

Taliban Suicide Bombings, Gun Battle Claim 7 Lives Including 5 Attackers

KANDAHAR - Seven people including five armed insurgents were killed as Taliban conducted a suicide attack on a base of the Border Police Force in the border town of Spin Boldak, Kandahar province on Monday, police said. "A group of Taliban terrorists attacked a base of the battalion of Border Police Force in Spin Boldak district at around 1:15 p.m. local time today, triggering a gun battle which lasted around 30 minutes during which all the five attacker were killed," provincial police spokesman Zia Durrani told Xinhua. Two personnel of the Border Police Force also lost their lives in the sui-



cide bombings and firefight, the police spokesman said, adding that at least two blasts, presumably suicide bombings rocked the area. Taliban, in an online statement, claimed of responsibility for the deadly attack, claiming that massive suicide bombings of Taliban fighters against a battalion of Border Police Force in Spin Boldak district had left more than 20 security personnel dead, a claim spurned by officials as baseless. Kandahar police spokesman Zia Durani in talks with Xinhua confirmed that only five attackers and two ...*(More on P4)...(17)*

Prisoners on Hunger Strike against Behaviour of Jail Staff

FEROZKOH - Prisoners in the central jail of western Ghor province have gone on hunger strike, warning their protest would continue until their problems were resolved. Through telephonic conversations, the prisoners told Pajhwok Afghan News jail staff misbehaved with inmates after the news about the supply of drugs inside the facility was leaked. Officials had snatched radio and telephone sets from the prisoners, fearing some of the inmates might have talked to human rights campaigners, they complained. Earlier, the head of the rehabilitation department at Ghor Civil Hospital had claimed the illicit substances were to prisoners with the connivance of the authorities. The prisoners supported the claim, saying the officials concerned were involved in the transfer of drugs because they earned enough money from the shady business. Abdul Aziz, an inmate, said the prisoners had been deprived of their due rights. He complained of the poor quality of food and their harsh living conditions. But the prison chief ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

Roadside Bombings Spike Worries Herat People

HERAT CITY - The provincial council on Monday said it was concerned about increasing roadside bombings which mostly took the lives of civilians in western Herat province. During the past three months, on average 10 roadside bombings occurred each month, but this month the number of explosions soared to 27, the head of the provincial council's security committee, Mihdi Hadid, told Pajhwok Afghan News. "Taliban carried out nearly 50 group attacks on police checkpoints and district headquarters in Herat in September, October and November, but they changed the tactics in December," he said, adding

that the militants now used to plant landmines on roads to target security forces. The three months saw about 10 landmine blasts occurring in Herat each month, but 27 such blasts took place in a month this time, he said. Many of the planted mines had been recovered and defused by security personnel, but some detonated, he said. In addition to the blasts, four people were gunned down during the past one month in Herat City, Hadid said, blaming the increasing insecurity on insufficient police personnel stretched thin in different parts of the province. Meanwhile, Herat police chief Brig. Gen. Abdul Majid Rozi said police

and intelligence officials had increased their efforts to arrest the perpetrators of roadside and magnetic bombings. Some terrorist networks hired poor people to plant roadside bombs against 5000 afghanis per bomb, he claimed, saying the militants were trying to spread terror through such attacks. A resident of Shindand district said on the condition of anonymity that Taliban paid money to people for planting roadside bombs in the district. He asked the government to provide jobs to the youth to prevent them from being misused by the insurgents for their nefarious designs. *(Pajhwok)*

Rocket Hits FICA Bank Building in Parwan

CHARIKAR - A rocket hit the building of Foundation for International Community Assistance Bank (FICA)'s branch in central Parwan province, an official said on Monday. Police chief Mohammad Zaman Mamozai told Pajhwok Afghan News the rocket struck the FICA building at around 11:00pm on Sunday night, but caused no casualties. A Pajhwok Afghan News reporter tried to talk to the bank officials about the rocket attack but police did not allow him. FICA, a non-profit microfinance organisation, has been providing loans to the poor over the past seven years in the province. The rocket strike shattered windowpanes of the bank ...*(More on P4)...(19)*

