

Helmand Schools Need Firewood: Activists

LASHKARGAH - Schools in southern Helmand province could not be supplied firewood this winter due to a dispute with contractors over the price, plummeting attendance by 30 percent, civil society activists said on Wednesday.

Bost Civil Society Organisation members told a press conference in Lashkargah, the provincial capital, that firewood should have principally reached all schools about a month ago.

However, the materials could not be supplied to schools so far due a number of problems at the Education Department and negligence on its part, said Abdul Ghaffar Ishaqzai, the organisation head.

He said many schools in Helmand lacked shelters



and some window glasses, exposing children to harsh climate conditions. Haji Nazir, the group's political committee head, said they wanted the provincial Education and Training Directorate to resolve the issue at the earliest. He said there were 264 operational schools in Helmand and

attendance in each had declined by 30 percent due to cold weather, affecting children's studies. He said the issue was only in Helmand because a dispute was ongoing with contractors over the price of firewood and gas. Nazir said the authorities concerned should ink contracts in

line with established rules and children should not be a victim of corruption in future. A 5th grader in the Safyan area of Lashkargah, Shamsuddin, told Pajhwok Afghan News heaters were available in their school, but there was no fuel. He said some schools lacked desks... (More on P4)... (16)

Suicide Attack Foiled on NDS Compound in Paktika

SHARAN - The Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) foiled a suicide attack plot in Orgun district of eastern Paktika province, a month after a deadly attack left at least 57 people dead.

A suicide bomber who wanted to target the special command of the Afghan Intelligence - National Directorate of Security (NDS) operatives in Orgun, was shot dead before he reach

to his target. NDS said Wednesday that the bomber was identified as Mohammad Hashim who was appointed by the Haqqani terrorist network for the attack.

The Haqqani terrorist network was also accused for the last month's deadly attack in Orgun, where a suicide bomber detonated his explosives among the spectators of a volleyball game in Yahya Khel district. (KP)

Engineers Improve Capabilities for Civil Construction Projects

KABUL - Over the past ten days, more than 125 engineers from various line departments in the provinces Badakhshan, Baghlan, Balkh, Kunduz and Takhar successfully took part in "Measuring & Scaling" training workshops. The aim of the five four-day workshops was to help participants improve the quality of surveying in public works.

The workshops were held in the five provinces between 20th and 30th December 2014, with the technical and financial assistance of the German government. The training was

designed to help various government departments manage public infrastructure projects effectively, efficiently and within budget and time constraints.

The authorities whose engineers took part in the training included the Department of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (DRRD), the provincial education department, the Department of Public Works (DoPW), the electricity department, Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS), the water supply department (WSD) and river basin... (More on P4)... (17)

11 Killed and Wounded in Nangarhar Clashes

JALALABAD - At least 11 people were killed and wounded after a number of armed insurgents attacked a crowded bazaar in eastern Nangarhar province, officials said. The incident took place Wednesday in Bati Kot district in which one police and two civilians were killed and eight others were wounded, district governor Haji Gulab said.

He added the assailants had planned to attack governor's office but were identified by the security forces. The Taliban, however, have not yet commented in this regard. (Tolnews)

264 Kg Drugs Seized from Truck in Zabul

QALAT - Police seized a truck and recovered 264 kilograms of drugs from it in southern Zabul province, an official said on Wednesday.

Two men on the truck were also detained in connection with the drugs, Zabul police chief Brig. Gen. Ghulam Sakhi Rogh Lewanai told Pajhwok Afghan News.

The narcotics included 245 kilograms of opium and 19 kg of heroin, he said, adding the drugs were destined for Kabul from western Herat province. The truck was captured

at the Kharwarin checkpoint on the Zabul-Herat highway following a tip off.

Rogh Lewanai said a large number of smugglers had been arrested and a huge quantity of drugs seized by police during the ongoing year. The detainees had been referred to attorneys for prosecution, he said. (Pajhwok)

Taliban Leader among 4 Killed in NATO Drone Strike

GHAZNI CITY - At least four Taliban militants, including the group's local leader were killed following a drone strike in southeastern Ghazni province of Afghanistan.

According to the local government officials, the airstrike was carried out by NATO-led coalition security forces in Qarabagh district late on Tuesday night. The district administrative chief, Fazal-ur-Rehman Sabawoon, confirmed that four Taliban militants, including one of their local leaders were killed following the raid. (KP)

As U.S.-Led Combat Mission Ends, Afghan Women Fear Oppression

KABUL - No one ever claimed responsibility after a suicide bomber rammed into the vehicle of celebrated female parliamentarian Shukria Barakzai. She walked away from the wreckage after the Nov. 16 blast that killed three civilians and wounded 20.

