

## Quote of the Day

Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself.

John Dewey

### Report

# Nearly 2m Acres of Land Usurped Under Karzai

KABUL - A new investigative report claims nearly two million acres of land was usurped by 15,800 individuals in 18 provinces of the country under former president Hamid Karzai during the past 14 years.

The survey in three chapters and 100 pages has been prepared in three months by the Afghanistan Freedom House (AFH), an investigative institute.

The survey titled 'The Black Season of Land Grabbing' and 'The Consequences of Land Grabbing in Afghanistan' cites credible information from government and non-government organs.

The survey that interviewed 70



government officials said usurping government and private properties has a long history in Afghanistan but

most of the public properties were grabbed during the last four years. Shah Hussain Murtazawi, an AFH

official, told a news conference here that they had found access to different government statistics regarding land grabs.

According to the statistics provided by the Afghanistan Independent Land Authority (AILA) and Wolesi Jirga's special commission, 1,297,000 acres of government land has been usurped, he said.

Of the land, 986,334 acres was grabbed by 15,831 people, 262,537 acres by owners of 355 townships and 30,829 acres by government organs, he said.

The AFH findings show 1,966,411 of government land has been occupied in 18 provinces alone, Murtazawi said. ...*(More on P4)...(1)*

## Senate Chief Urges Govt. to Take Advantage of Taliban Split



KABUL - Senate chairman Fazel Hadi Muslimyar has said that the government must take advantage of the split within the Taliban especially as new factions continue to emerge within the group.

He said that the current power struggle within the group could help bring them back to the negotiating table.

While divergence within the group in some way compli-

cates the peace process, many believe that this also offers an opportunity to government to act and get the Taliban to join the talks process.

Following Mullah Akhter Mansour's appointment as successor to group's long-time leader Mullah Omar, rival factions opposed to his appointment refused to endorse his leadership, an issue which has led to a splintering of the ...*(More on P4)...(2)*

## Russia Stops Cooperating with US in Afghanistan



KABUL - As the security situation in the war-devastated country deteriorates, Russia has withdrawn cooperation with the United States in Afghanistan, The New York Times reported on Sunday.

Russia's envoy to Afghanistan Zamir N. Kabulov recently said they had already told the Americans Moscow would not be part of talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government.

The newspaper quoted the diplomat as saying: "Honestly speaking, we're already tired of joining anything Washington starts." The Kremlin had no desire to attend what the Americans organise 'on the fly' for their own pre-election ...*(More on P4)...(3)*

## NPC Saves 290m Afghanis in 21 MoD Contracts

KABUL - The National Procurement Commission (NPC) has approved 25 contracts worth 636 million afghanis and rejected three others, the Presidential Palace said on Sunday. A statement from the Presidential Palace received by Pajhwok Afghan News said the NPC met under President Ashraf Ghani chairmanship and discussed 36 projects and procurement issues belonging to 11 ministries and independent organs of the government.

At the meeting held on Saturday evening, 290 million afghanis were saved in 21 contracts regarding maintenance facilities with military corpses



of the Ministry of Defense (MoD). The meeting also approved materials required for the Sarobi hydropower dam. The president once again ordered maintenance officials

to use domestic products for meeting MoD's requirements. Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS) also shared a plan with the meeting about a solar power system as alternative to

the extension of power cables to western Farah province.

DABS said the solar system was many times cheaper than importing electricity from regional countries.

The NPC approved the plan and asked DABS to provide similar systems in other provinces of the country as well.

President Ghani said the government would bring into use all available resources for making Afghanistan self-sufficient in energy.

More than 13 billion afghanis has been saved in 600 contracts worth 96 billion afghanis during the 41 weekly meetings of NPC. (Pajhwok)

## Mullah Mansour's Opponent Mustering Support in Ghormach



MAIMANA - An insurgent outfit in the Ghormach district of northwestern Faryab province has pledged allegiance to the Taliban splinter group led by Mullah Rassoul, a public representative said on Sunday.

After the confirmation of Mullah Mohammad Omar's death, Mullah Akhtar Mansour was named as new leader of the Taliban movement that ruled Afghanistan for almost five years until 2001.

But internecine differences emerged within Taliban ranks over the leadership of Mansour, as some insurgent leaders refused to accept his leadership. Mullah Rassoul, one of the dissenters, has formed his own faction.

Syed Abdul Baqi Hashimi, a member of the provincial council, said Mullah Abdul Salam Rakiti -- Taliban commander in the Qala-i-Wali locality of Ghormach -- had also supported Rassoul and distanced himself from Mansour's followers.

Hashimi said Rassoul's loyalists had been trying to expel Rassoul's opponents from the area. However, the provincial council's member did not go into details.

Syed Hashim Hashimi, introducing himself as spokesman for Rassoul's group, said the Taliban in Ghormach, and parts of Badghis province would soon announce their allegiance to Mullah Rassoul.

Mullah Rakiti, posing as a commander Mullah Rassoul, said at least 600 Taliban in Faryab and Badghis provinces, had accepted Mullah Rassoul's leadership. In the near future, another 1,000 fighters would pledge support to him, he added.