Casualties as Forces, Rebels Clash in Kapisa

MAHMOOD RAQI - Dozens of armed militants stormed a police post from four directions in Tagab district of central Kapisa province early on Monday morning, with both sides suffering casualties, an official said. A public order police battalion commander, Aimal, told Pajhwok Afghan News the attack that took place in Shatour area was repulsed after Afghan National Army troops in the district arrived at the scene. He said one attacker was killed and three others



wounded and two police officers were also wounded during the firefight. Civilians escaped unhurt. Haji Nazar, a local resident, told Pajhwok Afghan News that the clash lasted several hours and both the sides had suffered casualties, but he provided no figures. A Taliban spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, said four policemen had been killed or wounded in the assault. *(Pajhwok)*

100 Families Displaced by Fighting in Aqcha District

SHIBERGHAN - Nearly 100 families were displaced by recent clashes that inflicted casualties on militants and security personnel in the Aqcha district of northern Jawzjan province, officials said on Monday. The Afghan National Army (ANA), National Directorate of Security (NDS), Public Order Police and Afghan National Police (ANP) swooped from three directions on Aqcha two days ago. Police officer Col. Abdul Hafiz Khashi told Pajhwok Afghan News five fighters were killed and as many more injured in the operation. Public uprising commander



Mohammad Yousof, who was not part of the offensive, was killed by a Taliban-fired rocket. But ...*(More on P4)...(21)*

NDS Raids Weapon Depots of Daesh, Seven Terrorists Arrested Separately

KABUL - The National Directorate of Security (NDS) on Monday raided three weapon depots of the Islamic State (IS) in Azra District of central Logar province. A statement released by NDS stated that the depots be-

longed to Mohammad Ali Amarati who was previously a commander of Taliban group but now part of Daesh. Different types of weapons including Kalashnikovs, hundreds of rounds of weapons and

bombs were recovered from the depots. Military equipment, propaganda pamphlets, 1070 kilograms of drugs and two vehicles were also confiscated during the raids. According to the ...*(More on P4)...(20)*

Kabul University Students Slam Charsadda Massacre

KABUL - Kabul University students and civil society members have vehemently condemned the attack on the Bacha Khan University in the

Charsadda district of Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. On January 20, when the Bacha Khan University came under attack from

the Taliban insurgents, 21 people were killed and more than 30 others injured, some seriously. In a show of solidarity ...*(More on P4)...(22)*

Girl Killed, 6 others Wounded in Kandahar Blast

KANDAHAR CITY - A girl was killed and five women and a child were wounded when a mortar shell the children had found and brought home exploded inside their home in Arghandab district of southern Kandahar province, police said on Monday. The incident took place in Naghan area and the victims belonged to the same family, Kandahar police spokesman Zia Durrani told Pajhwok Afghan News. He said children of the family had found the previously undetonated shell while collecting firewood in nearby mountains and brought it home. He said the shell exploded late on Sunday night when the family's women were piling the collected firewood. A girl was killed on the spot and another six persons, including five women and a child, were wounded in the blast. Durrani said police reached the scene soon after the blast and shifted ...*(More on P4)...(23)*

Outlook Horoscope

Aries (Mar. 22-Apr.20)



You might have thought all was sitting pretty within your world, but it becomes apparent today that something was wrong all along. You may not be able to fix it immediately, but that won't stop you from trying now. Keep in mind that your tendency to impulsively respond to a crisis isn't always the most productive solution.

Taurus (Apr.21-May 20)



You can't help but feel frustrated if you haven't made much tangible progress toward your goals this year. Nevertheless, there's no reason to fret because the planets asked you to make some very big plans and then required you to begin very slowly -- so slowly that it may seem as if you've been moving backwards. Actually, no time has been wasted at all.

Gemini (May 21-June 20)



Although you may be weary of all the little setbacks you've already faced this year, you are rather hopeful that your path is finally clearing now. Even if a series of mix-ups and frayed loose ends are taxing your patience, don't even think about giving up today. There were important lessons to learn over these last few weeks, but it might take additional time to figure out what they mean in regards to your future. In the meantime.

Cancer (June 21-July 20)



Your thoughts have been preoccupied with all kinds of relationship issues over these last weeks and it's not always been easy to face the truth. Conflicting emotional needs, stirred by Mercury's recent retrograde through your 7th House of Others, now seem to need immediate resolution. But current tensions may be a result of simple misunderstandings.

Leo (July 21-Aug. 21)



These past few weeks may have thrown you a few curve balls, making it difficult to follow through with your normal daily routine. This period of testing isn't quite over, but today marks a turning point in the energetic flow. Pay attention to what unresolved issues resurface now, for these specific problem areas hold keys to the solutions of even larger questions.

