

Jalalabad Partly Cloudy 17°C 3°C	Ghazni Partly Cloudy 2°C -7°C	Kandahar Partly Cloudy 17°C 3°C	Mazar Chance of Rain 7°C 2°C	Herat Chance of Rain 13°C 1°C	Bamayan Partly Cloudy -1°C -8°C	Kabul Clear 7°C -3°C
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Daily Outlook Weather Forecast

DABS Owed 6bn Afs in Unpaid Electricity Bills

KABUL - A list sent to the media by Da Afghanistan Breshna Shirkat (DABS) has revealed that a number of companies, government offices and officials owe a total of at least six billion Afs in unpaid electricity bills.

Among those listed as being in arrears is First Vice President General Abdul Rashid Dostum. Also on the list are a number of MPs and influential and political figures - who collectively owe the company at least three billion Afs. Breshna spokesman Wahidullah Tawhidi said a number of powerful figures are not paying their bills and when DABS officials try to disconnect their



power, they physically stop them. "We have cut off their elec-

tricity many times but unfortunately they reconnect it - with the force of weap-

ons - and they are not making any bid to pay off their electricity bills," he said.

Tawhidi stated the Ministry of Finance also owes a substantial amount of money but has promised to pay 15 percent of its debt.

Ajmal Hamid, spokesman for the Finance Ministry said they are taking steps to rectify this.

"This debt is from past years. We will collect information and will take steps to pay the money," he said. According to DABS, the two biggest offenders are the Yasir Nabizada Company and Dostum.

DABS said Yasir Nabizada Company owes at least 40 million Afs and Dostum owes more than 33 million Afs. The first vice president's office would not comment on the issue. (Tolonews)

Islamic University to be Built in Nangarhar: Minister



PESHAWAR - An Afghan education team has visited the International Islamic University (IIU) campus in Pakistan's capital of Islamabad.

Headed by Higher Education Minister Farida Momand, the 11-member team discussed ways of boosting bilateral cooperation with IIU leadership. "The Afghan Higher Education Ministry wants to build an Islamic univer-

sity in eastern Nangarhar province," the visiting minister said. On the occasion, IIU Rector Dr. Masoom Yasinzai stressed the need for higher education quality and linkages of universities in Afghanistan and Pakistan for sharing experiences. The visitors met IIU Rector Dr. Masoom Yasinzai and President Dr. Ahmed Yousif Al-Draiweesh. (Pajhwok)

Pub Rep Confirms 20 Civilian Killings in Helmand



LASHKARGAH - The provincial council chief on Saturday confirmed the killing of 20 civilians in foreign forces' airstrikes in southern Helmand province.

In response to the claim, a Resolute Support (RS) spokesman said they were currently investigating the incident in the Sangin district of the province.

Earlier, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid alleged more than 20 civilians were killed and scores wounded, including women and children, in airstrikes on Thursday night.

Provincial council head Karim Atal told Pajhwok Afghan News foreign troops struck a civilian house, resulted in the

killing 11 people. Elsewhere, 10 more civilians were also killed in similar raids. Atal said area people had told him that their homes had been hit, but it was unknown who was carried out the raids. A resident of Mata Lakri area, Majnoon, said his house - five kilometers from the bazaar - was raided. Eleven of his family members were killed during the air raid by foreigners. The dead included two guests, three women, four girls and as many boys, he said, demanding immediate justice. Former district chief of Nad Ali and resident of Sanging, Haji Qasim, claimed 13 people, including women and children, were killed during the ... (More on P4)... (10)

Tax Issues, Power Shortages Haunt Businessman

KANDAHAR CITY - Traders and investors in southern Kandahar province complain of problems in paying taxes, delay in clearance of goods by the customs department and long power outages.

They shared the problem with the officials concerned in the central government about a week ago. Businessmen and investors in the province are faced with a host of problems.

Kandahar Chamber of Commerce and Industry head Haji Nasrullah Zahir told Pajhwok Afghan News traders previously paid taxes every six months. But now they have to pay taxes every three months, a major problem and a time-consuming exercise.

The late clearance trade goods by customs staff is another big headache as it inflicts losses on businesspeople. There is currently only one truck scale on Kandahar custom which cannot scale all trucks in short time, he said, adding that there was need for at least two truck scales in the custom.

Zaheer also hit out at Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB) for delaying traders' cash transfers to foreign countries. The slow process has been impeding business deals.

On the other hand, investors grumble about the lack of electricity in Kandahar. The electricity provided to the Kandahar Industrial Park is inadequate, forcing factories to scale down their production.

Haji Syed Mohammad, owner of the Beans Processing Factory at the Kandahar Industrial Park, said his unit was powered by diesel generators that produced eight kilowatts of electricity.

But he added that generators' electricity was weak and interruptions created problems. As a result, many factories have already been closed and those still active are functioning at 50 percent of their capacity.

The only hope for industrialists is the activation of a 10 megawatts solar power plant, but the project has delayed inordinately. Traders say ... (More on P4)... (12)

Balkh Activists Call for Govt. Action Against Insurgency

KABUL - Religious scholars and civil society activists in Balkh on Saturday raised their voices against this week's suicide bombing at Kabul's Supreme Court and the killing of six International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) employees in Jawzjan.

They said the incidents were crimes against humanity.

The activists held a prayer ceremony for those killed and called on government to clamp down on the activities of illegal armed groups and on insurgents.

"Government must prevent terrorists' movements which threaten security and stability of citizens," said Safia Sayes a civil society activist.

