

Quote of the Day

Truth is rarely writ in ink; it lives in nature.

Martin H. Fischer

Ghani Calls on Jihadi Leaders to Stand by Security Forces

KABUL - President Ashraf Ghani on Tuesday addressed guests attending the 28th anniversary ceremony to mark the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and said "yesterday was about freedom, today is about development."

Ghani also called on all jihadi leaders to maintain their support for the security forces, "who are today's Mujahideen."

Ghani said that by signing the recent peace agreement with Hizb-e-Islami, government is paving the way for "unhappy Mujahideen brothers to return to their country." He said Jihad had been carried out at the time of the Soviet occupa-



tion to ensure the country's freedom and development but later efforts were made by others to destroy the progress. Ghani also stated there is a strong will among the people to overcome the crisis in the country but that all Afghans "have the right to be proud about the Jihad".

Also addressing guests, Abdul Rauf Ibrahim, speaker of the Wolesi Jirga (Lower House of Parliament) said that Russia should not repeat the mistakes of the Soviet Union in terms of meddling in Afghanistan's affairs. He implied Moscow was supporting the Taliban. Second Vice President Sarwar ...*(More on P4)...(1)*

Prof. Sayyaf Calls for War on Corruption, Immorality

KABUL - Renowned jihadi leader Prof. Abdul Rab Rasul Sayyaf on Tuesday called corruption a serious threat to the democratic system and asked the president to eradicate the menace. Speaking at an event marking the anniversary of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, the religious scholar underlined the huge importance of the day in Afghanistan's history. He called for Afghanistan's diplomats to celebrate the day around the globe. The day was a matter of great pride, not only for mujahideen, but all people of



Afghanistan and should be marked in a befitting way, he told the audience at the Presidential Palace in Kabul. Sayyaf saw no threat to the current dispensation from outside ...*(More on P4)...(2)*

Russia Mulls Interference as 28 Years Pass from Soviet Defeat: Ibrahim

KABUL - The current Russian leaders are still thinking to interfere in Afghanistan despite 28 years pass from the bitter defeat of the former Soviet Union forces in the country, an Afghan lawmaker said Tuesday. The Speaker of the Lower House of the Parliament, Wolesi Jirga, Abdul Rauf Ibrahim, made the remarks during a gathering in Kabul to mark the 28th anniversary of the withdrawal of Soviet forces.

He said the current Russian leaders are unfortunately still thinking to interfere despite 28 years have passed and are keen to weaken the democratic system of Afghanistan by supporting the Taliban group. Ibrahim further added that

the defeat of the Soviet forces in Afghanistan 28 years ago must not be repeated by those thinking to interfere and must consider it as a major experience. The remarks by Ibrahim came as reports have emerged recently suggesting the growing establishment of relations between Russia and the Taliban group.

The top US commander in Afghanistan General John Nicholson said last week that Russia has become more assertive over the past year, overtly lending legitimacy to the Taliban to undermine NATO efforts and bolster belligerents using the false narrative that only the Taliban are fighting ISIL-K. ...*(More on P4)...(4)*

Stoltenber NATO Mission in Afghanistan is to Fight Global Terror

BRUSSELS - Speaking ahead of a defense ministers meeting in Brussels, NATO secretary general Jens Stoltenberg has said that the alliance is committed to combatting terrorist groups operating in Afghanistan and will not allow Afghanistan to become a safe haven for them.

NATO's mission and presence in Afghanistan is aimed at combatting terrorist groups operating there, said Stoltenberg.

Meanwhile, the UN has said that the terrorists waging war against the Afghan people are getting political, moral and financial support



from outside the country. "The purpose of that operation is to fight terrorism. The reason why we are in Afghanistan is to prevent Afghanistan ...*(More on P4)...(5)*

69 Afghan Children Fly to Germany for Medical Treatment



KABUL - In conjunction with Germany's Peace Village International, the Afghan Red Crescent Society on Tuesday sent 69 children to Germany for medical treatment.

According to the Red Crescent Society the children are mostly burn victims and orthopedic patients.

Family members of the children have welcomed the initiative and said their children, who were not able to be treated in Afghanistan, will now get the help they need thanks to the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS). Peace Village International, a children's ...*(More on P4)...(6)*

Chabahar Port to Open in a Month: Diplomat

PESHAWAR - The Chabahar port in Iran, designed to lessen reliance of Indo-Afghan trade, is expected to open in a month, an Afghan diplomat said on Monday.

Afghan Consul General in Mumbai Mohammad Aman Amin told reporters in the Indian state of Nagpur: "The port will provide impetus to trade between India and Afghanistan."

A 10-day training programme for Afghan revenue officers began at the National Acad-

emy of Direct Taxes (NADT) in Nagpur today, according to the Press Trust of India.

A Mumbai-Kabul flight service would begin very soon on the lines of the Delhi-Afghanistan route, the envoy said, adding the two nations share a historical relationship.

