

Quote of the Day

A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.

John C. Maxwell

Ghani Vows to Push on Peace Talks with Taliban

KABUL - President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani said on Thursday that his government will continue to encourage the Taliban groups to join the peace talks and the national reconciliation process.

"The message of the peace is clear, we want peace, but we want peace with dignity, we want peace talks that must be stand on the basis of our constitution and that we want peace that must guarantee the rights of our people," Ghani told audience at a gathering held in an Afghan air force base in Kabul.

The comment concedes with



the potential resumption of government-Taliban peace talks and the launch of the fourth round of four-nation meeting of

Afghanistan, China, U.S. and Pakistan on Afghan peace process to be held in Kabul on Feb. 23. The last meeting of the Quadrilateral Coordination

Group (QCG) was held in Islamabad, capital of Pakistan on Feb. 6. The QCG agreed to set a date for the Afghan peace talks by the end of February. The first ever direct talks between the representatives of the Afghan government and the Taliban were held in Pakistan in early July, but the process was scuttled after the death of Taliban leader Mullah Omar was confirmed. "All Afghans want the peace to return to their country but members of opponents who decline to take part in political negotiations would only marginalize ... (More on P4)...(1)

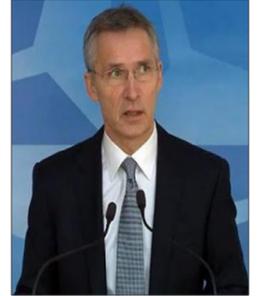
NATO Defense Ministers to Confer on Afghan Mission

KABUL - NATO's defence ministers are set to exchange views on the work of the Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan, an alliance official said on Thursday.

At the two-day meeting, which began in Brussels on Wednesday, the defence ministers conferred on a wide range of issues, including Afghanistan and strengthening defence and deterrence.

"We expect our defence ministers to exchange views on the work carried out by our ongoing Resolute Support mission providing training, advice and assistance to the Afghan forces," a NATO official told Pajhwok Afghan News.

On Wednesday, the alliance



agreed on bold steps to stop Russia from possible aggression in the Baltics or eastern Europe. The ministers supported quick deployment of air, naval and ground forces in the region. Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg will meet Russian ... (More on P4)...(2)

CIA ISIS Planting Flag in Different Parts of Afghanistan

WASHINGTON - Taking advantage of the some elements of the Taliban, the ISIS or in its Arabic acronym -- Daesh -- is now planting flags in various parts of Afghanistan, the CIA Director John Brennan has told lawmakers.

"ISIS has been able to take advantage of some elements within the Taliban that have been disenchanted with the organization," Brennan told members of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence during a Congressional hearing this week.

Brenna had travelled to Afghanistan some two months ago. "It was one of the real concerns they had that ISIS is planting the flag in different parts of Afghanistan and they are now seeing as a competitor to some of the existing militant and terrorist organizations there," he said in response to a question. The top CIA officials ... (More on P4)...(3)

Afghanistan Prioritizes Deepening of Ties with Iran: Abdullah

TEHRAN - CEO Abdullah Abdullah on Friday underlined that boosting relations with Iran is highly important for Afghanistan.

"Iran and Afghanistan share common threats, but they also have good common opportunities," Abdullah told reporters in Kabul.

He said that Iran-Afghanistan friendly ties are rooted in the two nations' cultures and ancient history, adding, "The basis of the friendly ties was laid by the two nations centuries ago."

Iran is one of the most important donors to Afghanistan,



which has kept its promises to help to the reconstruction of the war-ravaged country.

Iran has built several roads, power transmission lines, border stations and many other

infrastructure projects to better link the two nations.

Iran has also contributed more than \$50mln annually to Afghan anti-narcotics efforts during ... (More on P4)...(4)

EU Set to Host International Conference on Afghan Peace

KABUL - A senior European Union (EU) diplomat has said that an international conference on peace and stability in Afghanistan will be convened in the Belgian capital Brussels later this year.

He said Iran will be asked to cooperate in light of Tehran's influential role in the region. The European Union's Deputy Secretary-General for the External Action Service Helga Maria Schmid called on Iran to consider participating in the Brussels conference on Afghanistan.

The Brussels meeting is aimed at discussing restoration of peace and security in Afghanistan and to assess ways of cooperation among the nations in their struggles against terrorism.

The EU will host the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan on ... (More on P4)...(5)

Minister Pakistan Launches Projects worth \$500 Million in Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan has launched projects worth around \$500 million in Afghanistan covering different sectors including education, health and infrastructure, a Pakistani minister said Thursday.

