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| Jalalabad Partly Cloudy 17°C 2°C | Ghazni Clear 3°C -8°C | Kandahar Clear 13°C -3°C | Mazar Clear 8°C -1°C | Herat Clear 8°C -3°C | Bamayan Clear -6°C -7°C | Kabul Clear 8°C -1°C |
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Europe Must Not Forcibly Expel Afghan Refugees: CEO

KABUL - Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah Abdullah has renewed his call on European countries not to forcibly expel Afghan refugees. A statement from the CEO's office said Abdullah made the appeal during a meeting with Lowrnt Mishel, EU's refugee and protection affairs head, during a meeting on Wednesday. The CEO and the EU diplomat discussed Afghan refugees' problems in Europe and solutions to them, the statement said. It quoted Mishel as saying that Europe faced problems with the influx



of refugees from other regions and the EU could not continue to deal with the situation. He said the Afghan government would help the EU send back home Afghan refugees who had not been granted asylum by European countries. Mishel added the EU would help the Afghan refugees return back to Afghanistan. However, Abdullah said: "Afghanistan would help the Afghans in voluntarily returning home, but would accept their forced deportation." Abdullah said Afghanistan hoped the EU would consider the Geneva Convention...(More on P4)...(9)

Agriculture Farm for Women Launched in Kandahar

KANDAHAR CITY - The foundation stone of an agricultural farm was laid on Thursday by the women's affairs minister after arriving in the southern province of Kandahar. Gender manager at the Regional Agricultural Development Program-South (RADP-S), Balqi Bari, said at the inauguration ceremony that the farm was being established on a 12.5 acres of land in Aino Mena area of Kandahar City. She said the land had been provided for the First Afghanistan Construction Company (AFCC) and expenses on the farm's establishment would be provided by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Pomegranate trees would be planted on the farm by women who would themselves harvest the fruits, she said. A green house having the capacity...(More on P4)...(10)

175 Girls in Balkh Complete Leadership Program

MAZAR-E-SHARIF - Hafiza Mirzayee, Coordinator of Women's Leadership Development Program said on Thursday that up to 75,000 women are expected to complete special courses related to women leadership development programs in the country within the next five years in at least four zones across the nation. The program which is currently underway in five provinces is funded by the US government, she said. "The program is part of a shared commitment of the government of Afghanistan and the United States aimed to empower up to 75,000 women in the country and boost their capacities," Mirzayee said. 175 girls who completed the course under the Women Leadership Development...(More on P4)...(13)

Pentagon to Publish 200 Photos of Iraq, Afghan Torture



NEW YORK - The Pentagon has pledged to release nearly 200 photographs documenting the abuse of prisoners at US detention centers in Afghanistan and Iraq, the ACLU said on Wednesday. The pledge comes amid an ongoing Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) lawsuit filed in 2004 by the ACLU, which is seeking the release of some 2,000 photographs allegedly showing detainee

mistreatment. In a statement, the ACLU said the Pentagon had promised to post 198 of those images online for public viewing by Friday. The Obama administration in 2009 said it would release the photos, but Congress passed an exemption to FOIA that allows the images to be withheld if the US Defense Secretary believes their release would threaten national security...(More on P4)...(11)

Iran Sending Thousands of Afghans to Fight in Syria: HRW

NEW YORK - Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) has recruited thousands of undocumented Afghans living there to fight in Syria since at least November 2013, Human Rights Watch said Friday. According to some reports, Iranian authorities coerced them. Iran has urged the Afghans to defend Shia sacred sites and offered financial incentives and legal residence in Iran to encourage them to join pro-Syrian government militias, the Human Rights Watch said in a press release. Human Rights Watch in late 2015 interviewed more than two dozen Afghans who had lived in Iran about recruitment by Iranian officials of Afghans to fight in Syria. One 17-year-old said he had been forced to fight without being given the opportunity to refuse. Others said they had volunteered to fight in Syria in...(More on P4)...(12)

Sweden to Deport 80,000 Refugees

STOCKHOLM - Sweden is considering deporting as many as 80,000 asylum seekers, including Afghans. The Swedish interior minister said that nearly 80,000 asylum seekers, whose applications for refuge have been rejected will be deported. Hundreds of thousands of Afghan, Syrian and Iraqi refugees left their countries last year to start a new life in Europe. However, it seems that now they are faced with an uncertain future. Naser, one Afghan asylum seeker said that he wants to go to Germany, because his cousin and other relatives are there. "Yeah, yeah, it's difficult, too difficult, because it's too dangerous, but what can we do for our children? We have to take the risk in life," said Naser, another Afghan immigrant. Gholam Farooq Majroh, a lawmaker from Herat province, said the government should work on trust building and should create jobs. The Minister of Refugees and Repatriation Affairs, Sayed Husain Alemi Balkhi, said that they have discussed the issue with embassies of European countries in Afghanistan to allow Afghan refugees to stay in Europe, so that they will pave the ground for their return. (Tolonews)

Obama Vows to Counter Islamic State in Libya

WASHINGTON - President Barack Obama said the United States would tackle the Islamic State group beyond Iraq and Syria if necessary, as he signaled an increased focus on Libya. Amid fears that a power vacuum in the north African nation has provided fertile ground for Islamic State to grow, Obama convened his National Security Council to discuss the issue. "The President emphasized that the United States will continue to counter ISIL terrorist plotters in any country where it is necessary," the White House said following the meeting. "The President directed his national security team to continue efforts to strengthen governance and support on-



going counterterrorism efforts in Libya and other countries where ISIL has sought to establish a presence." Libya has been in political turmoil and rocked by violence since the ouster of longtime dictator Moamer Kadhafi in a 2011 revolution. It now has two governments and parliaments, with the

recognized authorities based in the eastern city of Tobruk and a militia-backed authority in Tripoli. World powers have urged Libya's warring factions to endorse the unity government formed last week under a UN-brokered deal aimed at ending the political paralysis that has fueled the rise of IS jihadists. (AFP)

Russia, Turkmenistan Discuss Situation in Caspian Region And Afghanistan

ASHGABAT - The situation in the Caspian region and Afghanistan has been discussed during a meeting between Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov in Ashgabat, the Russian foreign

ministry said Jan. 28. "The situation in Central Asia in terms of the risks in the territory of Afghanistan was discussed," Lavrov said. "We have a common position on the need for a political settlement of Afghanistan's problems."

