

Jalalabad Partly Cloudy 21°C 12°C	Ghazni Partly Cloudy 15°C 2°C	Kandahar Partly Cloudy 28°C 17°C	Mazar Partly Cloudy 20°C 13°C	Herat Partly Cloudy 23°C 11°C	Bamayan Snow Showers 6°C -1°C	Kabul Chance of Rain 13°C 4°C
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Weather Forecast Brought to You by MTN Afghanistan

Access to Information Law be Amended: Journalists

KABUL - Some civil society organizations and media men on Thursday demanded the president to help amend the relevant law to make access easy to information. The access to information law comprised six chapters and 32 articles was ratified by the Wolesi Jirga and approved by President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani this year. Sayyed Akram Afzali, head of the Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA), said the access to information law was one of the weakest laws as it ranked 66th among 100 international laws of similar nature. In addition, he said 150 privileges had been mentioned in the law while the government provided 77 only. He dubbed the complaints investigation mechanism inappropriate, adding that under such mechanism complaints could not be addressed properly. Afzali said IWA in collaboration with Pajhwok Afghan News (PAN), Killid Group, Internews, the Afghanistan Independent Journalist Association (AIJA), Association for Disabled, and experts of law had prepared a new draft regarding access to information. In the new draft, an independent and natural commission had to be assigned the task to investigate complaints, he added. He demanded the president should fulfill his pledges and issue a legislative decree to further ensure access to information law. Speaking on the occasion, Danish Karokhel, director Pajhwok Afghan News, said that civil society organizations and media outlets had worked for six years and finally introduced a draft regarding access to information. He lamented after its ratification and approval: "Access to the meetings of provincial complaint commission is a great problem for us that's why the current law has multiple ... (More on P4)...(14)

Pakistan Reiterates Support for Afghan Reconciliation

KABUL - Pakistan military appeared hopeful about progress in Afghan reconciliation as it warned of potential spoilers in the process, Pakistani media reports on Friday. The dawn.com quoted military spokesman as saying: "While onus for such negotiations to succeed lies on both parties concerned, Pakistan in all sincerity will support the process, as peace in Afghanistan will contribute to peace in the region. We hope all stakeholders will continue to act with responsibility not to allow detractors of peace to succeed." The rare statement by military's public affairs wing on the Afghan reconciliation process was issued in response to reports in the international media that Army Chief Gen Raheel Sharif, during his visit to Kabul, indicated to the Afghan leadership that Taliban might be willing to open dialogue. Quoting a well-placed source, the paper said that there ... (More on P4)...(9)



KABUL - Pakistan's Army Chief Gen. Raheel Sharif briefed a US congress delegation led by Senator Jack Reed with regard of his recent visit to Afghanistan, media reports. He told US the officials that Pakistan and Afghanistan had intensified cooperation to bring peace and stability to the region. He said both countries also agreed to continue the ongoing ... (More on P4)...(10)

Gen. Raheel Briefs US Officials on Afghanistan's Visit



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Taliban Refute Reports of Qatar Talks with US



KABUL - The Taliban on Thursday refuted reports that leaders of the insurgent held negotiations with the US in Qatar, the group's spokesman said in a statement. Earlier, media reported that Taliban and a US delegation would hold talks in Qatar today (Thursday). Zabihullah Mujahid, a Taliban spokesman, said such reports were baseless: "We strongly reject such reports. We have no such plans of any talks in our Qatar office. The news in this regard were concocted." The Taliban opened an office in the Qatari capital Doha in June ... (More on P4)...(11)

US Refutes Reports of Direct Talks with Taliban

WASHINGTON - The United States has strongly refuted reports of having direct talks with the Taliban in Doha, as reported in a section of the media. "We are not in direct talks with the Taliban, and there have not been any direct talks between the US and the Taliban since January 2012, when the Taliban broke them off," the State Department Spokesperson, Jen Psaki, said. "The US is committed to enabling progress on an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned ... (More on P4)...(12)

Marble Traders to Participate in ISM



KABUL - Indian Embassy with the support of USAID/ ATAR and Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FICCI) decided to send 16 Afghan marble producers and traders to participate in India Stone Mart (ISM) (29 Jan-01 Feb 2015) to link them with international buyers and technology providers in this sector. India Stone Mart 2015 held biennially at Jaipur is one of the largest international expositions on stone industry showcasing the world of natural di-



mensional stones, ancillary products and services comprehensively. This event is jointly organized by Center for Development of Stones (CDOS), India and FICCI. It provided Afghan marble producers and traders an excellent platform to promote their products, services and brand image amongst the consumers ... (More on P4)...(13)