According to the local media reports, citing Ahsan Iqbal, the country's Minister for Planning, Development and Reform, Pakistan has offered 3,000 scholarships to the Afghan students in different universities.

Iqbal further added that 100 Afghan students would study in the Lahore University of Management Sciences. He was speaking to an Afghan delegation comprising academicians, lawmakers, students and civil society members, the report added.

He said Islamabad had desired to forge friendly relations with all its neighbours, including Afghanistan, adding that Pakistan and Afghanistan shared a common destiny and had to work together to promote peace and stability in the region.

Insisting on the need for greater exchanges of scholars, artists, businessmen and others to boost relations between the nations, Iqbal said "We have to start a new chapter in Pakistan-Afghanistan relations by focussing on social and economic dimensions of the friendship."

He also added that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor would play an important role in ... (More on P4)...(7)

Gen. Dostum to Stand by President through Thick and Thin

KABUL - First Vice President Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum has said he would stand by President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani until the last minute of his life.

He held out the vow during a dinner reception for Ashraf Ghani at his residence in Kabul on Wednesday night, a statement from the Gen. Dostum's office said on Thursday.

The vice-president, while welcoming Ghani, promised to do all he could to ensure the success of the governance system in the country. The Uzbek leader pledged to stand by the president through thick and thin.

The president hailed Dostum for his services to the country and his people. He said the government would implement the pledge he had made during the election campaign. (Pajhwok)

Ahmad Zia Massoud Security Forces Need Proper Management



KABUL - The President's Special on Reform and Good Governance Ahmad Zia Massoud on Friday visited northern Kunduz province where he spoke out about the leadership of Afghan National and Defense Security Forces (ANDSF) and said the forces lack proper management and leadership - in the war against terrorism.

He praised the forces for their bravery and resistance

against terrorists on the battlegrounds and said they are capable of defeating insurgents on condition that there is good leadership for forces. Massoud said softening towards insurgents will be a type of cruelty towards the people and that Afghan security forces should not be flexible towards terrorists.

He also said the security forces should act against terrorists from a ... (More on P4)...(6)

ACCI Afghan Economy Trembles Amid Foreign Investment Decline



KABUL - Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI) said Friday that foreign investment in the country sharply dropped - to its lowest level since the start of new solar year, warning of an economic recession if government does not take firm steps to tackle the decline.

According to ACCI, a surge in violence across the country

and government's failure for providing fresh incentives to foreign investors have also affected domestic investments.

"There has not been any foreign investment in the country this year, no one is prepared to invest amid the fragile security situation, even our domestic investors are faced with numerous problems ... (More on P4)...(8)

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Tender Notification call for expression of interest:

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is implementing Technical Cooperation measures on behalf of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany.

GIZ Office in Kabul now invites experienced and financial solvent Bidders for the Support to MOLSAMD on National Priority Plan on Women's Economic Empowerment- NPP-WEE to submit their expression of interest letter to participate in the bidding process.

Objective:

Development of a NPP on Afghan Women's Economic Empowerment

Expected Outcome:

1. A unified, results-based and Finalized National Priority Plan on Afghan Women's Economic Empowerment in Afghanistan that enables a sound context for various initiatives to improve the economic situation of Afghan women and their role in society.
2. A Monitoring and Evaluation System which enables/ensures effective NPP-WEE implantation.

Qualifications required

This assignment requires committed and qualified national and international consultants with insight knowledge of international best practices and experiences in the field of gender and economic development Working Experience within Afghan Ministries to develop is needed. Therefore the experts should fulfill the following requirements:

Consultancy firm:

- A team with
- minimum Master Degree or PhD in social sciences including development studies, governance, gender and M&E issues.
- A liaison assistant to coordinate and support from the MOLSAMD- WEE unit.
- Experience in working together with Afghan government organizations and international organizations especial Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MOLSAMD) and Ministry of Women Affairs is required
- Proven record and expertise in gender related issues
- Excellent understanding of social perspectives especially on cultural and political situation of Women in Afghanistan
- Proven understanding of women economic situation in Afghanistan.
- Excellent experience and proven network to donor/international community on national level and to align with various other national stakeholders
- Proven Experience with developing national action plan or national priority plans is essential
- Familiar with Afghan government strategic and country-wide priorities (NPPs, SMAF, etc.)

To claim the tender documents for the bidding process, please send us your interest letter with the reference number (83222201) to tenders-afg@giz.de latest until 15.02.2016.