The Taliban often takes responsibility for suicide bombings - it did so for one against the British embassy that killed six people days later.

Barakzai, 42, said Afghanistan's spy agency had warned her before about threats to her life from the insurgent group. But an investigation into the attack on the outspoken women's rights activist has led nowhere.

Barakzai, a tireless campaigner for women's rights, has no shortage of potential enemies, including powerful warlords, as Afghanistan's regional chieftains are known.

"Our Parliament is a collection of lords,"

Barakzai once famously said. "Warlords, drug lords, crime lords." Barakzai was only a few hundred metres from the Parliament building, her destination, when the suicide bomber rammed into her armoured car. (Reuters)



Kabul Police Arrest Gang of Robbers, Killers

KABUL - A gang of five armed robbers and killers charged with kidnappings and killings along with other heinous crimes has been arrested in the heavily-fortified city of Kabul, the police reported.

The newly-appointed police chief, Abdul Rahman Rahimi, said Wednesday that the criminals had killed several people after robbing their homes and stealing their cars.

The convicts have confessed that they have killed members of a family and buried them at their home, Rahimi said.

He added the group leader known as Adam Khan admitted to have suffocated a woman about four months ago and buried her at her home.

"I killed her because she was not a good woman," Khan acknowledged,

who was recently released from jail after he was sentenced for 18 years. According to police, Khan has also killed that woman's husband and a six-year-old daughter.

"After strong efforts, the police finally arrested this dangerous group," Rahimi said. "These people were also rob-

bing citizens in the highway between Kabul and Jalalabad." This year, the Kabul police have been able to arrest several mafia leaders including most wanted Habib Istalif and Raees Khudaidad.

However, Istalif was executed along with five rapists of Paghman incident about three months ago in Kabul. (Tolnews)

5 Projects Completed in Paktia, Wardak

GARDEZ/MAIDAN SHAHR - Five different projects have recently been completed in Paktia and Maidan Wardak provinces, officials said on Wednesday.

In southeastern Paktia, three bridges were constructed at a cost of 40 million afghanis, the deputy governor told a gathering in Gardez.

Syed Abdul Wali Sahi said thousands of people would benefit from the bridges that solved transportation problems and connected residents of the areas concerned.

He said earlier residents had to face problems while crossing the rivers and the bridges had cut the distances short.

Residents of Ahmadkhel

district said it would take hours reaching the district bazaar, but the bridges had resolved the problem and facilitated residents of many areas.

In central Maidan Wardak province, construction work on a football and a volleyball ground has been completed in the Chak district. (Mohammad... (More on P4)... (18))

Outlook Horoscope

Aries (Mar. 22-Apr.20)

Sticking to a proven method brings better results today than trying a whole new approach. You may grow restless if everything seems too familiar; however, it's much smarter now to manage your anxiety by gradually modifying your attitude instead of randomly messing with your environment. Thankfully, once you settle into a routine, most everything should get easier to handle all around.

Taurus (Apr. 21-May 20)

You may grow so concerned with executing your own agenda today that you could end up obsessing over something you want. Problems arise if other people's schedules conflict with yours. But you're not likely to take no for an answer since the Moon's return to your determined sign heightens your attachment to your preferred version of the outcome.

Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You might not be overly loquacious today because you don't trust your ability to know when to stop talking. Thankfully, practicing self-restraint is an intelligent strategy since there are pressing issues that require your attention and it can be problematic if you wear yourself out too early in the game. Although pursuing random social activities is fun, don't let them distract you from the real work at hand.

Cancer (June 21-July 20)

This may be a perfect day to hang out with friends, but don't worry about figuring out too many of the details beforehand.

You prefer to know your schedule in advance, but ultimately, it will be more enjoyable if you leave things unstructured for now. Oddly enough, everyone else seems to have specific plans even if you don't.

Leo (July 21-Aug. 21)

You have a very specific picture of what you want to accomplish at work today, but you could seriously miscalculate the amount of support you receive. In fact, you are relying on everyone to stick close to your agenda, as promised. But the universe might have a slightly different notion about what's next and you're better off now if you don't fight the inevitable.

Virgo (Aug. 22-Sep 22)

This could turn out to be a rather mellow day if you don't fill up your schedule with too much unnecessary work. Instead of shifting into automatic gear and plowing through your long list of chores, consider which tasks are non-essential and leave those for another day. Even if you're typically a hard worker, take some well-deserved time off just to relax.