But Mullah Obaidullah, introducing himself as close aide to Mullah Mansour in Faryab, rejected the claims. He insisted no Taliban member was against the movement's supreme leader.

Obaidullah accused the National Directorate of Security ...*(More on P4)...(8)*

## DABS Hopes to Reconnect Kabul Power by Monday



KABUL - Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS) said Sunday it hopes to fully restore the electricity supply to Kabul by Monday despite Taliban insurgents having cut more lines in six additional areas of Dand-e-Shahabuddin district of Baghlan province.

According to DABS, insurgents blew up several lines in some six points in the volatile province, however, lines are now repaired in five areas.

"Power will be restored to Kabul by Monday. Repair work continues in six areas where the Taliban blew the transmission lines and power in five areas has been reconnected," Wahidullah Tawhidi, a DABS spokesman said.

The Taliban cut transmission lines in Dand-e-Ghori district of Baghlan province, cutting off Uzbekistan's electricity to the Afghan capital for twenty days.

"The pylon was totally damaged and we are connecting electricity, we need six more days to repair it completely," head of Baghlan electricity supply company Ghulam Hussain Haidar said.

As Afghans in the capital count the days for complete restoration of electricity, concerns however still exist about ...*(More on P4)...(6)*

## Gilani Appointed as Government's Chief Peace Negotiator

KABUL - Renowned spiritual leader Pir Syed Ahmad Gilani has been appointed as new Afghan High Peace Council chairman, a well-placed source said on Sunday.

Salahuddin Rabbani resigned the slot after his appointment as foreign minister. The key post had been vacant for nearly a year, irking major international donors.

An official familiar with the decision told Pajhwok Afghan News ex-vice president Karim Khalili and then Bamiyan governor Habiba Sarabi had been named as deputy head of the peace



body. Attaullah Saleem, Maulvi Khyber Haji Din Mohammad and Maulvi Khuddam have also been appointed to the council, said Javed Faisal, deputy spokesman for the CEO office. Weeks ago, major donors including the United States

Agency for International Development and the British government suspended financial aid to the council due to the delay in the appointment of its leader. Meanwhile, a source in the National Front party also said Gilani's appointment. ...*(More on P4)...(4)*

## Qadir Concerned Over Pakistani Military Installations in Zero Point Areas

KABUL - The Deputy Speaker of Wolesi Jirga (Lower House of Parliament), Zahir Qadir, on Sunday expressed his deep concerns over the construction of military installations by Pakistan in bordering districts of eastern Nangarhar province.

Qadir said that Pakistan is building military installations in Zero Point areas along the border.

He warned of negative consequences if Pakistan does not stop the construction of the installations.

"We urge the Afghan government to discuss the issue with Pakistan through diplomatic ways," he added.

Despite undermining the peace process, Qadir warned the installations will have other serious consequences.



Hinting at intensified fighting between Afghan security forces and Daesh militants in Achin district of the province, Qadir said that security forces have suppressed Daesh fighters.

"You [Daesh fighters] are fighting in Afghanistan at

the behest of others. Go and live with your families, otherwise you will be eliminated," he added.

Meanwhile, residents of Achin district, pledged to stand beside Afghan security forces against militants. "Daesh militants are still active in some villages. We urge security forces to eliminate them," said Gul Ahmad, a resident of Achin. Daesh rebels are believed to have widespread presence in some districts of Nangarhar. The Ministry of Defense (MoD) recently said that their large-scale operation against Daesh in the province was a success. However, residents of the province are still concerned about the presence of the terrorist group. (Tolnews)

## Kunduz Governor Listens to Security Concerns in Chardara



KUNDUZ CITY - The newly-appointed governor of northern Kunduz province on Sunday travelled to Chardara district, where he listened to residents' concerns over the worsening law and order situation.

Asadaullah Umarmkel, a former member of the peace committee, was appointed as governor three months after the capture of the provincial capital by the Taliban.

Chardara inhabitants ex-

pressed their grievances over security at a time when the Ministry of Interior (MoI) announced the detention of Taliban's shadow district chief for the district.

Umarkhel visited the torched building for the district police headquarters, from where he walked to the main district bazaar. Located one kilometer from the police HQ, the once bustling bazaar wears a deserted look.

One ...*(More on P4)...(5)*

## Zabul Women's Affairs Director Accused of Corruption

QALAT - A number of women in southern Zabul province accuse the provincial Women's Affairs Department of widespread corruption in its training programmes, but the department head rejects the allegation.

Attending a training workshop at the women's affairs department, a number of women claimed financial corruption was being committed in their training programmes.

One of them, Aqila, told Pajhwok Afghan News that half of the funds an aid-giving agency had provided for workshops on agricultural issues were being pocketed by the women's affairs director.

She said on every agriculture issue a two-day workshop was being organized and each participating woman was given



500 afghanis per day, but the second day money went to the director. Another woman, Bakht Bibi, claimed she was told prior to the start of the workshop to give half of the money she receives to the director, otherwise her name would be removed from the list of workshop participants. ...*(More on P4)...(7)*