



Pakistan Grants 3,000 Scholarships to Afghans, Vows More for Phd Level

KABUL - The government of Pakistan has granted 3,000 scholarships to Afghan students and promised as many for the PhD level, it has been reported. Pakistani President Maanoo Hussain made the announcement during an event on Wednesday. Speaking at the event at the Pak-China Centre, President Hussain said the scholarships are being awarded as part of the project of the Higher Education Commission (HEC). President Hussain further added that the Afghan students will receive educational opportunities as enjoyed by Pakistani students. According to Hussain, the purpose of the project was also to help improve ties between the two nations,



expressing hopes that the Afghan students would play a role in enhancing goodwill between the two

countries. The ceremony was also attended by Minister for Higher Education of Af-

ghanistan Farida Mohmand and the Afghan Ambassador to Pakistan Hazrat Omar Zakhilwal, according

to the local media reports. The scholarships currently granted to the Afghan students are up to the graduation level and will cover different majors including biology, agriculture, business administration, information technology, chemistry and economics. Pakistan has been host to millions of Afghan refugees who fled the devastating civil war in the early 80s and 90s. In the meantime, the Pakistani government is busy to pave the way for the repatriation of hundreds of thousands of Afghan refugees to Afghanistan and passed a bill in the latest move that covers the extension of the stay of registered Afghan refugees as well as the refugees repatriation. (KP)

Pakistan to Help Build Capacity of Afghan Universities



PESHAWAR - Afghanistan and Pakistan have signed a Document of Understanding (DoU) on developing a legal framework for collaboration in the higher education sector. Minister of Higher Education Farida Momand and Pakistan's Higher Education Commission (HEC) Chairman Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed signed the document in Islamabad on Wednesday. The HEC chairman and the

Afghan minister signed the DoU, where under the two sides will devise plans for expanding collaboration. Momand was accompanied by Ambassador Omar Zakhilwal and some professors. Mukhtar Ahmad told Dawn Afghanistan had asked Pakistan for the capacity building of universities. Prime Minister's Adviser on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz has promised \$500 million. (More on P4 12)

Snowfall, Chilly Weather Add to Suffering of Displaced Afghan Families

KABUL - The chilly weather and snowfall in winter usually add to war-weary Afghans who often suffer in spring and summer when fighting gets momentum in the militancy-plagued Afghanistan. "To be frank, we have no life, neither in the freezing winter nor in the hot summer. We have been fed up with such boring living conditions and even some of us prefer to die," lamented Ghubar, 38, in talks with Xinhua recently. Ghubar, who like many Afghans goes by one name, lives under a tattered tent in a makeshift camp in Chaman-e-Babrak area, a suburban in northern edge of Kabul city. He bewailed that he has been living here under a tent over the past 10 years to escape the war and survive but the government has paid little. (More on P4 15)

'Allegations of Civilian Casualties in Sangin Air Raids Being Investigated'

KABUL - Resolute Support (RS) spokesman on Friday said they were investigating the Taliban claim of killing over 20 civilians in foreign forces airstrikes in the Sangin district of southern Helmand province. RS spokesman Cleveland, Charles told Pajhwok Afghan News US forces conducted airstrike in Sangin district in past 24 hours to support and defend Afghan security forces. "We're aware of the allegations of civilian casualties the take every allegation very seriously. We'll work with our Afghan partners to review all related material," he said. Cleveland referred to the provincial civilian and military authorities for more information and strongly rejected the involvement of B52 fighter jets. Earlier, the Taliban claimed over 20 civilians have been killed and scores wounded in foreign forces airstrikes in Sangin district. Governor spokesman Umar Zwak rejected the Taliban claim and said the area was a war zone where no civilian lived since two years. (Pajhwok)

Different Regional Terrorist Groups Involved in Afghan Conflict: MoD

KABUL - Comprehensive training, equipment and armament of Afghan National Defence and Security Forces would help strengthen the ongoing campaign against terrorism, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) said on Friday. In response to US and NATO forces commander in Afghanistan Gen. Nicholson remarks, MoD spokesman Gen. Dawlat Waziri said ongoing war in the country was not Afghanistan's own war. He said Al Qaeda, Lashkar-i-Tayyiba, Uzbekistan Islamic Movement (UIM), Tajik and Panjabi terrorist groups enjoyed Taliban support in the Afghanistan conflict. He acknowledged the NATO commander's remarks and said most of



these groups had safe heavens in Pakistan and their leadership lived in the neighbouring country with full freedom. Waziri said terrorist groups enjoyed full support in Pakistan and were dispatched to stage attacks in Afghanistan. The defence ministry spokesman said Pakistan may reduce its support for

terrorists if US and international community put more pressure on Islamabad. The NATO commander also asked for more international troops in Afghanistan as they were struggling with the soldier foot on the ground. When asked about the deployment of more foreign troops Waziri said governments. (More on P4 13)

'Youth Induction in Civil Aviation to Reduce Dependence on Foreigners'

