



Abdul Sattar Murad

Corruption Must be Fought from a National Platform

KABUL - The Minister of Economy Abdul Sattar Murad Thursday said Afghanistan must fight corruption from 'a national platform' and at 'a national level campaign'.

"The absence of national will for fighting corruption is one of the big problems so far," he said.

Meanwhile, the deputy head of EU Delegation George Cunningham called on the Afghan government to accelerate its efforts against corruption in public offices - particularly in the country's legal and judicial institutions.

"All Afghans should take personal responsibility for ending the scourge, including refusing to benefit from the corruption of others.



Let us all together work for that end," he stated.

The Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA) meanwhile blamed President

Ashraf Ghani for 'unnecessary meddling' in all government affairs, claiming that Ghani failed to comply with his promise on formation of an anti-corruption commission.

"Government which is owned by people hears and ... (More on P4)...(12)

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Mohib Discusses Trade, Investment with USAID Delegation

KABUL - Afghan Ambassador to US has met a delegation of US Agency for International Development (USAID) and discussed better coordination in the execution of agencies' economic projects in Afghanistan, the envoy wrote on his social media page on Friday. The two sides also discussed post-Brussels conference projects in the war-torn country and talked about better coordination in the implementation of USAID programmes.

Reforms process, facilities for the US investors in Afghanistan and other issues came under the discussion between the two sides.

The Afghan envoy talked about the exploration of markets for Afghan products, investment in demining, promotion of the Afghan handicraft and products and repatriation of refugees during the meeting.

Mohib thanked the USAID for its development projects in Afghanistan over the ... (More on P4)...(15)

Malaysian Cyclists Arrive in Kabul on Route to Saudi Arabia

KABUL - A Muslim Malaysian couple and their two companions have arrived in Afghanistan after cycling more than 10,000km in their epic journey they will end in Saudi Arabia.

The cyclists hope to perform the Haj pilgrimage when they finally reach their destination. The couple, who arrived in Kabul on Friday, said they entered Afghanistan through Hairatan port and visited historical sites in northern Balkh province while there.

They said they set off from Malaysia 10 months ago and are visiting Islamic heritage sites along the way. So far they have cycled through nine countries and visited mosques and other cultural sites along the way. They have however used trains and buses when needed, they said. (Tolonews)

MoD Urges Afghan Women to Join National Army



KABUL - The Ministry of Defense (MoD) on Thursday said it has enforced a special salary scale and other incentives for female recruits to encourage more women to join the ranks of the Afghan National Army (ANA).

MoD spokesman Dawlat Waziri said that more than 400 female recruits are in training at the Defense Min-

istry institutions currently.

"There are 5,000 positions for female recruits in the national army. We have introduced two categories of posts which are only allocated for women. In case a male officer is employed in the post, we immediately terminate his job and introduce a female officer for it," he said.

According to the MoD, over 30 women are in training at the National Military Academy, 62 women at the ANA Officers Academy, 143 women at Malalai Military School and another 109 female recruits are in training in Turkey.

Also, many female recruits and officers are studying at private ... (More on P4)...(13)

Salang Massacre Victims Remembered

KABUL - Former and incumbent government officials and a number of prominent former jihadi leaders on Thursday remembered the 1,200 people who were killed by former USSR forces in 1989 in Salang district in Parwan province.

Participants at the event including CEO Abdullah Abdullah talked on the role of mujahideen in the withdrawal of the then USSR troops and said all Afghans have sacrificed in the way of jihad.

Abdullah said jihad and resistance are the pride of the Afghan people. "Imagine the martyrdom of 1,200 people in a day. Only those people, that place and land feel the heavy toll of this incident," Abdullah said. He added: "Today, the sacrifice which people are giving in the way of defending the National Unity Government and the country is very heavy."

Meanwhile, former vice president Mohammad Yunus Qanooni said a number of people are trying to create divisions among ethnic groups in Afghanistan. ... (More on P4)...(16)

Media Can Play Vital Role in Enhancing Sino-Afghan Relations: Journalist



KABUL - A veteran Afghan journalist describes China and Afghanistan as two neighboring countries with many commonalities whose media can play a vital role in further enhancing the countries' bilateral relations.

"China is our neighbor and it has been our neighbor for a long time and will be in the future as well. I think there is lots in common between the people of Afghanistan and the people of China, which should be reported by media," Lotfullah Najafzada, told Xinhua in an exclusive interview.

Najafzada, who is the Director of TOLONews, a leading television channel in Afghanistan, also noted that there are many similarities between Chinese and Afghan people and each side needs to further understand

about the other. "Such commonalities include our traditions such as being hospitable and welcoming of foreigners. It is important for the media on both sides to report these virtues," the veteran journalist said.

"As for what goes on in Afghanistan, it should be more than just war reporting," said Najafzada, referring to the almost daily release of reports solely on the ongoing war and militancy in Afghanistan by news agencies.

