

## NATO-Led Forces Ends Combat Mission in Afghanistan

KABUL - The NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) formally ended its 13 years old combat mission in Afghanistan on Sunday.

In a ceremony held here to mark the end of 13-year old war on terror by the U.S.-led alliance and complete the handover of security charge to Afghan national security forces, the U.S. commander of NATO-led ISAF General U.S. General John F. Campbell said "Today marks an end of an era and the beginning of a new one."

"We remember and honor those Coalition and Afghan heroes whom we've lost and the loved ones they left behind," the general said. "Their sacrifices drive us to persevere. They drive us to finish this noble mission well, they drive us to win."

Ruling out the possibility of Taliban returning to power, the commander of U.S.-led NATO troops in Afghanistan pointed out "There is no turning back to the dark days of the past. We are not walking away. It's time for the enemy to heed President Ghani's call, lay down their arms, embrace peace and help rebuild the Afghan nation." Speaking at the ceremony, Afghan presidential advisor on national security Mohammad Hanif Atmar appreciated the services of NATO-led troops in Afghanistan.

"We will never forget your sons and daughters who died on our soil. They are our sons and daughters as well," Atmar said.

"We are fully committed to working with you to meet our common security needs."

During the past 13 years of the U.S. and NATO-led ISAF war on terror, more than 3,500 servicemen with some 2,200 of them Americans have lost their lives in Afghanistan. With ending the combat mission of the NATO-led forces, the security transition of the alliance to Afghan national security is completed and Afghan forces formally assume the security responsibility of their country from Jan. 1, 2015.

However, some 13,000 NATO servicemen, including 10,800 Americans, are supposed to remain in Afghanistan in 2015 to train and advise Afghan national security forces. (Xinhua)

# NATO Should Fulfill Continued Aid Pledge: MPs

KABUL - Welcoming the end to NATO's 13-year combat mission in Afghanistan, senators on Sunday urged the western military alliance to fulfill its promises of continued assistance to Afghan forces.

The NATO formally ended its longest combat mission in Afghanistan on Sunday when top officials of the US-led coalition pledged to remain long-term partners in Afghanistan's war against the Taliban and international terrorism.

Several hundred Afghan and foreign officials gathered to witness the formal shift to a new,



much smaller NATO mission, inside NATO "Our commitment to ... We are not walking assistance and training headquarters in Kabul. Afghanistan endures. away," promised Gen.

John F. Campbell, the US commander of the outgoing International Security Assistance Forces mission, who will remain in command of the new NATO support role that technically begins at midnight Wednesday.

Meshrano Jirga chairman Fazl Hadi Muslimyar told the upper house: "It is a proud moment for us that our security and economic sectors now themselves serve their own people." Senator Nisar Ahmad Haris said he was happy to see foreign flags lowering in Afghanistan and that of Afghanistan's ... (More on P4)...(1)

## Trader Assists 200 Dangam Families

ASADABAD - A businessman, Habib Gulzar, on Sunday donated food and non-food items to 200 families displaced by the conflict in Dangam district of eastern Kunar province.

Khan Jan Alakozai, Deputy Head of the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI), who personally brought the items to Asadabad, said other businessmen had also been Alakozai urged Kunar governor, Shujaul Mulk Jalala, ... (More on P4)...(2)

## President Sacks 30 Officials in Herat

HERAT - President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani has sacked at least 30 civil and military officials in western Herat province and referred them to judicial organs, officials said on Sunday. Earlier on Saturday, Ghani traveled to Herat to assess recent spike in insecurity and apprise himself of governance related issues. He also met the officials, elders, provincial council and civil society members.



Officials fired by the president, included Attorney General, heads of custom, education, electricity, fuel, and 15 district police chiefs following complaints by locals of their inefficiencies. Speaking to journalists last night, Ghani ... (More on P4)...(3)

## 22 Insurgents Killed Across the Country

KABUL - Interior ministry of Afghanistan says to have killed 22 insurgents during clearance operations across the country.

A statement issued by the ministry states that seven insurgents sustained injuries in confrontation with Afghan National Security Forces while three of them arrested.

The statement issued Sunday morning adds that the operations were conducted in past 24 hours in Kunduz, Kandahar, Uruzgan, Ghazni, Khost and Kapisa provinces.

Afghan National Police (ANP) was also assisted by Afghan National Army (ANA) and National Directorate of Security (NDS) personnel in these operations, the statement says.

According to the statement security forces also seized different types of weapons and ammunitions and defused three IEDs in Baghlan and Kandahar provinces.

Improvised Explosive Device or IED is considered one of the biggest threats not only to government forces but also to the civilians.

UNAMA has expressed deepest concern regarding IEDs threatening civilian lives in Afghanistan beside the ground engagements. (KP)



## Deputy CEO Lambasts Delay in Cabinet Formation

KABUL - Deputy Chief Executive Officer (CEO) on Sunday vehemently criticized delay in formation of cabinet and made clear that people wanted to know procrastination tactics behind the vital task to be done.