KABUL - The independent Civil Aviation Authority (ICAA) has said induction of youth in the aviation services would reduce reliance on foreigners in the future. Mohammad Nasim Samim, head of the ICAA, expressed the view on the occasion of entry test for new recruits in civil aviation services. According to the ICAA statement as many as 400 newcomers had appeared in the entry test of which 130 would be selected for the second test. In the second phase 50 candidates with high marks would be chosen who would be provided two year education in Air Traffic Control (ATC) and Communication Negation Surveillance (CNS). The results of the entry test would be declared on Monday, the statement said. (Pajhwok)

Afghan Military Would Support More Foreign Troops: Officials



KABUL - The Afghan Defense Ministry welcomed on Friday suggestions by the commander of international forces in Afghanistan that more troops were needed to train Afghan security forces, who are battling to hold back a growing Taliban-led insurgency. General John Nicholson, the commander of U.S. and international troops in Afghanistan, told the Senate Armed Services Committee in Washington on Thursday he did not have enough troops to adequately advise Afghan forces on the

ground. Nicholson told lawmakers the NATO-led force in Afghanistan had enough troops to carry out counterterrorism missions but had "a shortfall of a few thousand" for its major role of advising Afghan security forces. His comments came just as U.S. President Donald Trump and his Afghan counterpart, Ashraf Ghani, spoke by telephone for the first time since Trump's inauguration last month. The two discussed security, (More on P4 14)

10 Projects worth 55m Afs Inaugurated in Kunar

KABUL - Ten community development projects including four pipe water supply schemes were inaugurated in eastern Kunar province on Wednesday, the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) said. Upon completion, the projects were formally inaugurated and handed over to the communities in presence of relevant authorities, the committee said in a statement. The SIDA-funded projects cost 55 million afghanis spent through the Rural Development Programme/Engineering Unit of SCA. The unit in coordination with relevant government line departments and communities had been involved in planning, surveying, designing and implementation of the projects. The projects included construction and rehabilitation of four school buildings and cricket pitches in Asadabad, Bayero, Bar Shengas and Dab Shingas, two pipe water schemes in Sangin district. Governor spokesman Umar Zwak rejected the Taliban claim and said the area was a war zone where no civilian lived since two years. (Pajhwok)

Govt. to Enforce Tight Security Ahead of Hekmatyar's Arrival



KABUL - the Afghan government and officials of Hizb-e-Islami on Thursday announced that tight security measures will be enforced in the capital to thwart possible security problems when Gulbuddin Hekmatyar arrives in Kabul. Hizb-e-Islami's reconciled leader is expected to arrive in Kabul within the next few weeks. According to a Hizb-e-Islami spokesman, the group is working with the Afghan security forces to pave the way for Hekmatyar's arrival. The CEO's office said government will arrange a special venue for Hekmatyar's welcome so as to thwart possible security problems and to avoid traffic disturbances. "There are a lot of people

living on the route (to be used) when he is expected to come to Kabul; Hizb-e-Islami and the security forces will enforce tight security according to their capacity," said Hizb-e-Islami spokesman Hashmatullah Arshad. "In general there are security concerns for people's safety, but the welcome party which is going to take place by Hizb-e-Islami must be well-organized, so things proceed smoothly," said Jawed Faisal, the CEO's spokesman. "In the wake of the current situation, there is no need for a rush; it is enough to welcome him at ARG rather than welcoming him on the street," said military analyst Atiqullah Amarkhail. This new development takes place six days after the (More on P4 17)

UNAMA Welcomes Strong Political will for Elections

KABUL - The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has said it was encouraged by the strong political will of President Ashraf Ghani, Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah and other political leaders to hold timely, credible and transparent parliamentary elections, according to a statement. Speaking after an executive meeting on elections chaired by President Ghani and attended by Chief Executive Abdullah, the electoral commissions and ambassadors, the head of UNAMA, Tadamichi Yamamoto said, "The momentum towards



holding credible elections is now taking clear form. The UN is looking to do all it can to support electoral reform and elections seen as fair by the Afghan people." UNAMA supported the

Government's efforts to build consensus and create an inclusive process, and recognises that legitimate elections require the continued implementation of reform. (More on P4 16)

Taliban Urges ICRC to Resume its Humanitarian Operation

KABUL - The Taliban have regretted the killing of six aid workers of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and asked the organisation to resume its humanitarian operation in Afghanistan. Earlier, six of the ICRC aid workers were killed in a suspected Islamic State attack and two went missing in

northern Jawzjan province. Soon after the attack ICRC has put on hold its humanitarian operation across Afghanistan. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid in a statement expressed regret over the killing of "The Taliban health commission is saddened and felt regret over the killing of

ICRC aid workers in Jawzjan province," the Taliban statement said. Taliban hailed ICRC activities in Afghanistan and said the organisation had been working in the war-torn country over the past 30 years and provided assistance to poor and needy Afghans. The people of (More on P4 18)