

Quote of the Day

The best way to pay for a lovely moment is to enjoy it.

Richard Bach

Regional, Global Cooperation Key to Afghan Stability: Ghani

KABUL - Calling peace and stability in Afghanistan as its people's fundamental demand, President Ashraf Ghani has said regional and international cooperation is crucial in this regard.

The president said this while accepting credentials from the new British ambassador to Afghanistan, Dominic Jermy, during a ceremony at the Presidential Palace.

A statement from the palace said the president and the new British envoy conferred on relations between the two coun-



tries in various sectors.

The president thanked the UK for its assistance with Afghanistan and British troops' participation in the NATO mission.

Ghani said peace and stability in Afghanistan was the fundamental demand of its people and government and in this regard, regional and international cooperation

was important to logically end extremism and terrorism that threatened the entire region and the world.

The new British ambassador said he was happy over his new assignment in Afghanistan and would make every effort that further strengthened cooperation and relations between the two countries.

The British Embassy in Kabul in a statement said Dominic had previously worked as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) International ...*(More on P4)...(1)*

3rd QCG Meeting Begins in Islamabad Today



KABUL - The Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG) of Afghanistan, Pakistan the United States and China would hold its third meeting in Islamabad on Saturday (today), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) said on Friday.

Khairullah Azad, deputy spokesman of the MoFA, told Pajhwok Afghan News the first QCG meeting which was held in Islamabad dis-

cussed over the work of committee, while the second QCG meeting held in Kabul discussed the entire spectrum of renewable peace talks with the Taliban.

In the third meeting of four-nation the strategy of peace negotiation would be finalized. The Saturday meeting would be launched by Afghan delegation led by Hikmat Khalil Karzai, deputy foreign ...*(More on P4)...(2)*

Hanif Atmar Joint Global Strategy Needed to Eliminate Daesh



KABUL - National Security Advisor Mohammad Hanif Atmar has said war against Islamic State (IS) or in its Arabic acronym --- Daesh --- required joint global efforts.

Atmar expressed the view in a meeting with his Turkish counterpart Saifullah Hashim Oghlo in Ankara, the capital of Turkey, a statement from the National Security Council (NSC) said on Friday.

Bilateral relations, joint efforts against war on terror, regional cooperation and Turkish assistance in NATO framework with Afghanistan had been discussed during the meeting, the statement said. Atmar said the people of Afghanistan hailed Turkish assistance and hoped for the continuation of these assistance in the future. He said Afghanistan has recently become the ...*(More on P4)...(3)*

General John Campbell Taliban Taking Advantage of Reduced US Troops



WASHINGTON - Top US General John Campbell has said the Taliban have taken advantage of reduction of the number of coalition aircraft and US troops in Afghanistan.

Testifying before the powerful Armed Services Committee of senate on Thursday Gen. Campbell said the Taliban intensified attacks on security forces recently in Afghanistan.

"I think the Taliban know that we've downsized. I think the Taliban understand that in the past, they couldn't gather in larger formations. I think we've seen this year that they have taken advantage of the reduction of the number of coalition aircraft, absolutely," Gen Campbell said.

"Again, the network in Afghanistan where you get Haqqani, Al Qaida, LeT, it's all intermingled. We know for sure that ISIL, we know for sure that A.Q. and some of its remnants, have already attacked the U.S., and want to continue to have vision on doing that. So the Taliban support that in other ways," he said.

Campbell exuded confidence that the Taliban can be beaten. "They are not 10 feet tall. But in many areas of propaganda, their information ops have convinced many of the security forces that they can beat them, they can," he said.

Gen. Campbell, however, said that the Taliban can be defeated and the advantage they had was the use of indirect ways of attacking security forces, spreading fear among people by targeting civilians and innocent people.

On the Afghan security forces part, he said that like any other professional armies they had to fighting by rules care about civilian casualties and follow discipline in everything ...*(More on P4)...(5)*

Govt. Reiterates Willingness to Dialogue with Taliban

NEW DEHLI - Chief Executive Officer of Afghanistan, Abdullah Abdullah, on Friday reiterated the willingness of Kabul to talk with the Taliban but demanded violence cessation and warned that the process must be led by Afghans.

There will be no pre-conditions for talks, but a result that violates our Constitution is an absolute red line, said Abdullah in an interview by The Hindu newspaper.

He highlighted the work of the Quartet (United States, China, Pakistan and Afghanistan) to outline a road map



leading to the dialogue initiation. However, he said his job is to

facilitate the process by considering that it must be led by Afghans.

Pak, Afghan Intelligence Chiefs Hold Anti-Terror Talks

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan and Afghan intelligence chiefs Thursday held talks in Islamabad in an effort to boost intelligence sharing and bridge trust gap, official sources said.

