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January 11, 2017

Jalalabad Clear 12°C -2°C	Ghazni Clear 6°C -7°C	Kandahar Clear 14°C -3°C	Mazar Clear 11°C 1°C	Herat Clear 14°C 0°C	Bamayan Clear -1°C -14°C	Kabul Clear 2°C -12°C
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None of Afghan Universities among Top 1,000

HERAT CITY - None of Afghanistan's universities has found a place among the world's top 1,000 universities due to a dismally low level of excellence in the scientific domain and closure of research centres. But the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) in Kabul argues the country's universities will need time meeting global standards. The Times of England recently published a list of world's top 1,000 universities. None of Afghanistan's universities was included in the list. The survey of top universities was conducted by the Times with the cooperation of some other organisations between 2016 and 2017, based on the reading of 12,000 research books.



Herat University teachers say fewer students pursuing masters and doctoral studies, inadequate scientific contents and closure of research centres were the reasons for Afghan institutions' failure

to carve out a niche for themselves. Eight universities in Iran, 16 in India and one in Pakistan have been included among the top institutions. America's Harvard University with

100 points secured the first rank, Astanford University, Stanford University of America with 98 points secured the second spot, with Massachusetts Institute of Technology

getting third position. The UK-based University of Cambridge ended fourth on the list with 96 scores. Dr. Ahmad Ghani Khasravi, a lecturer at Heart University, sees low qualifications, poor English proficiency and little scientific research behind the exclusion of Afghan universities from the list. He wants government leaders and officials of MoHE to struggle for enabling Afghan universities to find their way to the list. "Researchers mostly focus on academics, quality of teaching, qualifications of lecturers and staff, research books and influence of universities," he says. On the other hand, a number of Herat University students said flaws in higher education system and ...*(More on P4)...(7)*

Track-2 Dialogue: Robust Af-Pak Links Underlined

PESHAWAR - Afghanistan and Pakistan have been urged to bridge their trust deficit, stop the blame game and focus on border management to ensure security on both sides of the Durand Line. Members of the Pakistan Afghanistan Joint Committee issued the call at their third workshop in Karachi as part of Beyond Boundaries II, a track 1.5/II dialogue series undertaken by the Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS) in partnership with Afghan counterpart Women Peace and Security Organization (WPSO). The initiative is aimed to foster better understanding and cooperation between civil society members and address the bilateral trust deficit. Members of the committee also met Sindh Minister for Education and Literacy Jam Mehtab Hussain Dahar. Muzammil Shinwari, Afghanistan's former deputy minister for trade and commerce, hailed Pakistan's decision to extend the stay of Afghan refugees. "There is dire need to tackle the trust deficit and improve security," he stressed. Both countries should focus on improving bilateral trade, he suggested, noting a decline in transit trade. He also thanked the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) for inviting Afghan players. Advisor to Defense Ministry Wazhma Frogh believed media could play a key role, but it needed the right piece of information to properly serve its purpose of public information and improving public perceptions. Parliamentarian Heelay Ershad remarked terrorism could not be combated with terrorism. ...*(More on P4)...(8)*

Senate Team Restricts Timber Transfer from Kunar



KABUL/ASADABAD - A Meshrano Jirga delegation has banned transfer of all kinds of wood from eastern Kunar province pending an investigation into alleged timber smuggling. The delegation that visited Kunar, said local officials were not involved in illegal smuggling of the wood. Deforestation has been ongoing in Kunar over the past few decades. But the Afghan government last year imposed restrictions on transferring wood from the province. However, the Ministers' Council a few months back permitted the transfer of wood-built items and furniture based on local industrialists and wood factories

owners' demand. Recently reports in social media and mainstream media appeared about smuggling of wood from Kunar amid claims local authorities have a big hand in the smuggling. To investigate the issue, a Meshrano Jirga delegation headed by Senator Mohammad Hashim Alokozai was sent to the province. The delegation submitted its investigation report to the upper house on Tuesday. Alokozai said according to a Cabinet decision, the only Kunar governor allowed 20 furniture-loaded trucks to transfer the commodity on a daily basis. However, he said some circles ...*(More on P4)...(11)*

Seizing Drugs Vital for Security in Kunduz: Police

KUNDUZ CITY - Drugs have been providing funding for Taliban insurgency and seizing the substance plays a vital in enhancing security, said the police chief for northern Kunduz province on Tuesday. Brig. Gen. Abdul Hameed Hamidi said police seized 1.5 tonnes of different kinds of narcotics and arrested 60 people in connection with the seizures during the past 10 months. He said detection and seizure of drugs played a vital role in ensuring security because the Taliban earned from drug sales. During the past 10 months, Gen. Hamidi said the special counternarcotics police unit seized 1.5 tonnes of drugs, detained 60 suspects and confiscated eight vehicles. He said the detainees had been referred to judicial organs ...*(More on P4)...(10)*

Body of Kidnapped Coalmine Worker Found

AIBAK - Kidnappers killed a Shabashk coalmine worker in the Dara-i-Saof Bala district of northern Samangan province despite getting one million afghanis in ransom from the hostage's family. Security forces found the dead body of the mine worker named Ghulam Hussain and handed it over to his family on Monday. Seven suspects have been detained so far in connection with the incident. Police officer 2nd Lt. Mohammad Munir Rahimi told Pajhwok Afghan News Ghulam Hussain -- hailing from central Daikundi province -- had been abducted by on November 4 from the coalmine. He said the worker was shot dead and his corpse found in the Chaikhaki locality of Roidoab district three days back. The district shares a border with Dara-i-Sauf Bala. The body was handed over to the victim's family after identification, he said. The worker's family said they would carry the body to Kabul and register a case there. *(Pajhwok)*

