

Uruzgan PC Urged to Elect Administrative Board

TARINKOT - Civil society networks and media representatives in a protest gathering in central Uruzgan province demanded the provincial council members to settle their differences and elect their administrative board for senate.

The participants of the gathering stressed on the provincial council members to respect people's votes and settle their differences to choose the administrative board.

For the last three and a half-month after the announcement of final election results, the Uruzgan provincial council could not elect their administrative board.

Civil society organizations and media representatives accused some government officials and lawmakers to delay electing the provincial council board.

A civil society activist Izatullah Latifi accused Uruzgan representative in Wolesi Jirga Ubaidullah Barakzai, provincial police chief Matiullah Khan and Kandahar police chief Abdul Razziq with regard of their involvement in provincial council's affairs.

He said the provincial council divided into two groups and each one was trying to elect their favorite candidates for the senate.

Another civil society activist Assad Pashtoon demanded the Independent Election Commission (IEC) to interfere in matter to resolve the issue without further delay.

They also demanded the central ...*(More on P4)...*(4)

Pai Appointed as EUPOL's Head of Mission

KABUL - Following approval by the Political and Security Committee in Brussels, Pia Stjernvall, current acting head of mission, has now been confirmed as the head of mission for EUPOL Afghanistan.

In a statement on Wednesday, the EUPOL quoted Pia as saying: "I am delighted and honored to be appointed as the Head of Mission at such a critical time in the development of civilian policing in Afghanistan, which is at the heart of the EUPOL mandate."

She went on to say: "I am looking forward to working personally with the new Minister of the Interior together with a strong team of senior EUPOL advisers, who are now already starting their work meeting with Afghan counterparts, providing advice at the strategic level. There can be no peace in Afghanistan without a legitimate, trusted and respected civilian police service.... This is where EUPOL can play its part and where our focus will be until the end of 2016"

Pia Stjernvall is from Finland and was appointed as the Deputy Head of Mission for EUPOL Afghanistan in 2014. From the 1st of January 2015, she has been assigned as the Acting Head of Mission. Pia ...*(More on P4)...*(10)

Member States Agree to Accelerate TAPI Project Work

KABUL - In latest development, Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pledged on Wednesday to expedite the process of the stalled gas pipeline project in the region, media reports.

The Pakistani dawn.com reported that the agreement emerged during a high-level meeting chaired by Prime Minister ...*(More on P4)...*(1)



Obama Admin. to Reassess US Troops Presence

KABUL - According to a top U.S. official on condition of anonymity, commander of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Gen. John Campbell and a number of high level security officials of the Obama administration are said to speak on Wednesday about U.S. troop's presence in Afghanistan beyond 2015.

The source added that the meeting is aimed to discuss ways of supporting the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and defeating



the Taliban and other surge groups.

Afghan Ministry of Interior (MoI) expressed that they would welcome the decision of keeping U.S. forces in Afghanistan post-2015, as fear that ...*(More on P4)...*(3)

Islamabad Wants Early TAPI Gas Line Implementation: PM

KABUL - Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said that Islamabad was keen for early implementation of the much-delayed Turkmeni-



stan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project, which was important project for the development of regional countries.

Talking to petroleum ministers of Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and India in Islamabad, the prime minister pledged his country would play a leading role to materialize the TAPI gas pipeline project.

Any further delay, he warned would only multiply its cost. Pakistan's Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources Shahid Khaqan Abbasi was also present during the meeting.

Pakistan, he acknowledged was facing with immense gas shortage and the TAPI project would help the energy-starved country to overcome the problem.

A day earlier, Mines and Petroleum Minister Daud Shah Saba was scheduled to travel to Islamabad to participate ...*(More on P4)...*(6)

CEO's Office

No Formal Step Taken Yet on Electoral Reforms

KABUL - Unlike the agreement to form the National Unity Government (NUG), there has been no formal step taken so far to bring reforms in the electoral system, according to the CEO Abdullah Abdullah's office.