US Reiterates Long-Term Support for Afghanistan

KABUL - The US congress delegation led by MP Jack Reed reassured President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani of US long-term economic support and strengthening of Afghan security forces. A statement from the Presidential Palace said on Thursday that the US congress delegation exchanged views with president on a range of issues of mutual interests. The president, the statement said briefed the US visiting delegation on the capabilities of Afghan security forces' and their professionalism in fighting the terrorists. Jack Reed pledged his country continued support specifically backing the Afghan forces. (Pajhwok)



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Ghani Comments Pakistan's Efforts for Afghanistan Peace

KABUL - President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani on Friday appreciated Pakistan's efforts for providing level playing field to ensure peace in Afghanistan and to put the reconciliation process back on track. A statement from the Presidential Palace said that the unity government had been intensified efforts to bring peace and stability to the country since last six months. The leaderships in Kabul and Islamabad, the statement said had now realized to work in tandem to resolve challenges by joining hands. The tragic incidents in Paktika's Yahyakhel district and the Army Public School attack in Peshawar forced both governments to enhance joint cooperation against the scourge of terrorism. The ... (More on P4)...(15)

ANSF Launch Massive Military Operation



LASHKARGAH - The Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) launched a massive military operation in southern Helmand province and its bordering provinces to clear the area of insurgents, local officials said on Thursday. Officials of the Ministry of Defense (MoD) said that the operation was launched nine days ago from Sangin district of Helmand, which has been one of the most insecure districts, where 299 Taliban insurgents have been killed and 67 others injured. "This is a very large operation that we launched independently," Deputy Spokesman for the MoD, Dawlat Waziri said. "Throughout the operation the forces have clashed with insurgents killing and injuring several. We have also discovered and seized over hundreds of weapons." According to security officials, the operation is currently underway by commando ... (More on P4)...(16)

Afghanistan Imports \$42m worth Dairy Products Annually

Afghanistan, despite having more than two million dairy cows, imports dairy products worth of \$42 million from the neighboring countries on annual basis.

KABUL - Despite producing about 1.5 million tons of dairy products on annual bases, the Central Statistic Organization (CSO) figures have shown that during the past nine months, Afghanistan has paid about \$18 million for importing about 29,000 tons of dairy products from several countries, especially from Pakistan and Iran. Meanwhile, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) says that about 2.1 million dairy cows exist in Afghanistan with the capacity of producing more than 1.5 million tons of milk. "As there is no quality control in Afghanistan, most of the dairy products are being imported and the country's markets are full of imported products," FOA technical head Lotfullah Rang said.



The UN officials emphasized on establishment of dairy processing plants, calling it vital for the economic growth of the country and the improved situation of dairy farms. The comments came after the FOA opened a dairy processing factory in eastern Jalalabad, provincial capital of Nangarhar, with the capacity of processing 10,000 liters of milk per day. The factory head, Ziaullah Danish, noted that currently seven types of dairy products were being produced and packed according to international standards. "We have made a number of ranchers our partners to bring milk for us from the

districts, and they are making a good profit of it," Danish said. According to FOA officials, currently five medium processing plants are operating in the country, processing yearly about one million liters of milk being collected from eight provinces. Besides this, 15 other small factories are also active in the country, processing 180,000 liters of milk that meet only 20 percent of total demand of the citizens. The livestock experts criticize the government for not paying required attention to the farming industry. The critics believe the government by supporting this sector not only will be able to meet the demands of the citizens, but can also export its products to the Central Asian and Gulf countries. (Tolonews)

Wardak Police Threaten to Quit Jobs Amid Low Stipend

MAIDAN SHAHAR - A number of police officials in central Maidan Wardak province on Friday warned they would quit their jobs if their stipends were not increased. Faridullah, a local policeman in the province, told Pajhwok Afghan News that their salaries were decreased 12%. "Earlier, I was getting 12,000 afghanis but now I'm getting 10,500 for the last two months," he recalled. He said if surge was not announced in the salaries then he would prefer to quit the job. Fazal, another policeman in Daimirdad district,



said he and his colleagues were discharging their duties in the most troubled part of the province. They should be given incentives by discharging their duties in tough area while the government had slashed their salaries, he added. Another policeman wishing not to be named said every policeman was facing death all time because militants staged ... (More on P4)...(17)