Lavrov said that the sides also confirmed the close cooperation in the UN and other international organizations. The sides stressed the significant progress on the trade-economic cooperation in terms of the achieved results and prospects. (TNT)

Pakistan, Afghanistan Should Work Together to Eradicate Polio: TAG

ISLAMABAD - The chairperson of Technical Advisory Group (TAG), an organization that advises Pakistan on polio eradication programmes, has suggested that Pakistan and Afghanistan should come together in their efforts towards eradicating polio from both countries. At a meeting to review the Pakistani governments' progress over the last six months, Chairman TAG Dr Jean Marc Olive said: "Pakistan will not make it

on its own so there needs to be a stronger coordination with Afghanistan. It is, however, good to see a better management of mass vaccination campaigns." Mr Olive added that the hardest part would be maintaining the gains and that there was a need for further improving operations in areas most affected by polio. "I want to acknowledge the commitment to the programme...(More on P4)...(16)

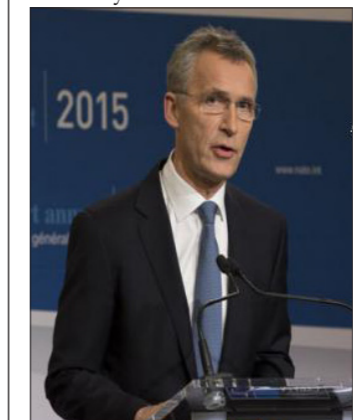
Tajikistan Starts to Export Cement to Afghanistan

DUSHANBE - Tajikistan has started to export cement to Afghanistan. In a report released at a news conference in Dushanbe, Tajik Minister of Industry and New Technologies Shavkat Bobozoda revealed on Thursday that 500 tons of Tajik cement were supplied to Afghanistan last year. "In 215, Tajikistan produced

1.4 million tons of cement," the minister said. According to him, Huaxin Gayur Cement Co., Ltd in Yovon district of Khatlon province accounted for 77 percent of cement produced in the country last year, Tajikcement (Dushanbe cement plant) accounted for 16 percent and...(More on P4)...(17)

NATO Looking at Funding Afghan Forces Until 2020

KABUL - NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg on Thursday said their mission in



Afghanistan was aimed at denying safe haven to international terrorists. Launching his annual report for 2015 in Brussels, the NATO chief said they would continue to train, advise and assist the Afghan army and police. He said the Afghan forces faced significant challenges, but they were holding their ground. "We decided, in 2015, to maintain our current level of troops this year and we are looking at how we can contribute to the funding of the Afghan security forces until

2020." He said every NATO ally was part of the global coalition to counter Daesh or Islamic State and the coalition's high degree of interoperability was a key asset. To address the root causes of instability, he said, NATO was working even closer with partners in the region. "We are building the defence capacity of Jordan. We will soon start training Iraqi officers and we are working with Tunisia on special operations forces and intelligence to help them be stronger in defending themselves." Stoltenberg said in the year 2015, they saw brutal terrorist attacks in their cities and the biggest refugee crisis in Europe since World War Two. "We also saw it in Russia's continued actions in Ukraine and its recent military build-up in Syria and the Eastern Mediterranean. But last year also showed how NATO is responding." He said they implemented the greatest strengthening of their collective defence since the end of the...(More on P4)...(18)

Cooperation Fund for Free Speech Being Created

KABUL - President Ashraf Ghani said they were working to create a cooperation fund for the freedom of speech and trying their best to arrest and punish the perpetrators of a suicide attack on Tolo TV staff members. The president said during a meeting on Thursday evening with families of the victims of MOBY group (Tolo TV, Tolo News and Kaboora Production) at the Presidential Palace, a statement from the palace said. Seven Tolo TV staffers were killed and another 25 wound-

ed in the suicide attack that struck a minibus carrying the media persons on Jan 20 in the heart of Kabul. Family members of the victims during the meeting with President Ghani thanked the Afghan security forces for their sacrifices and urged them to arrest the perpetrators. A girl, who lost her brother Syed Mohammad Jawad to the attack, said her brother wanted terrorist groups to be dealt with strictly and the Afghan government talked to the insurgents from a strong position with people's...(More on P4)...(14)

Militants Enjoy Sanctuaries in Pakistan: Gen. Nicholson

WASHINGTON - The Taliban and the Haqqani network continued to enjoy sanctuaries inside Pakistan, posing a major challenge to both American and Afghan forces inside Afghanistan, a top American general told lawmakers on Thursday. "This (safe havens) has been one of the principal challenges. It's a sanctuary that our enemies, in particular the Haqqani network, have enjoyed inside Pakistan," Gen John "Mick" Nicholson told members of the Senate Armed Services Committee during his confirmation hearing. A day earlier US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter nominated Gen Nicholson to replace Gen John Camp-



bell as the Commander of US and NATO forces in Afghanistan. "I view it (terrorist safe havens inside Pakistan) as a serious problem," Nicholson said when Senator John McCain, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, asked...(More on P4)...(15)