Deputy spokesman for Abdullah, Asif Ashna, said Tuesday that the formal work on electoral reforms



would not be started until ...*(More on P4)...*(5)

Afghanistan, Sweden to Sign a Long-Term Strategic Accord

Mr. Semneby reaffirmed his country's commitment to provide 100 million USD on a yearly basis until 2024 as pledged at the Tokyo Economic Conference on Afghanistan in 2012



KABUL - Afghanistan and Sweden are planning to sign a long-term strategic partnership agreement that will define Sweden's future role in Afghanistan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement on Wednesday.

The talks on the proposed bilateral accord, according to the statement, took place between Hikmat Khalil Karzai, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Hans Peter Semneby, the Swedish Ambassador in Afghanistan.

As per the agreement, Sweden will continue to support development projects in the areas of capacity building, education, energy, economic

empowerment and employment generation in Afghanistan.

During the meeting, Mr. Semneby reaffirmed his country's commitment to provide 100 million USD on a yearly basis until 2024 as pledged at the Tokyo Economic Conference on Afghanistan in 2012. The envoy said Sweden is committed to work together with the Afghan government in the framework of NATO and international community.

"The Swedish government is in favor of the prosperous and stable Afghanistan that is able to stand on its feet," said Mr. Semneby. Mr. Karzai, who was ...*(More on P4)...*(11)

Govt. Intends to Resolve Water Issue: Massoud

KABUL - President's special representative for reforms and good governance Ahmad Zia Massoud on Wednesday said the unity government had the intention to resolve Afghanistan's water crisis and effectively manage ...*(More on P4)...*(8)



Afghanistan Could Turn Into Haven for IS: Grenier

WASHINGTON - Afghanistan is in danger of turning into a sanctuary once again for Islamist extremists as the West withdraws troops and shifts its attention elsewhere, a former senior CIA official warned Tuesday, US media reports.

Robert Grenier, the former Central Intelligence Agency station chief in Islamabad and author of a new book warned that the country could even become a refuge for Islamic State jihadis now waging war in Syria and Iraq.

His memoir, "88 Days to Kandahar," recounts his harrowing experience helping to topple the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in 2001 after the Sept. 11 attacks.



"I would say if anything the future threat of an Afghan safe haven is maybe even greater than it was back before 9/11," Grenier said at an event organized by the New America think tank.

The Afghan Taliban would not be ready to rebuff its allies in the Pakistani Taliban or other extremists — such as the Islamic State group — if

they asked for sanctuary, he said.

"There are groups within Pakistan that are dedicated to attacking the regime in Islamabad. They're not going to go away," he said.

According to Grenier, the Taliban tend to see things in black-and-white terms, looking at decisions through the question: "Is it dictated by

Islam or is it not?"

"And they won't turn their back on people who are ideologically allied with them across the border.

"Nor do I believe will they turn their backs on international terrorists, if once again they come back to the region in any significant numbers, as I fear they will if their fortunes ...*(More on P4)...*(12)

Nearly 700 Attacks Occurred in January



KABUL - TOLONews' monthly security report indicates that 696 insecurity events were recorded across the country in January; the month after the Afghan troops took over complete security responsibility of the country.

Based on the report, 1,324 armed oppositions, 171 Afghan forces and 108 civilians were killed during the first month of 2015 after NATO forces formally ended their 13-year combat mission.

The Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) conducted 315 anti-insurgent operations during the month, the report noted, adding that ANSF detained a number of insurgents along with seizing arms and explosives during 203 raids.

"We prepared this report based on the statements of the National Directorate of Security (NDS), Ministry of Defense (MoD), Ministry ...*(More on P4)...*(2)

China to Help Build Hydropower Plant



KABUL - China has promised to help build a hydroelectric power plant in eastern Kunar province, as well as road and rail links to Pakistan, officials said on Tuesday.

Afghan Foreign Ministry spokesman, Sirajul Haq Siraj, told the media the assistance would include an unspecified amount of financing. A day earlier, senior Afghan, Chinese and Pakistani diplomats met in Kabul.

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign ...*(More on P4)...*(7)

US Confirms Killing Militants in Somalia, Afghanistan

WASHINGTON - Spokesperson Rear Admiral John Kirby told reporters, late on Tuesday, referring to a military operation conducted in late January.

"What I can confirm today is that we know we killed him and an associate in that strike. We do not assess that there was any civilian or bystander casualties as a result of that," he said.

Kirby added that on ...*(More on P4)...*(9)