"I think it is important for the Chinese press to report on Afghan life, including how Afghans live, how we interact, how Afghan society has transformed," the journalist emphasized, adding that the peoples of Afghanistan ... (More on P4)...(17)

Khost's Qalandar District Governor Defends Taliban

KHOSHT CITY - Qalandar district governor in Khost has said the Taliban is in control of the district and came out in defense of the insurgent group, saying they were decent people.

He said the group has its own shadow governor in the district along with military officials.

The district governor, Warikhman Gul Bashry, said the district's affairs are being controlled by the Taliban.

However, the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) lashed out at Bashry over his remarks and said an investigation into the matter will be conducted.

"The independent directorate of local governance will act in accordance with the law and will introduce them (governor) to the judicial institutions," said Muneera Yousofzada, a spokesman for the IDLG.

Meanwhile, police forces, stationed in Khost and assigned to maintain security in Qalandar district, have reportedly not gone near the district in the past few years.

"They dare not go to the center of the district," said Abdul Hanan Qaladar, a tribal elder from the area.

Khost provincial council meanwhile confirmed government does not have control of Qalandar district.

"I accept that there is no story of war in Qalandar district and the reason is because government is not active there," said Qadim Afghan, a member of the provincial council.

The spokesman for Khost government however said they do not agree that their governor has made such remarks.

"I don't think that our governor has said that government does not have control over Qalandar district. I think he may mean that currently we cannot control the district in a way we did before," Mubarez Zadran said. Qalandar district is located in the northern parts of the province, almost 40kms from Khost city. (Tolonews)

Halim Fidai

5,750 Acres of Land Grabbed in Logar

PUL-I-ALAM - Nearly 2,000 individuals have encroached upon 5750 acres of land in central Logar province, creating problems for the local administration, the governor said on Thursday.

Mohammad Halim Fidai said this during a press conference he addressed jointly with some lawmakers and provincial council members in Pul-i-Alam, the provincial capital. He said the land had been occupied by a total of 1898 individuals during the past 15 years in Pul-i-Alam, Baraki Barak, Khoshi and Mohammad Agha districts. The illegal grabbers included powerful individuals and common people, Fidai said.

He said there were individuals who had grabbed land measuring just one-eighth acre, but there were others usurping up to 1500 acres.

The governor identified two notorious land grabbers in Logar as Haji Dawlat and Haji Dawran. However, the governor did not share further information about the two individuals.

Pajhwok tried to seek comment from the two persons,



but they were not present in the country.

Fidai said the land-grab culture had created many problems for good governance and reconstruction in Logar.

He said many projects had been delayed as a result of land ownership claims, but he had initiated a serious campaign against land-grabbing and administrative corruption and the campaign would continue.

The governor said so far 1663 acres of land had been retaken and 92 persons arrested in connection with that. "Land-grabbers, corrupt officials and militants are the same, all of them create problems for the government." (Pajhwok)

Peace in Afghanistan Seen as Vital to Regional Stability



PESHAWAR - Peace in Afghanistan is a pre-requisite for stability in the region, Pakistan's National Security Adviser (NSA) Nasser Janjua said.

At a meeting with British Ambassador to Afghanistan Dominic Jermy in Islamabad, the advisor said Pakistan desired cooperative relations with the neighbouring country.

The situation in Afghanistan and regional security came up for discussion, with Janjua saying that Pakistan envisaged cordial relations with the neighbour based on mutual trust.

Pakistan would continue backing global efforts for reconciliation in Afghanistan and stability in the region, the advisor promised. He ... (More on P4)...(14)

International Efforts on to Improve Af-Pak Ties

KABUL - The Afghan government on Thursday said Kabul kept the door open for seeking solution to problems between Afghanistan and Pakistan despite Islamabad's reluctance to combat terrorism.

Mujib Rahman Rahimi, a

spokesman for the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), told a press conference here terrorists still enjoyed safe havens in Pakistan.

He said evidence show terrorist attacks carried out in Afghanistan were organized inside Pakistan.

"Despite Pakistan's inaction, our door for negotiations with the country are open, we can solve problems through talks with Islamabad," he said.

Rahimi said Afghanistan-based foreign diplomats recently increased their trips to Pakistan to help resume negotiations between the two countries about resolving problems.

"Our international friends are also trying to press Pakistan to come to the negotiating table for fundamentally resolving problems," he said.

British ambassador to Kabul, Dominic Jermy recently ... (More on P4)...(18)



UN Launches Mobile Messaging System for Afghan Refugees in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD - The United Nations launched a mobile messaging service for young Afghan refugees in Pakistan, enabling them to make visible their needs and issues in the areas of health, education and protection, water sanitation, social welfare and others, the world body said in a press release on Friday.

In an earlier story, DPA, quoting several officials, had erroneously stated that the main purpose of the programme launched jointly by UNHCR and UNICEF was to report severe tactics allegedly used by Pakistani security agencies to force the migrants to return. One source from within the

UN, that was not authorised to speak to the press, had told DPA the tool would help Afghan refugees to register their complaints with the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in case they or their relatives are arrested, asked to pay bribes or have their premises raided. ... (More on P4)...(19)