

Jalalabad Chance of Rain 11°C 7°C	Ghazni Chance of Snow 4°C 0°C	Kandahar Chance of Rain 1°C -8°C	Mazar Chance of Rain 0°C -3°C	Herat Partly Cloudy -3°C -7°C	Bamayan Chance of Snow -7°C -13°C	Kabul Chance of Snow 4°C -3°C
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Abdullah Backs Discussions Around System Change

KABUL - Following remarks by a number of political figures about a change in government's system - from presidential to parliamentary or from centralized to decentralized - CEO Abdullah said at a gathering on Thursday discussions on altering the system are allowed and legal. He said he believes that the alteration of the system should be done in accordance with the Constitution and that people's representatives should decide on the details of changing the administration from a centralized system to a decentralized administration. "The issue of changing the system is legal and discussions among politicians are allowed and it should be done in accordance with the law," Abdullah stated. He added: "Anyone can comment on what should be done and what is better,



but MPs make the final decision [in this respect]." Meanwhile, a number of political analysts expressed mixed remarks about the two government

systems. "Our problems will increase if we fail to create another system by amending the Constitution and if we fail to organize the

plans of that new system or if we act based on our personal interests," university lecturer Tahir Hashimi said. "This [alteration of government's system] is a

good and favorable issue, because the centralized system has created a crisis in the country," political commentator Ajmal Balochzada said. (Tolonews)

Experts Assess Ecosystems, Climate Change Adaptation in Hindu Kush Himalaya



KATHMANDU - More than 30 international and government experts from 10 countries have gathered in Nepal's capital to participate in two-day regional policy workshop on Adaptation Outlook for the Hindu Kush Himalaya region, which kicked off on Thursday. The event hosted by International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) in coordination with UN Environment Program and Norwegian organization GRID-Arendal will focus on mountain ecosystems and climate change adaptation. Experts from Nepal, China, India, Myanmar, Austria, Thailand, Norway, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan are assessing the progress of past and current interventions in the Hindu Kush Himalaya region.

The workshop is expected to build a foundation for a region-wide assessment of existing adaptation policies for different sectors, critical policy gaps and opportunities. Tina Schoolmeester, an expert from GRID-Arendal Norway said, "We need joint efforts to protect, maintain and manage natural resources of this region, which is just not possible by an effort of a single country." Making presentations on various possible chapters of the outlook, experts said that it is necessary to launch the outlook that will bring out adaptation strategies, policy gap analysis and priority areas for future action. Nand Kishor Agrawal, Program Coordinator of Himalayan Climate Change Adaptation ... (More on P4)...(6)

Hizbut Tahrir Turning Youth Against State: Zia

TALOQAN - The Hizbut Tahrir group has increased its activities in northern Takhar province, provoking the youth against the government, the provincial governor alleged on Thursday. Mohammad Yasin Zia in an exclusive interview with Pajhwok Afghan News said local people were concerned about the increasing activities of Hizbut Tahrir in the province. "The organization is more active in the higher education sector here and it encourages newly enrolled students to stand against the government." "We are worried about this issue and we have sent a letter to the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) about the group's increasing influence in higher education institutes," he said, adding the ministry was yet to respond. The governor said a security conference had decided to arrest members of the organization if evidence was produced about their unlawful activities. Meanwhile, Takhar Civil Society Network head Munir Ahmad Hadaf said Hizbut Tahrir was spreading extremist ideas in universities. "If you talk about Islam with Hizbut Tahrir-affiliated lecturers, they hold extremist thoughts," he said. "It is a matter of great concern, this organization has no clear legal or Islamic standing, they believe all Islamic intellectual processes are against Islam, this organization may pose greater threat than Daesh in future," he said. Hadaf said he had tried many times to enlighten such lecturers, but in vain and instead retaliated with calling him 'Abu Jehl' and 'nonbeliever'. Sayed Malak Hussain Rahim, ... (More on P4)...(9)

Route Survey for TAPI Pipeline to Begin this Month

PESHAWAR - A route survey and detailed engineering and feasibility studies for the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline will begin in Pakistan this month, a news report said on Thursday. The German firm ILF has been granted the project management consultant (PMC) contract by the TAPI Company, which will operate the long-awaited pipeline. "A team from Turkmenistan will reach Islamabad on February 14 to begin work on the route survey, engineering and feasibility study to implement the project," a government official was quoted as saying. The Express Tribune reported the team would initiate



work in Pakistan before proceeding to Afghanistan. Inter State Gas Systems Managing Director Mobin Saulat told the newspaper that pipeline construction and gas-field development was ongoing at a fast clip in Turkmenistan. A \$10-billion investment agreement for the pipeline has been inked to undertake

activities, update the feasibility study and finalise the route in Afghanistan. The project is designed to reduce energy deficiency in South Asia. Under the agreement, Turkmenistan will invest \$25 billion in delivering 3.2 billion cubic feet of gas per day (bcfd) to Afghanistan, ... (More on P4)...(7)

