

Parliament Approves 9 of 19 Cabinet Nominees

KABUL - The Wolesi Jirga (Lower House of Parliament) approved of only nine out of 19 cabinet nominees on Wednesday, after almost four months of delay. Unlike other Parliament sessions, 243 MPs were present to cast their vote of confidence in favor or against the ministerial nominees and the National Directorate Security (NDS) nominee. Each cabinet nominee must have attained 122 votes in favor to become a member



of the National Unity Government's cabinet. The results of President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah's picks are as follows: Introduced by Ghani: Nominee for the Ministry of Finance Eklil Hakimi was approved: 128 votes in favor, 88 against, 21 blank, and eight invalid. Nominee for the Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs Faiz Mohammad Osmani was approved: 160 votes in favor, 61 against, 17 blank, and ... (More on P4)...(1)

IS Claims Branch in Pakistan, Afghanistan



KABUL - Even as the Islamic State was in retreat from Kobani in northern Syria this week, the militant group claimed growing influence farther afield. Fighters loyal to IS said they carried out a deadly attack Tuesday on a hotel in Libya's capital. The day before, an IS spokesman an ... (More on P4)...(2)

President Ghani Sets Hotline to Receive Complaints from People



KABUL - A new complaints hotline has been set up by the office of President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani which is apparently aimed at bolstering better governance. In an online short statement President Ghani's office said "President Ghani's complaints hotline, please direct ... (More on P4)...(3)

Distribution of New ID Cards Faces Delay of Reasons Unknown



KABUL - Despite all preparations having been taken for the distribution of long-awaited electronic ID cards among the Afghan public, project leaders say none have yet been issued, and the reason for the delay remains unclear. According to the ... (More on P4)...(7)

Iran Has Special Place in Afghan Foreign Policy: Afghanistan

Iran is among the priorities of Afghanistan's foreign policy, Afghan deputy foreign minister said on Tuesday in a meeting with Iranian ambassador to Afghanistan.



KABUL - Hekmat Khalil Karzai, who has recently been appointed to the post, said in his meeting with Ambassador Mohammad-Reza Bahrami that the historical and friendly relations between the two countries in political, economic and security fields are of great significance. He appreciated Iran's contribution to Afghanistan in the past three decades and the Iranian nation's hospitality for the 470,000 Afghan refugees, most of whose visas have been repeatedly extended many times, Karzai said that the bilateral relations with Iran have always been of great importance for Afghanistan. Ambassador Bahrami expressed pleasure with meeting the new ... (More on P4)...(5)

Parliament Approves National Budget

KABUL - The Wolesi Jirga (Lower House of the Parliament) approved the national budget for the next fiscal year with majority of votes on Wednesday simultaneously suspending the budget allocated for the offices of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah Abdullah and economic advisory. The budget for the next Afghan fiscal year—beginning 21 March 2015 to 20 March 2016—received 132 out of 152 votes in favor. Approving the fiscal budget, the



House of Representatives suspended the budget for the CEO and economic advisory offices unless the formations of ... (More on P4)...(4)

Obama 'Literally Insane' for Afghan Withdrawal: Graham

WASHINGTON - "His decision to withdraw all of our troops by 2017 in Afghanistan is literally insane in light of Iraq," Senator Lindsey Graham said Tuesday night on Fox News's "On the Record with Greta Van Susteren." "All of his military com-



manders are saying you should not set a date for withdrawal, you should withdraw based on conditions." Obama has kept around 10,800 troops in Afghanistan this year even after the combat mission has ... (More on P4)...(6)



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