

**We Need Security, Not Aid, IDPs Tell Govt.**



ASADABAD - Internally-displaced persons (IDPs) on Saturday asked the government to drive militants from their areas in the Dangan district of eastern Kunar province instead of providing them with aid. Last month, hundreds of heavily-armed insurgents attacked the residents spearheading uprisings against them in various parts of the troubled town near the Pakistani border. Afghan forces stepped in days after the clashes between militants and residents forced hundreds of families to flee to the provincial capital, Asadabad, and other areas. One of the uprising leaders, Haji Muzamil, told Pajhwok Afghan News the insurgents had torched dozens of homes besides inflicting casualties on some people. He said nearly 1,000 families had been displaced and some ... (More on P4)...(2)

**Tajikistan, Afghanistan Discuss Cooperation Issues**

AVESTA - Tajik Deputy Foreign Ministry Nizomiddin Zohidov met here on Friday with Abdulgafur Orzu, the Afghan ambassador to Tajikistan, country's Foreign Ministry said Saturday. At the meeting the sides exchanged views on state and prospects of further expansion of bilateral cooperation between Tajikistan and Afghanistan. Zohidov and Orzu, in particular, discussed bilateral cooperation between the two countries in the fields of ... (More on P4)...(3)

**Ministers-Designate to Seek Vote of Confidence on Tuesday**

KABUL - President Ashraf Ghani, during a meeting with a delegation of the Wolesi Jirga, said on Saturday the ministers-designate would be introduced to the lower house for a vote of confidence on Tuesday. The cabinet nominees were to appear before the assembly today but the house session was postponed. More than three months after being sworn in, the government named the 25-member cabinet last week after missing several deadlines. After the meeting with Ghani, Wolesi Jirga Secretary Irfanullah Irfan told Pajhwok Afghan News the president was not ready to send his cabinet picks



to the lower house. He said the president had apologized for delaying the process till Tuesday. Irfan added Ghani was engaged in preparation of a five years plan and that was why he was not ready for the trust vote process. The president pledged to introduce the ministers-designate on Tuesday to the lower house, he added. On the issue of dual nationality, the president said Wolesi Jirga members reserved the right to decide the fate of the nominees who had the citizenship of more countries than one. Earlier, the Wolesi Jirga decided not to give a trust vote to ministers-designate ... (More on P4)...(1)

**Militants under Any Brand Threat to Humanity: Gen. Murad**

KABUL - Following deep concerns growing over emergence of masked insurgents by the name Islamic State fighters, the Afghan National Army (ANA) Ground Forces Commander stresses all the militant groups are the enemies of Afghanistan. During his visit to northern Balkh, Gen. Murad Ali Murad acknowledged the IS fighters, who have seized some major parts of Iraq and Syria, were trying to establish their centers in Afghanistan. "Masked men active in Zabul and Helmand provinces have raised black flags and are trying to



spread their activities to northern parts but I say that they are the same enemies who are a threat to human beings," Gen. Murad said. These statements were expressed after some local officials in Helmand ... (More on P4)...(4)

**IS to be Defeated Like Taliban: Security Officials**

MAZAR-I-SHARIF - Security officials on Saturday said gunmen claiming allegiance to the Islamic State (IS) group would be defeated like Taliban insurgents in northern Afghanistan. They told this at an impressive ceremony celebrating the nationwide transfer of security responsibilities from foreign troops to Afghan security forces at a military base in the Dehdadi district of northern Balkh province. Senior govern-

**Public Distrust Remains in Peace Process: Poll**

KABUL - A recent poll conducted by more than 10 civil society groups indicate lack of public trust in the peace process after the respondents accused High Peace Council (HPC) members of preferring personal interests in the so far fruitless process. Majority of 6,000 poll respondents from across the country believe the HPC members—most of



them ex-jihadists—find their personal interests in the continued insecurity. According to the poll

trust in government's performance. The poll participants in a joint letter to the unity government leaders have asked for a new and viable strategy for the peace process. "Most of the people are unhappy with the peace council," civil society activist Fahim Hakim said. "They insist on a reshuffle in this council and ... (More on P4)...(6)