The Chabahar port, bypassing Pakistan, would offer India access to markets in Europe and Central Asia. India signed the port deal with Iran and Afghanistan in May 2016. (Pajhwok)

Procurement Body Oks 3 Contracts worth 1.5b Afghanis

KABUL - The National Procurement Commission has approved three contracts worth one and a half billion Afghanis, the Presidential Palace said on Tuesday.

The contracted were given the go-ahead at a meeting of the commission chaired by President Ashraf Ghani on Monday night, a statement from the palace said.

It said contracts were okayed for the construction of a 10.8 kilometre road in Zaranj, the capital of Nimroz province, a 50-bed hospital in the Siah Gird district of Parwan



province and food supplies for security personnel. The meeting also endorsed a proposal from the Ministry of Defence for cancellation of medical supplies. The commission rejected

contracts for gravelling of roads in Kandahar, asking the Defense Ministry's engineering corps to implement the projects. President Ghani said pro ...*(More on P4)...(3)*

Hizb-E-Islami Calls on U.S to Lift Sanctions Against Hekmatyar

KABUL - A top Hizb-e-Islami negotiator on Tuesday called on the U.S to remove the name of its reconciled leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar from its blacklist, saying Washington was supposed to lift sanctions within five days after the United Nations removed his name from their list.

"The government also pledged that once the United Nations Security Council lifted sanctions against the leader of Hizb-e-Islami, four or five days later, the U.S would also announce the lifting of sanctions against the leader of Hizb-e-Islami and the party itself; however this commitment so far has not been achieved," said Hizb-e-Islami spokesman Nadir Afghan.

Meanwhile, Hizb-e-Islami has rejected media reports



that Hekmatyar was reportedly hospitalized in Turkey. According to Hizb-e-Islami officials, Hekmatyar is in the country and will arrive in Kabul soon.

On Monday, a Turkish newspaper claimed Hekmatyar was in hospital in Istanbul. The newspaper, Aydinlik, quoted a Turkish intelligence source as saying Hekmatyar is being treated at an ...*(More on P4)...(7)*

Hekmatyar Reportedly Hospitalized in Istanbul

KABUL - A Turkish newspaper has claimed Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the leader of the Hizb-e-Islami group, is currently in hospital in Istanbul. The newspaper, Aydinlik, quoted a Turkish intelligence source as saying Hekmatyar is being treated at an Istanbul hospital. No details were however given.

Last week, Afghan government and Hizb-e-Islami offi-

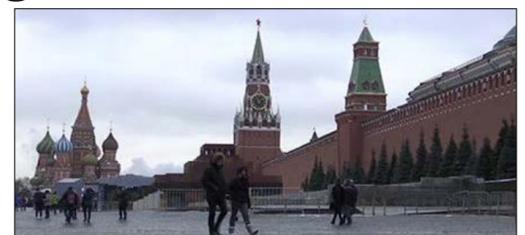
cial said Hekmatyar would return to Kabul within the next few weeks and that arrangements were being made in terms of housing and security.

Pakistan media recently reported that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan had said he would travel to Kabul to welcome Hekmatyar when he returns to Afghanistan. This ...*(More on P4)...(8)*

Moscow Expected to Host Afghanistan Talks

MOSCOW - Russia is expected to host a second round of international talks on Afghanistan in Moscow on Wednesday (Today), reports Russia's TASS news agency, with Afghanistan representatives invited for the first time.

Russia says it wants stability and cooperation in the fight against extremists in the region. But Afghan officials are not happy with Russia's direct talks with the Taliban, which U.S. officials say are aimed at undermining



their efforts. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov announced the peace talks on February 7, during a visit by his Afghan counterpart, Salahuddin Rabbani.

China and Pakistan were at December talks in Moscow, while Iran, India and Afghanistan representatives are invited to participate at this ...*(More on P4)...(9)*

Iran Ready to Help Afghan Farmers Replace Poppy Cultivation

TEHRAN - Deputy head of Iran's Anti-Drug Headquarters announced here on Tuesday that the country is ready to cooperate with Kabul to replace cultivation of opium poppy with other agricultural products in Farah province in Afghanistan.

Iran ready to help Afghan farmers replace poppy cultivation

Talking to IRNA, Assadollah Hadinejad underscored that almost all border areas of Iran-Afghanistan have been blocked to prevent the entry of opium into the country. He added several measures have been taken so far to prevent the smuggling of opium into Iran from Afghanistan, adding that the negotiations



are still underway with Afghan officials to meet that end.

The official stressed that Afghan farmers could replace poppy cultivation with other agricultural products including sesame and corn and sell them to Iran.

He added that the Iranian private sector has also voiced

its willingness to cooperate with Afghanistan to replace opium cultivation with other agricultural products.

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Afghanistan's cultivation of opium poppy for drugs has risen to its third-highest level in more than ...*(More on P4)...(10)*

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