere, which can lead to delusions of returned affections or unhealthy choices. The safe bet is to get together with a close friend or family member who knows you inside and out.



Across

1. With competence, 5. Equals, 10. Ancient marketplaces, 14. Urgent request, 15. Wheel shafts, 16. Nights before, 17. Implore, 19. Bottomless, 20. Before, poetically, 21. Drome, 22. Nobles, 23. Baked dessert, 25. Lascivious looks, 27. Crimson, 28. Financially, 31. Customers of prostitutes, 34. Garbage, 35. French for "Water", 36. Midmonth date, 37. Hackneyed, 38. Between the head and shoulders, 39. Veto, 40. Make fun of, 41. Mocks, 42. Backpack, 44. Direction, 45. Menacing look, 46. Cut in three, 50. Tempter, 52. Hearing-related, 54. Bleat, 55. Forearm bone, 56. Fixations, 58. Oceans, 59. Runs away, 60. Notch, 61. Only, 62. Brusque, 63. Numerous.

Down

1. Church recesses, 2. Utter impulsively, 3. Pariah, 4. Chatter, 5. Coupled, 6. Surpass, 7. Distinctive flair, 8. Avenge, 9. South southeast, 10. Felt hat, 11. Sleep longer than intended, 12. Marsh plant, 13. Vipers, 18. Loads, 22. Pervert, 24. Coffee dispensers, 26. Being, 28. Search for concealed weapons, 29. Shoestring, 30. Laughs (slang), 31. To move quickly, 32. Norse god, 33. Six-sided, 34. Trackable, 37. Rip, 38. Negatives, 40. Russian emperor, 41. Prisons, 43. Give delight to, 44. Hogfish, 46. Tall woody plants, 47. African virus, 48. Religious law, 49. Yummy, 50. Wimp, 51. Margarine, 53. End ___, 56. Frequently, in poetry, 57. Belief.

Yesterday's Solution



bleak, blood, bottle, brash, brew, brown, camel, chips, clear, deeply, despair, eatery, estate, fable, fatigue, flint, frequency, frowns, halls, lies, light, miners, mumble, muscle, obese, picture, problem, rabble, rear, roast, scheme, slop, suet, test, tires, tooth, tress.