**UNAMA Welcomes Civil Society's Call for Sustainable Peace**

KABUL - As part of the civil society-led Afghan People's Dialogue for Peace initiative conducted over the past three years, some 6,000 Afghans from all walks of life shared their grievances and aspirations, identified the main drivers of conflict and proposed solutions to achieve sustainable, inclusive and just peace. As a result, Afghan civil society organizations and the AIHRC produced 34 provincial-level road maps for peace. A national conference held on 15 January in Kabul presented 12 of these local road maps for peace and provided an important chance to develop

advocacy strategies so that provincial and national policy makers act upon their findings. "The national conference was a unique opportunity for civil society to develop their advocacy plans to ensure that the voice of the Afghan people is heard. This advocacy could not be more important or timely," said the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan, Nicholas Haysom. "The United Nations stands ready to support this in any way it can." Participants highlighted the need for strengthening security institutions, promoting ... (More on P4)...(7)



**CJTF Says 24 Drug Smugglers Arrested**

KABUL - Two dozen people, including four women, were detained in connection with drug smuggling last week, the Criminal Justice Task Force (CJTF) said on Saturday. The arrests were made in Kabul, Nimroz, Kunduz and Logar provinces, CJTF said in a statement. Following preliminary investigations, their cases were sent to the attorney general office. More than 47 kilograms of heroin, 1,062 kg of opium, 898 kg of chemicals used in drug manufacture, 450 litres of alcoholic beverages, 25 mobile phone sets and five vehicles also seized from the detainees. (Pajhwok)



**Journalists Widely Condemn Colleague's Murder**

KABUL - Journalists in several provinces on Saturday strongly condemned the killing of their colleague by unknown gunmen in eastern Nangarhar province and called for the murder to be thoroughly investigated. Aqeel Mohammad Waqar, who worked for local radio station "Spin Ghar", was shot dead on Friday night when he was attending a marriage ceremony in the Batikot district. Another person was injured in the incident. Eastern zone Journalists and Writers Association members staged a protest demonstration in Jalalabad, the capital of Nangarhar province, to condemn Waqar's killing. The association issued a statement that said Waqar had been airing programmes highlighting people's problems. It urged the warring parties to stay committed to the freedom of speech and asked the government to bring to justice the killers. The association head, Ustad Lal Pacha Azmoon, in his address to the protest rally said the warring parties should respect journalism. He urged the government to investigate the incident. Meanwhile, the press club in southern city of Kandahar issued a statement, strongly condemning the killing of Waqar. The ... (More on P4)...(8)

**Radio Journalist Shot Dead in Nangarhar**



JALALABAD - A private radio station report was shot dead by militants in the Batikot district of eastern Nangarhar province, bordering Pakistan's tribal region of Khyber, officials said on Saturday. Batikot district chief Haji Ghalib told Pajhwok Afghan News that Spinghar Radio Aqil Mohammad Waqar was attending a wedding party that militants stormed. He was shot to death on Friday night. Another person was wounded in the attack. Spinghar Radio Station is located on the Jalalabad-Torkham highway in Rodat district. Sher Bahadur, an official, said Waqar did not have personal enmity with anyone and the motive behind his murder remained unclear. A professional journalist, Waqar always raised issues of public importance, Sher Bahadur said, asking the government to conduct a thorough investigation into the incident and bring his killers to justice. Lal Pacha Azmoon, head of the journalists and writers association in the east, said threats to journalists had recently increased, affecting reporters' performance. He called on the government to investigate the murder. Eight Afghan journalists lost their lives to security in 2014. (Pajhwok)

**Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan Cooperating in Joint Border Areas**

**Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan are fully cooperating aimed at tightening the security along the joint border areas, a senior Iranian commander said here on Saturday.**

TEHRAN - Talking to IRNA, Deputy Commander of Iran's Border Guards for Operations Brigadier General Jalal Setareh stressed that the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) and the army forces are also stationed along the southeastern border areas to reinforce security in this joint region. In the latest border clashes, two Iranian border police officers were killed and several bor-



der guards were injured in southeastern Iran last October in an armed conflict with a group of bandits at Iran-Pakistan border. Iran has repeatedly criticized its eastern neighbors

for failing to rein in terrorists who cross the borders back into these countries after carrying out their attacks on Iranian soil. General Setareh underscored that Iran also enjoys cordial relations with its southeastern neighbors aimed at tightening security in joint border areas. As per the negotiations held between the Pakistani and Afghan officials, ... (More on P4)...(9)