Mol Officials Trapped in Snowstorm at Haji Gak Pass

BAMYAN CITY - A government delegation on its way to central Bamyan province has been trapped in heavy snowfall and snowstorm in the Haji Gak Pass, an official said on Friday. The delegation started its journey from Bihud district of central Maidan Wardak province at around 3:00pm on Thursday. Telephonic contact with the 7-vehicle convoy of the Ministry of Interior (MoI) officials had been lost at the Haji Gak Pass, said Abdul Rahman Ahmadi, the governor's spokesman. Maidan Wardak deputy governor Mohammad Amin Mubalegh confirmed that officials of the interior ministry had been trapped in snowstorm at Hajik Gak Pass. He said efforts were on to rescue the trapped officials. (Pajhwok)

Balkh PC Says Bypassed in Budget Plans



MAZAR-I-SHARIF - The provincial council of northern Balkh province on Thursday complained of being always ignored by the governor house in preparing and executing provincial development and budgetary plans. A member of the council, Hasham Azimi, told Pajhwok Afghan News the governor's house used to prepare development and budgetary plans and send them for approval to the central government, but the provincial council was never consulted. He said making revenue and

annual plans while not consulting the council was illegal, incomplete and unjustifiable. He said the elected public representatives were responsible to share their views about budgetary and development plans and allocate budget as per people's requirements in different areas. Meanwhile, civil society activists in Balkh also criticized the governor's house for what they said arbitrary and illegal actions. Razia Mirzayee, a civil society activist, said not consulting public ... (More on P4)...(8)

Germany Indicts Afghan Suspected of Taliban Membership

KABUL - German prosecutors say they have indicted a 28-year-old Afghan man on suspicion of fighting for the Taliban and breaking arms control laws. Federal prosecutors said in a statement Wednesday that the suspect, identified only as Wajid S. in line with German privacy rules, is believed to have joined the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2009 and received weapons training. Prosecutors say the man took part in fighting in Afghanistan's Kapisa province in 2014 and 2015, during which his unit attacked Afghan police. The man, who was arrested on October 27, initially claimed to be 19 years old, but investigators later determined he was 28. Prosecutors didn't specify when or how he arrived in Germany. Germany has classified the Taliban as a foreign terrorist organization. (Tolonews)

Khost-Paktia Cooperation on Curbing Violence Stress



GARDIZ - Officials in southeastern Khost and Paktia provinces on Thursday stressed the need for cooperation on improving security and resolving tribal disputes. Khost Governor Hakam Khan Habibi, during a trip to Paktia province, talked about on a wide range of issues with his counterpart and other officials on Thursday. Security and defence officials, provincial council members, tribal elders and other officials of both provinces discussed greater cooperation and coordination on combating crimes. Hakam Khan, calling for on

solving disputes between tribes in both provinces, said it would improve the security situation in the region and restore people's trust in the government. He expressed concern over passengers' harassment and extortions by gunmen. He called for cooperation among security officials from both provinces to resolve the problem. "Paktia and Khost are neighbouring provinces with shared interests and goals. Protection of our borders against militants is a key issue. We should pay special attention to it," Habibi remarked. Paktia Governor Zalmi ... (More on P4)...(10)

Afghanistan Needs a Balanced, Multipronged Foreign Policy Concept

KABUL - Afghanistan could change into a battlefield for foreign countries unless government defines a more balanced and multi-pronged foreign policy strategy, said former national security advisor Ranganatha Spanta. He said Afghanistan has to break away from the reliance on certain nations and work on new concepts. Spanta made the statement during a conference in Kabul which was organized by Afghanistan Center of Strategic Studies where speakers debated Afghanistan's foreign policy issues. "I think a multipronged policy will help us to be in more harmony and cooperation with other countries and in principle have equal rights,



the right of national sovereignty and mutual respect," said Spanta. According to Spanta, now is the time for Afghanistan to work on its foreign policy. In their speeches, the participants highlighted the multidimensional side to the Afghan foreign policy and stressed the need for

a more coherent, balanced and multipolar foreign policy track. The former head of Afghanistan's intelligence agency - the National Directorate of Security (NDS) - Amrullah Saleh questioned the current issues facing Afghanistan's foreign policy and called for a ... (More on P4)...(11)