Lt. General Rizwan Akhtar, the director general of Pakistani Inter Services Intelligence held nearly two-hour talks with Masoud Andarabi, chief of Afghan National Directorate of Security, the sources said.

The meeting was held amid growing interaction between the military and intelligence officials of the two countries after the visit to Islamabad by Afghan President Ashraf Ghani in December, that also paved the way for the launch of a four-nation mechanism for reconciliation process in Afghanistan.

The next quadrilateral meeting of Afghanistan, Pakistan,



China and the United States will be held in Islamabad.

Sources said diplomats during the two previous meetings held in Islamabad and Kabul had suggested the interaction between the Pakistani and Afghan military and intelligence officials to boost cooperation.

The meeting of the intelligence chiefs also reviewed options to build trust that is necessary for security cooperation.

Senior military officials of the

two countries also met in the Pakistani city of Rawalpindi on Thursday and both sides "reiterated that terrorists operating on either side of border will not be allowed to use their soil for any terrorist activity on either side of the border."

An army statement said both sides expressed resolve to continue the interaction for better military to military coordination. (Xinhua)

Dostum Says No Intention to Part Ways with Govt

KABUL - First Vice-President Abdul Rashid Dostum on Thursday said he had no intention to part ways with the unity government, but complained most of the election campaign promises with people could not be honored so far.

Addressing a convention of his Junbish Milli Party's youth wing in Kabul, the Uzbek leader said there were some problems within the unity government, but rumors that the government might collapse were baseless. "I am the VP and have some reservations, but I am not resigning. How can I quit the government, in the creation of which we made a lot of efforts."

Dostum said the unity gov-



ernment had not yet fulfilled even 10 percent of its campaign promises, but encouraged his followers that problems would resolve gradually. "Politics and war demand patience."

About 3000 people from 27 provinces took part in the gathering, with participants renewing their call for the creation of a youth ministry. In response to this demand,

Dostum said: "I still stand firm on my promise and I have proposed the conversion of the Information and Culture Ministry into the youth ministry."

The VP said he supported the youth and had always encouraged them to pursue higher studies and serve their country. He said the youth should continue their studies beyond...*(More on P4)...(6)*

Senate Panel Approves Obama's Pick to Lead Forces in Afghanistan

WASHINGTON - US Senate committee approved on Thursday President Barack Obama's pick to lead U.S. and international forces in Afghanistan.

Lieutenant General John Nicholson's approval by the Senate Armed Services Committee came during a hearing with the outgoing U.S. commander in Afghanistan, General John Campbell.

Nicholson said in testimony to the committee last week that he aimed to review a plan that would cut American troop levels by nearly half by the start of next year, as he acknowledged deteriorating security in the country. (Reuters)

Minister Germany will Stand by Afghanistan



KABUL - The German Minister of Interior, Thomas de Maizière, vowed that his country will continue its support to Afghanistan.

In an interview with TOLONews, he said that despite ongoing fighting, Afghanistan should talk peace with the Taliban.

He believes that militants have not made tangible achievements in Afghanistan and said the collapse of Kunduz city did not indicate a weakness on the part of security forces, but weakness of the individuals in the province.

He said terrorists have even reached the back doors of European countries. He stressed that the world should remain committed to the war on terror.

The German minister was optimistic about the peace process and said that peace negotiations will yield a result.

"It is not our job to fight against the Taliban. It's the job of the Afghan authorities, but we will support, assist and train, and this has to be accompanied by the political talks, the reconciliation talks, then together fight and talk could be a solution," said de Maizière.

German troops were mostly stationed in northern Afghanistan...*(More on P4)...(7)*

Key Positions Stay within Certain Families in 10 Provinces

KABUL - Fifteen powerful positions have long been bequeathed by one family member to another in 10 different province of the country, reveals research by Pajhwok Afghan News.

Occupants of the slots include eight directors, three district chiefs, a member of the Meshrano Jirga, two managers and a general manager, according to information gathered by this news agency.

The holders of the 15 positions are based in Kabul, Uruzgan, Kunar, Ghor, Badakhshan, Paktika, Faryab, Farah, Kunduz and Nuristan provinces.

As these mighty offices ...*(More on P4)...(4)*

China Supports Anti-Terror Cooperation Among SCO Members

BEIJING - Chinese Public Security Minister Guo Shengkun stressed China's support for anti-terrorism cooperation among member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), as he met with the new head of the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure on Friday.

Guo congratulated Yevgeniy Sysoyev on his new post, director of the structure's executive committee, and said the body has played a big role in coordinating SCO members' cooperation in security and law enforcement.

"China will support the SCO Anti-Terrorist Structure to enhance international anti-terrorism cooperation and maintain regional security and stability," he said.

Sysoyev said he appreciated China's support and would push SCO members to cooperate more against terrorism. (Xinhua)