More Than 100 Militants Killed in Logar Raids

PUL-I-ALAM - More than 100 Taliban rebels have been killed and 28 more wounded during two weeks of an operation wrapped up Monday night in central Logar province, an official said on Tuesday. Salim Saleh, the governor's spokesman, told Pajhwok Afghan News the operations were conducted in Pul-i-Alam, the provincial capital, Kharwar, Barak-i-Barak and Sarkh districts. He said at least 103 militants were killed including 10 foreign fighters and four suicide bombers, and 28 others were wounded. Two civilians were also killed and 10 others wounded, but it remained unclear which side



caused casualties to the civilians, Saleh said. He said 12 motorbikes and some machineguns were seized and 40 landmines defused. A member of the provincial council, Hassibullah Stanikzai, said the operation had positive results as most parts of the provincial capital were cleaned of Taliban insurgents.

However, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said only four fighters were killed during the operation that he claimed left 22 security officials dead including a commander. Taliban militants, who have closed the highway to Azra district over the past 14 years, are in control of many areas in Logar. *(Pajhwok)*

Afghan Interpreters for French Army Threatened by Insurgents

KABUL - Nearly 100 Afghan former interpreters for the French army demanded French visas on Tuesday so they can leave their country, saying they face regular threats from Islamist insurgents. The group, which gathered near the French embassy in Kabul but was promptly dispersed by police, displayed banners calling for protection and France's solidarity with endangered interpreters. "Why are we still here in Kabul? Why were our demands rejected by the French government?" said Khodadad Adib, 28, their representative. "We were with the dangers in some times dangerous places. ...*(More on P4)...(9)*

Refugees Leave Camps Due to Safety Concerns



KABUL - Some refugees, including Afghans, on the Greek island of Lesbos by the Aegean Sea have chosen to leave refugee camps due to safety concerns and have opted instead to stay in abandoned warehouses. Despite the sharp drop in temperatures over recent days, refugees have remained in the dormant buildings, and refuse to return to the camps where they would have a steady supply of food and water. Syrian refugee Abbas has stayed in a long-abandoned plant on Lesbos for the past month. He said series of problems at the Moria refugee camp drove him and his family away.

Abbas said he arrived in Lesbos from Turkey four months ago. After three months in Moria, he along with four of his relatives moved into the abandoned plant in December. Despite having no normal food supply and no bathroom, Abbas said he finds his current situation safer than life in Moria. A gas tank explosion on the evening of November 24 killed one woman and a child at the packed Moria camp. Prior to that incident, two large fires broke out in the camp, with arson suspected to be the cause of both cases. Most refugees in the camp have stayed for over six months ...*(More on P4)...(12)*

Ex-AG Sabit's Son Sentenced to 19 Years in Jail



WASHINGTON - Detroit-based neurosurgeon Aria O. Sabit, son of former Afghan attorney general Abdul Jabar Sabit, has been sentenced to more than 19 years in prison on charges of fraud worth \$28 million. Aria O. Sabit, who had pleaded guilty earlier, had caused serious bodily harm to patients by performing unnecessary invasive spinal surgeries, the US Department of Justice said. A licensed neurosurgeon, Sabit had earlier pleaded guilty to four counts of health care fraud, one count of conspiracy to commit fraud and one count of unlawful distribution of a controlled substance, resulting in losses to Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance companies. In his plea, Sabit admitted he derived significant profits by convincing patients to undergo spinal fusion surgeries with "instrumentation" (medical

devices designed to strengthen the spine) that he never performed and billed public and private healthcare benefit programs for those fraudulent services. He admitted, in some instances, he operated on patients and dictated in his operative reports, which he knew would later be used to support fraudulent insurance claims, that he had performed spinal fusion with instrumentation, when in fact, he used cortical bone dowels made of tissue, the Justice Department alleged. Federal prosecutors said Sabit failed to render services in relation to lumbar and thoracic fusion surgeries, including in certain instances, billing for implants that were not provided. *(Pajhwok)*

Senior MoI Official Sentenced to 14 Years in Jail



KABUL - A primary anti-corruption court has sentenced a senior Interior Ministry's general to 14 years in prison on charges of embezzlement and fake documentation. The verdict was handed down at the end of a hearing on Monday, attended by government officials, representatives from the Resolute Support (RS) mission, corruptions watchdogs and civil society. Maj. Gen. Abdul Wase Raufi, the accused who served as deputy chief of policy and strategy at the ministry and head of the procurement commission, awarded the fuel contract to Feedless Company in return for \$150,000, said the prosecutor. He said the official was caught red-handed by detectives while receiving the bribes at his home and a Land Cruiser-type vehicle without permit and other

documents was recovered from his residence. Gen. Raufi claimed: "MoI's former deputy head of policy asked me to award the fuel contract to Feedless and promised to give me some amount. But I told him the company did not meet the requirements and was not entitled to the contract." Abdul Jalil Momand, Raufi's lawyer, called the case was a conspiracy by some officials of the ministry, particularly the deputy head of policy and strategy, against his client. But Judge Sher Aqa Munib, after 10 minutes of consultations with other members of the court, sentenced Raufi to 14 years in jail and fined the accused 18,000 afghanis. The court, which started functioning four months earlier, moved fast to sentence a worker of the Aziz Bank to 10 years and six months in jail for ...*(More on P4)...(13)*