

# ANSF Launch Counterinsurgency Offensive in Balkh

MAZAR-I-SHARIF - Three militants have been killed and six others wounded during an ongoing security operation in the Albarz mountains of northern Balkh province, officials said on Friday.

Lt. Col. Azar Mohammad, a senior Shaheen Military Corps official, told reporters Afghan National Army (ANA), police and National Directorate of Security (NDS) personnel were conducting the offensive.

The security forces had

captured some arms and ammunition, he said, adding more than 250 militants from Balkh, Sar-i-Pul and Jawzjan provinces were operating in the mountainous area. But the acting police chief for Balkh, Col. Abdur Razzaq Qadiri, told Pajhwok Afghan News that they had encountered a small number of rebels so far. The offensive would continue until the area was cleared, he said.

Chaftang area has already been purged of fighters, according to



the police officer, who said the security forces had entered Chalikhel, Qolakhel and Narikhel villages. The militants were unable to put up strong resistance, he claimed, saying locals were extending full support to their security forces by helping in identification of the insurgents. (Pajhwok)

## 2 Policemen Killed, as Many Wounded in Sangin Attacks

LASHKARGAH - Two policemen have been killed and two others wounded in the Taliban attacks in the Sangin district of southern Helmand province, an official said on Friday.

Sangin police chief Col. Hamdullah told Pajhwok Afghan News the police casualties resulted from overnight assaults on four police posts in the district. The coordinated attacks triggered an hour-long fire-fight between the two sides, according to the officials, who said nothing... (More on P4)...()

## 30 Afghan Pilots to be Trained at Columbus Air Force Base in US

KABUL - Up to 30 Afghan pilots are due to participate in a training mission on A-29 Super Tucano Light Air Support aircraft at Moody Air Force Base in Valdosta, Georgia.

The training of the Afghan pilots will be part of

the 81st Flight Squadron which will be activated during a ceremony on Thursday.

The training will be overseen by the 14th Flying Training Wing which will also train 9 Afghan maintainers on the A-29 Super... (More on P4)...()

## Paktika Police Chief Mullakhkel Transferred to Helmand

SHARAN - President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani has ordered the transfer of the Paktika police chief to southern Helmand province, the government announced on Friday.

Brig. Gen. Nabi Jan Mullakhkel, who has been the police head for Helmand in the past also, was given a farewell reception by local officials, tribal elders and public

representatives.

Former provincial council member Abdul Ghani Paktin said the outgoing police chief had reopened the Goshta road that was kept closed by the Taliban for nine years.

In his brief remarks on the occasion, Gen. Mullakhkel promised he would serve the people of Helmand to the best of his ability. (Pajhwok)

## Kunduz Traders Warn of Protest over Mounting Insecurity

KUNDUZ CITY - Dozens of traders on Friday voiced their grave concern at increasing insecurity, including kidnappings, in northern Kunduz province.

During a protest meeting at the provincial council office in Kunduz City, the businessmen complained they had been unable to pursue their activities due to growing violence.

The continuance of the current situation was simply intolerable and unaffordable, they said, asking the provincial council to join hands with them in addressing the problem.



Urging the security institutions to take urgent action to stabilise the province, one of the businessmen said they had already shared the issue with police and the Chamber of Commerce and Industries.

Haji Ziaul Haq warned if the higher authorities in Kabul failed to provide them with adequate security, the traders and shopkeeper in Kunduz would resort to widespread protests. Without giving details, he claimed one of his family members... (More on P4)...()

## Paktika Governor Promises Administrative Reforms

SHARAN - Abdul Karim Matin, governor of southern Paktika province, promised on Thursday problems of residents would be shared with President Ashraf Ghani and CEO Abdullah Abdullah.

The newly-appointed governor said his office had started monitoring the performance of civil and military staff in all districts of the province to ensure good govern-



ance in Paktika.

In an exclusive interview with Pajhwok Afghan News, the governor said he would try to bring reforms to provincial

## Pro-Government Cleric Dead in Khost Mosque Blast

KHOST CITY - A pro-government cleric has been killed in a bomb explosion inside a mosque in southeastern Khost province, an official said on Friday.

Maulvi Abdur Rashid Naqshbandi, who stoutly supported Afghan security forces, died in the blast happened on a joint Afghan-NATO base near the provincial capital on Thursday night.

A security official, who did not want to be named, told Pajhwok Afghan News the mosque... (More on P4)...()

## District Police, Crime Branch Chiefs Killed in Bomb Attack

MAIMANA - The district police and crime branch chiefs for the Almar district of western Farah province were killed in a roadside bombing on Thursday.

Mohammed Saleh Saleh, the district's administrative head, told Pajhwok Afghan News the blast happened in Bokhari Qala area at 5.30pm.