"The incident which occurred in Qoshtipa district of Jawzjan does not have any connection with Is-



lam but the name of Islam is misused in this action and therefore as a religious scholar I am criticizing the act," said Mohammad Arif Wazin a religious scholar. Balkh civil society activists believe that the existence of illegal armed men and poor governance has led to the increase of violence and human rights violations in the North. "Illegal armed men under the name of Daesh and Taliban and thieves harm our

people and we believe that poor governance has resulted in such incidents that are taking place in the north of the country," said Abdul Hamid Safawat, head of the Civil Society Network in Balkh.

"Silence by government resulted in the audacity of Daesh and Taliban and if elements who paved the way inside government for the opposition is not eliminated the situation will get worse," ... (More on P4)... (8)

UK Drops Hundreds of Soldiers Misconduct Claims Over Iraq, Afghan Wars

KABUL - The defense ministry said on Friday that Britain is dismissing hundreds of allegations of misconduct by its soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The Iraq Historic Allegations Team (IHAT), which was set up in 2010 and is dealing with hundreds of cases, will be shut down in the summer and 20 of its cases will be handed over to the Royal Navy police, Yahoo news reported.

This follows an investigation that led to campaigning lawyer Phil Shiner, who had brought many of the claims, being struck off earlier this month.

The announcement was made by Defence Minister Michael Fallon, who also said that 90 percent of the 675 current misconduct allegations involving British troops in Afghanistan were being dismissed.

"This will be a relief for our soldiers who have had allegations hanging over them for too long," Fallon said in televised remarks.

"Now we are taking action to ... (More on P4)... (13)

Eshchi Questions Motive for Suspects Not Having Been Arrested

KABUL - Ahmad Eshchi, the former deputy of Dostum's Junbish-e-Milli party, on Saturday accused the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and the Attorney General's Office (AGO) of not making any effort to arrest First Vice President General Abdul Rashid Dostum's nine bodyguards who have been accused of beating and sexually assaulting Eshchi. Last month, the AGO issued arrest warrants for the bodyguards but MoI have reportedly not yet taken any action in this regard.

The Ministry of Interior and the Attorney General's Office would not comment when contacted.

However, Eshchi has warned that if government does not address his case, he will take the matter to the international courts.

"I have not received any answer from the ministry of interior on why they have not carried out the Attorney General's orders," he said.

Eshchi also said he thought the MoI and the AGO had plotted with Dostum over the issue. "It can be a deal, it is worry-



ing," Eshchi said.

"In summoning Dostum's bodyguards, I think the political issues have been considered rather than legal issues, because the AGO was following its orders," Abdul Wahid Farzaie, a member of Afghanistan's Lawyers Union said.

Civil society activists also said if the Eshchi-Dostum case is not investigated properly, it will damage justice in the country. "If government cannot investigate cases properly, and exempt powerful men and only implement the law on poor people, the situation will get worse," Azizullah Rafie, the head of the Civil Society Forum said. (Tolonews)

Explosion in Defense Ministry in Kabul, No Casualties Reported

KABUL - An explosion took place inside the Ministry of Defense compound earlier today but no casualties were reported.

The Ministry of Defense (MoD) confirmed the incident and said a magnetic bomb planted in a Ford Ranger vehicle went off in the vicinity of the ministry compound.

MoD further added that the incident did not result into any death or injury to the ministry personnel or security forces.

No group has so far claimed responsibility behind the incident.

This comes as the anti-government armed militants have stepped up the magnetic bombing in key cities of the country, mainly planting the bombs in government officials vehicles. ... (More on P4)... (9)

Karzai Calls on US to Revise Pakistan Policy

KABUL - The former Afghan President Hamid Karzai has called on US to revise its Pakistan policy and persuade Islamabad to end its 'policy of safe havens to terrorist groups'.

Speaking at The Hindu's first "The Huddle" conclave in Bengaluru, the former Afghan President said "I love the people of Pakistan, but its military supports terrorists and extremists across the border from us. The U.S. must stop this."

In other parts of his speech, Karzai said he is hopeful that there would be an opportunity for the U.S. to reverse its policy on Afghanistan under the new U.S. President Donald Trump,



particularly with better U.S.-Russia ties.

Karzai had earlier suggested that President Trump must first re-analyze and re-evaluate what had gone wrong in the past in order for his administration employ actionable policies in

the region. Pointing towards Pakistan's interference in Afghanistan, Karzai said peace Afghanistan can be achieved "by being clear with Pakistan, first."

The former President further ... (More on P4)... (11)

Hundreds Protest Against Night Raids in Zabul

QALAT - A large number of people on Saturday blocked the Kabul-Kandahar highway during a protest demonstration against nighttime raids by security forces in southern Zabul province.

The governor's spokesman, Gul Islam Sial, told Pajhwok Afghan News the protest in Shahr-i-Safa district began at 9am and ended at 12:30pm.

He said the protesters numbering around 300 blocked the Kabul-Kandahar highway for traffic during the demonstration and torched vehicle tyres. "Protest is legal right of people and local officials have arrived to listen to the complaints of the demonstrators," he said, adding the government would try to address the protesters' concerns

One of the protesters, Ahmadullah, said the aim of their protest was to oppose Afghan Special Forces' night raids in their area. He said the district intelligence manager and his deputy were involved in such operations. Ahmadullah asked the government to replace them. He said mostly civilians were targeted in night operations. (Pajhwok)