Virgo (Aug. 22-Sep 22)



Although you are in the midst of a highly creative phase, your ideas have been unable to gain traction this year. You might even feel as if you are running around in circles or covering old ground. Since Mercury is your key planet, its three-week retrograde cycle affected you more strongly than most. Thankfully, this déjà vu phase is coming to its conclusion. You've been treading water long enough; it's finally time to move forward.

Libra (Sep 23-Oct. 22)



Maybe Nietzsche was right when he suggested that we live in a cycle of eternal recurrence, revisiting the same issues again and again. However, this feeling that you've been here before is actually an opportunity to break out of your old patterns. Strong foundations are crucial for your future success, and you have a chance to firm up your base as Mercury turns direct in your 4th House of Roots.

Scorpio (Oct.23-Nov.22)



You're beginning to realize that the future is coming at you faster than ever before. The pace of your everyday life may have slowed down to a crawl while Mercury was retrograde in your 3rd House of Immediate Environment. Or, even if events were moving at a more rapid pace, you felt lethargic and couldn't catch up. However, the time for you to make changes is today.

Sagittarius (Nov.23-Dec.20)



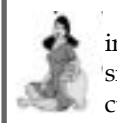
You have an opportunity to experience some healing around issues of self-esteem now that logical Mercury is turning direct in your 2nd House of Values. This personal challenge is about examining your core beliefs, your sense of self and how you built a philosophical foundation that protects you from your own emotional pain. You might put a lot of energy into making people think you're wide open to new experiences when secretly you're not.

Capricorn (Dec.21-Jan19)



You might feel weighted down by your own heavy thoughts, but you don't seem to be able to work your way out of your current predicament. It's as if you're close to understanding something very important, but it keeps vanishing like a dream fading in the morning light. For the past three weeks, cerebral Mercury has trudged backward in your sign requiring you to go over things one more time to make sure.

Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb.18)



You are on the verge of your dreams coming true. You replayed your favorite fantasies over and over again while mental Mercury retrograded through your 12th House of Spirituality during the past three weeks. But imagination opens the way for reality as quicksilver Mercury's direct turn motivates you to get real now. You still have plenty of sweat equity to invest but.

Pisces (Feb.19-Mar.20)



Your friends and associates are simultaneously a great help and a major pain in the neck today. They may remind you of a past hurtful situation without even realizing it. You might choose to push these memories away -- or you can embrace conversations that initiate a deeper healing process. Open your heart and you'll experience interesting changes within the next week or so. As Lao Tzu wrote, "Nature does not hurry."



Across

1. Mouthful, 5. Potato state, 10. Hint, 14. Operatic solo, 15. Relocation company, 16. Steering mechanism for a ship, 17. Observed, 18. A strong liking, 20. Slender double-reed instrument, 22. A small kitchen appliance, 23. Female sib, 24. Tale, 25. Next-to-last, 32. Agitated, 33. Fanatical, 34. Mayday, 37. Gait faster than a walk, 38. Celebrations, 39. Cab, 40. A very long period, 41. Scintillas, 42. Femme fatale, 43. Getting excessively hot, 45. A type of small mammal, 49. Vigor, 50. Scholarly, 53. Stronghold, 57. Drugs, 59. Applications, 60. Annul, 61. Fortuneteller's card, 62. Search, 63. Beams, 64. Stalks, 65. Makes a mistake.

Down

1. Deep cut, 2. Component of urine, 3. Place, 4. Slack suit, 5. Customs duty, 6. Small boat, 7. "Maria", 8. Significance, 9. Chocolate cookie, 10. Thorax, 11. Slowly, in music, 12. Canker sore, 13. Manicurist's board, 19. Levelled, 21. Tab, 25. Head, 26. River of Spain, 27. Midday, 28. Angry, 29. Of the cheekbone, 30. Humble, 31. "the season to be jolly", 34. Indian dress, 35. Beasts of burden, 36. Make melodious sounds, 38. Governor (abbrev.), 39. Chickadee, 41. Classical Greek, 42. Told, 44. Happenings, 45. Take exception to, 46. Turf, 47. Mucky, 48. "Bye", 51. Makes lace, 52. French for "State", 53. Space, 54. End, 55. Ale, 56. Sounds of disapproval, 58. Fury.

Yesterday's Solution



bright, brunt, budget, busk, center, chalk, chance chart, court, cows, cult, defense, diplomat, gaudy, glisten, grief, handy, imply, interact, ironic, match, meet, outfit, quiet, repent, round, saturnine, sear, sets, shabby, shin, short, stick, summit.