Libra (Sep 23-Oct. 22)

Your outlook on life is changing radically now, but you might not be able to set your ideas into motion. This puzzling dilemma isn't just about your efforts being blocked; your current lack of confidence makes you wonder if you will reach your goals if you are opposed to the prevailing currents. Actually, it's smarter to wait for the storm to pass; enjoy yourself today by being creative, instead of productive.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 22)

It's irritating if someone quickly agrees with you in word, yet continues to resist your actions. It's as if there's a split between the mental and physical universe, which can be quite frustrating to you strong-willed Scorpions. Keep in mind that you won't be able to solve this dilemma today. Instead of trying to control all the variables, simply be an objective witness to the current events.

Sagittarius (Nov. 23-Dec. 20)

You might not be able to accomplish all your goals today, but a large part of the problem comes from extending your reach too far. You can visualize the big picture so well that it motivates you to dream beyond your immediate environment. Unfortunately, there isn't a fast way to get to your destination. Nevertheless, concentrating on the most practical things on your plate makes the most sense, even if that means success is delayed another day.

Capricorn (Dec. 21-Jan 19)

Your friends think you would benefit from some relaxation today but they might secretly believe that you don't know how to have fun.

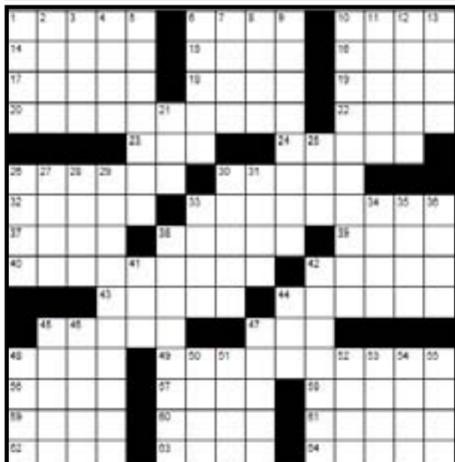
However, you're more than willing to let them follow you around so you can prove them wrong. But don't bother defending your actions if someone doesn't like your plans. Do whatever you want without worrying about anyone else's opinion.

Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb. 18)

The same events that would have rattled your cage previously don't seem to have much of an unsettling effect now; nevertheless, they can sidetrack your current progress. Whether you like it or not, you have some work to do because unaddressed issues won't likely vanish on their own. Make a commitment to yourself to get to the bottom of your emotional dilemma while you have such a positive attitude about life.

Pisces (Feb. 19-Mar. 20)

You are ready to settle into an easy day at work, hoping that you don't have to deal with any major upheavals. However, you may need to climb a few hills that now stand between you and your personal satisfaction. But you won't find any pleasure if you try to force your position on others. It's currently more effective to step back from potential conflicts until you're able to talk about your emotions in a rational manner.



Across

1. A stringed instrument, 6. Mend (archaic), 10. Bothers, 14. Birdlike, 15. Sore, 16. Ark builder, 17. Fit out again, 18. Sneaker or pump, 19. Medical breakthrough, 20. Perilous, 22. Quaint outburst, 23. Record (abbrev.), 24. Map within a map, 26. Cold, 30. Give birth to, 32. Cowboy sport, 33. Types of restaurants (British), 37. Black, in poetry, 38. Not the most, 39. Iridescent gem, 40. Automatic transmission of data, 42. False front, 43. Tricks, 44. Reposed, 45. Hitches, 47. Family, 48. Petty quarrel, 49. A preacher, 56. 53 in Roman numerals, 57. Agreeable, 58. Subsequently, 59. Relating to aircraft, 60. Feudal worker, 61. Scintillas, 62. Scheme, 63. D D D D

Down

1. Grumble, 2. Always, 3. Vitality, 4. Nonclerical, 5. One of the Great Lakes, 6. Introductory, 7. Reflected sound, 8. You (archaic), 9. Vision, 10. Resembling incest, 11. French for "Red", 12. Unit of gold purity, 13. Outbuilding, 21. Crimson, 25. Prefix meaning "Modern", 26. Fuss, 27. Gown, 28. False god, 29. A coming into being, 30. Tolerates, 31. Not difficult, 33. French for "Head", 34. Expectoration, 35. Leisure, 36. Toboggan, 38. Diminished, 41. Cup, 42. Beginning, 44. 18-wheeler, 45. Patter, 46. Nigerian monetary unit, 47. Leg joints, 48. Smack, 50. Workbench attachment, 51. Skin disease, 52. King of the jungle, 53. Within, 54. Stigma, 55. Exam

Yesterday's Solution

arrive, carbon, choose, class, coal, crossword, cruise, deduce, dinner, disease, dollar, doubt, expert, extra, family, fast, favor, final, flora, fresh, fright, fruit, halt, interest, paste, pest, phrase, please, project, relief, roof, rough, shown, soothe, story