Syed Aslam Ziarati, the Almar police chief, and crime branch officer Jan Mohammad had been to the area to assess the security situation there.

The carrying the security

officials struck the roadside bomb on its way back from the village. Saleh said one policeman was wounded in the blast.

After the district police headquarters received information about the planting of bombs in the area, the two security officials were dispatched there for investigations.

Meanwhile, Faryab Provincial Council chief Syed Abdul Baqi Hashimi condemned the bombing, calling the deaths of the senior police officers a big loss. (Pajhwok)

## 8 Taliban Eliminated in Dangam Operation: Police

KUNDUZ CITY - Eight Taliban have been killed during an ongoing offensive in the Dangam district of eastern Kunar province, an official said on Friday.

Provincial police chief Brig. Gen. Abdul Haseeb Syedkheli said the offensive featuring Afghan security forces was launched at 5.00am after

civilians left the area. Karkot, Kantosar, Khro Patai and Ayub Banda areas have been cleared of militants by the security forces, who had air support from the Afghan army, he added.

The ANA commandos had surrounded insurgent positions in mountainous areas of the district near the Pakistan

border, Syedkheli said. The bodies of eight fighters have been found on the battlefield. Meanwhile, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid confirmed the fighters were locked in an intense battle with the security personnel in Dangam. He acknowledged the loss of only three militants. (Pajhwok)

## Faryab Collision Claims 3 Lives; Youth Shot Dead by Taliban

MAIMANA - Five people have been killed in separate incidents in western Faryab province, officials said on Thursday.

Three people lost their lives in a road accident, one young man was shot dead by insurgents and another found hanged.

The accident occurred in the morning when a Corolla car collided with a truck on the Jawzjan-Andkhai highway, the

Andkhai district chief said.

Sultan Sanjar told Pajhwok Afghan News three occupants of the car were killed instantly as a result of the head-on collision. The drivers of both vehicles were taken into custody.

Separately, armed militants killed a young man in the Khwaja Sabz Posh district of the province. Sakhi... (More on P4)...()

## Baghlan Road Project Benefits 2,000 Families

PUL-I-KHUMRI - The graveling of a 10-kilometre road in the Beno district of northern Baghlan province has reduced the travel time from two and a half hours to 20 minutes, residents said on Thursday.

The road connects five villages with the district center, with residents saying previously they had been faced with a lot of problems, especially

when they in taking patients to the district hospital.

"We would take the sick to hospital on animals, but with the graveling of the road, vehicles are now available," said Shah Mohammad, a local resident.

In the past, agricultural produce would rot in the absence of transport facilities.

Mohammad Hassan, another... (More on P4)...()

### Outlook Horoscope

#### Aries (Mar. 22-Apr. 20)

You may be thinking about heading to your dream destination with the Moon moving through your 9th House of Faraway Places. But this isn't just about a vacation. You are on a mission as you search for your special place on Earth. Forget about immediate gratification; this journey is important enough that you shouldn't take no for an answer now, even if you can't follow through on your explorations yet.

#### Taurus (Apr. 21-May 20)

A dilemma could surface today around your need for simplicity, even within a complex situation. You are driven to find the most practical solutions to your problems, but it's not as easy as you wish. You may inadvertently contradict your intentions by saying more than necessary. Stirring up someone's wrath isn't the best path to a peaceful day.

#### Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Although you often enjoy bantering with people who are as clever as you, today you may actually try to avoid others because you're not interested in debating your opinion on every subject. Unfortunately, seeking solitude isn't the best way to deal with smart people who might contradict your stated position. Be open to learning something you don't already know.

#### Cancer (June 21-July 20)

You are typically cautious in how you present yourself, but today you could consider drastic action in your haste for self-improvement. Nevertheless, it's better to test an idea by discussing it first, instead of just jumping in and making changes you can't undo. Taking the time to think your plan all the way through ensures that your actions will have the greatest positive effect on your future.

#### Leo (July 21-Aug. 21)

Romantic inclinations can make your life more interesting today, but you may have mixed emotions as to whether or not to act on your feelings.

The Moon is skipping through your 5th House of Love and her alignment with cold Saturn and hot Mars is simultaneously discouraging and encouraging.

#### Virgo (Aug. 22-Sep 22)

You may be able to tell that an emotional power struggle is brewing beneath the surface today, even if others are acting as if everything is copasetic.

However, someone may be less than friendly, although you haven't a clue why. Be patient and don't ask too many questions; it could take a few days for the real issues to manifest.

#### Libra (Sep 23-Oct. 22)

You're quite capable of turning on the charm, even in the most difficult situations. But your friends might notice an emotional chill from you now that the Moon is hooking up with somber Saturn in your 3rd House of Communication.

Fortunately, you can still make your point as long as you don't try to cover up your true intentions with social niceties.

#### Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 22)

Your relationship to your material possessions is undergoing a dramatic shift as you reconsider what you want these days.

You might be willing or even eager to let go of once-prized belongings that have turned into unneeded baggage.

#### Sagittarius (Nov. 23-Dec. 20)

You do not want to waste precious energy on a communication mix-up today. Nor do you want to be misled by anyone because your feelings are strong and your patience is short. You just don't have time for playing games now; you expect everyone to get right to the point. Your emotions may be raw, so give yourself time to process inwardly before revealing any insecurities to those who have not already earned your trust.

#### Capricorn (Dec. 21-Jan 19)

A lighthearted daydream can morph into an obsessive fantasy if you let your guard down.

Oddly enough, the more you try to set your thoughts aside, the more they linger and gain strength. Suppression doesn't work now, so just let your imagination play through even if it raises uncomfortable fears or desires.

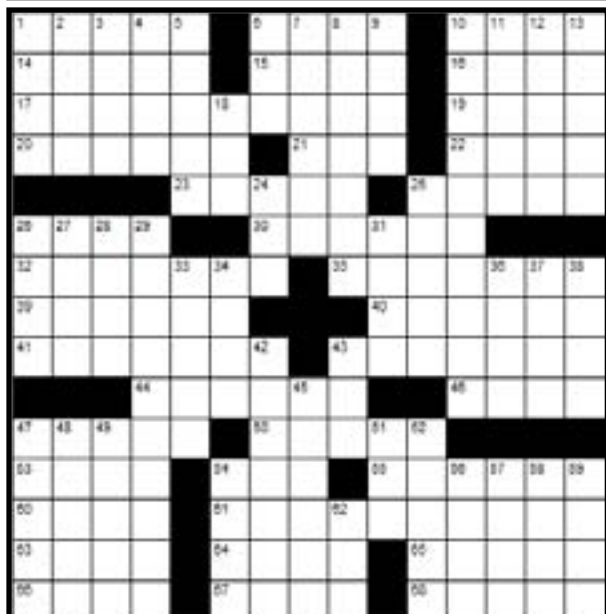
#### Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb. 18)

You may be overly demonstrative about a social or political issue with the Moon camped out in your 11th House of Groups. However, you are less interested in going along for a ride than you are in focusing your efforts on making a difference.

With karmic Saturn so close to the Moon, your contribution will most likely be appreciated by others.

#### Pisces (Feb. 19-Mar. 20)

You might think you're being straightforward today, but your actions don't necessarily support your intentions. At first, your behavior could be awkward as you hold your feelings in. But then, when you realize you're not being authentic, you can overcompensate by revealing too much. Ultimately, you must find a healthy outlet for your conscious expression that, like Goldilocks, is not too hot and not too cold, but just right.



**Across**

1. Perpendicular to the keel, 6. You (archaic), 10. Gentle, 14. Prod, 15. A magician's tool, 16. Bright thought, 17. Hades, 19. 1/100th of a dollar, 20. Heavy and filling food, 21. 24 hours, 22. Be worthy of, 23. Aromatic solvent, 25. Flies alone, 26. Nonvascular plant, 30. Cherubim, 32. Commemoration, 35. Teach, 39. Calm, 40. Orchards, 41. Responses, 43. Evening worship service, 44. Acid neutralizer, 46. Sea eagle, 47. Portion, 50. Loamy deposit, 53. Group of cattle, 54. Band booking, 55. Benni, 60. Dash, 61. Delinquent, 63. Nights before, 64. Pearly-shelled mussel, 65. Shades of blue, 66. Marries, 67. Knife, 68. Binge

**Down**

1. Rectum, 2. A lightly-hit baseball, 3. Cocoyam, 4. Matured, 5. Mix together, 6. Pair, 7. Toughen, 8. Make larger, 9. Countercurrent, 10. Used to see small things, 11. Something to shoot for, 12. Slowly, in music, 13. Days of the month 18. Damp, 24. Derivative laugh, 25. Aspersions, 26. Plateau, 27. Not closed, 28. Knights, 29. Flight attendant, 31. Border, 33. Anoint (archaic), 34. Benefit, 36. Affirm, 37. Small slender gull, 38. Being, 42. Prominent 43. Compete, 45. A roofed arcade, 47. Termagant, 48. Throw with effort, 49. Cambered, 51. South southeast, 52. Religious splinter groups, 54. Wildebeests, 56. Stair, 57. A long way off, 58. Stubborn beast, 59. If not, 62. Toss

**Yesterday's Solution**

access, across, beneath, blast, bother, care, corridor, counter, crush, cubic, doses, effort, entire, geology, giant, increase, inside, lack, level, operate, party, peat, peer, permit, place, sets, shell, shock, short, shout, simple, slur, sort, space, stir, support, target