President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani set two deadlines for introducing his council of ministers and both the deadlines were expired, which sent shock waves throughout the country. Earlier officials had promised to introduce the cabinet on time.

Speaking at an event in Kabul, Engineer Muhammad Khan criticized the delay and urged both the president and



the CEO to name their picks soon.

"Wolesi Jirga decided to send a delegation to the palace and discuss about the delay. I want both the president and CEO to sit with the people's representatives and satisfy them," he added. He said the delay had

been one of the main reasons for recent spike in insecurity across the country.

Sources close to the president and CEO told Pajhwok there were groups that mounted pressure on president to have share in his cabinet. (Pajhwok)

## Senators Criticise High Petroleum Products Prices

KABUL - Some Meshrano Jirga members on Sunday complained against high prices of petroleum products and said the rates should be decreased in line with international market trends.

Senator Hidayatullah Rihaee from central Bamyan province told the upper house that oil prices had drastically fallen in all markets of the world, but the products were sold for the same old prices in Afghanistan, registering no change. "No change is observed in fares of transport vehicles and airlines," the lawmaker said. Bismillah Afghanmal from southern Kandahar province said petroleum products were sold in Afghanistan for unjustified high rates against their plummeting prices in the international market.

"The price of oil has fallen in the whole world, but despite its low quality, the oil in Afghanistan is sold for a high price," he said, calling for the inflation to be curtailed.

But Mohammaduddin Hamdard, who heads the Senate Economic Commission, said oil prices could not be reduced in Afghanistan because some mafia groups were involved in hoarding crude, thus contributing to high prices.

"We should support state-owned firms to enable them to maintain continued oil supply to the market and prevent inflation," he suggested.

Senate Chairman Fazl Hadi Muslimyar said complaints had increased over the hike in prices of petroleum products because oil prices had decreased in the entire world, but their prices remained high in Afghanistan. He tasked the Economic Commission with raising the matter with the Ministry of Commerce and the directorate concerned and reporting back to the house.

About a month back, a litre of petrol cost 62 afghanis and the same quantity of ... (More on P4)...(6)

## Ghani Yet to Approve Positions at Abdullah, Massoud Offices

KABUL - After taking oath as the President, Ashraf Ghani appointed Abdullah Abdullah as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Ahmad Zia Massoud as his special envoy for reform and good governance; however the positions at these newly-established offices are yet to be approved.

Abdullah's office is consisted of more than 500 positions but only limited numbers of them including the spokesmen have been approved by Ghani while rest of the

positions, especially the secretariat are not approved yet.

"Secretariat which is the most important part of chief executive's office has not been approved so far," said Abdul Qahar Abed, head of Abdullah's Office. "Discussions are underway in this regard."

Since these two positions were newly formed under the National Unity Government (NUG) framework, Ghani is required to issue special decrees in order to ... (More on P4)...(4)

## NUG Seeking Qualified Members for Cabinet: Sources

KABUL - The National Unity Government (NUG) is delaying the formation of cabinet following its efforts to appoint qualified and neutral figures in the key ministries, according to sources.

Amid huge criticisms over delay in the cabinet, the sources close to the President Ashraf Ghani told TOLNews that the major factor behind the frequently-delayed cabinet is to introduce professional persons for the security and judicial slots.

Reporting of significant progress in the appointments, the sources ensured the cabinet would be introduced to the Parliament for a vote of confidence in near future.

"The cabinet is going to be finalized soon," said Tahir Zahir, Ghani's campaign spokesman. "Appointment



of qualified and neutral persons is likely the major factor behind the delay."

Meanwhile, Abdul Qahar Abed, the head of Office of Abdullah Abdullah, the chief executive, noted the cabinet members have been agreed and would be announced soon.

Sparking huge criticisms, the cabinet delay has been topping the headlines these weeks and has also been the agenda for the Parliament.

Yesterday when the one-week deadline of the House of Representatives ended futile, the MPs decided to meet the government leadership and also warned to call the President to the Parliament.

The trend of blaming the government even continued on Sunday when the senators called on the unity government to finalize the issue immediately.

"We hope the government to ... (More on P4)...(7)

## Rebels Using Locals as Human-Shield: Officials

DANGAM - Officials said on Sunday militants were using locals as human shield and targeting security forces position from their houses in Dangam, a district under intense fighting for weeks in eastern Kunar province.

Abdul Hasib Saddiqi, spokesman of the National Directorate of Security (NDS), Maj. Gen. Mohammad Zaman Waziri, commander of the 201st Sailab military corps and Brig. Gen. Abdul Habib Sayedkhel, police chief of the restive province, told this to journalists in the district.



Intermittent clashes were still underway between Afghan security forces and well-armed Taliban who attacked the district some two weeks back.

Saddiqi told Pajhwok Afghan News rebels were using locals as human shields and pound-

ing security forces position from their houses.

The militants, he said were planning to make their permanent sanctuaries after occupying Dangam and then unleashed anti-state activities from there to create instability in the country. ... (More on P4)...(5)