

## Quote of the Day

The foundation of every state is the education of its youth. Diogenes Laertius

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# 80 Dead, 231 Injured As Blasts Rip Through Kabul Rally

KABUL - Thousands of protesters in Kabul on Saturday demanded the route of TUTA be changed to pass through central Bamyán province.

The protesters, marching on Dashti-e-Barch in the thirteen police district, chanted "we want justice, be united for your freedom, TUTAP is our right and no to discrimination".

One of the protesters, Mohammad Daud, said their demand was changing the TUTAP project route to Bamyán adding that "This pro-



test is not held by a particular tribe; our aim is justice to the province."

The rally was peaceful when explosions took place in the middle of the rally around 2:30 local time. Mohammad Ismael Kawasi, head of the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) media office, confirmed 64 dead and 234 hurt in the explosions.

Security forces cordoned off the site of explosion and no one was allowed to get closed. Ghani ... (More on P4)...(1)

## Kabul Rally Attack Widely Condemned

KABUL - World leaders expressed their sympathy and condolences on Sunday to the people of Afghanistan following the deadly bombing in Kabul Saturday which claimed the lives of at least 80 people.

Russian and U.S officials said they stand alongside the people of Afghanistan at this time of sorrow and are determined to help the country in its fight against terrorism.

Russian President Vladimir Putin sent a message to President Ashraf Ghani after the Kabul suicide attack on Saturday and said that Russia is

ready to fight terror with Afghanistan.

"The head of the Russian state strongly condemned this cynical crime committed against peaceful citizens and reiterated readiness to continue the most active cooperation with the authorities and people of Afghanistan in fighting all forms of terrorism," Russian media quoted a Kremlin statement as saying.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon has also condemned the attack. He said that the attack targeted those who protested for ... (More on P4)...(2)

## Mangal Bagh Dies in U.S. Drone Attack: Report

ISLAMABAD - A Pakistani militant leader, Mangal Bagh, has been killed in a U.S. drone strike in eastern Afghanistan, section of the Pakistani media reported on Sunday.

Bagh, who heads "Lashkar-e-Islam" group in Pakistan's Khyber tribal region, was wanted for his involvement in attacks on the security forces and tribal elders.

The government had also announced 20 million rupees bounty on the head of the militant leader. Bagh had fled to neighboring Afghanistan and had been operating from there, according to security officials.

Pakistan leading private Geo television reported that a U.S. drone targeted Mangal Bagh in Nagarhar's Khoi Khula area, bordering Pakistan.

The TV quoted unnamed intelligence and Taliban sources as confirming the drone strike on July 22 that eliminated the militant leader. Bagh's Lashkar-e-Islami has not confirmed the incident.

Reports suggest that the United States has stepped up drone strikes in Afghanistan after President Barack Obama approved in June aerial strikes against the Taliban. (Xinhua)

## Poppy Source of Growing Insecurity in Badakhshan: Affendi

FAIZABAD CITY - The counter-narcotics director for Badakhshan says poppy cultivation and drug trafficking was the only sources of Taliban insurgency and insecurity in the province.

Mohammad Quaid Affendi recalled the illicit crop was cultivated on 1,246 hectares of land in Argo, Kisham, Tashkan, Khash and Juram districts last year. But this year, 4,050 hectares of land has been sown with poppies.

Speaking at a gathering, attended by journalists, religious scholars, farmers and common citizens, he highlighted the harmful effects of poppy. He acknowledged a possible increase in poppy cultivation this year.

"Poppy cultivation and opium processing in insecure areas of the remote province, where police could not reach, involves mafia members," alleged the counter-narcotics director.

Despite eradication efforts and an investment of millions of dollars, he lamented, the government could not succeed in preventing poppy cultivation. It was insecurity ... (More on P4)...(4)

## Ghani Underlines Af-Pak Efforts for Regional Peace & Stability

PESHAWAR - President Ashraf Ghani has once again underlined the need for joint efforts by Afghanistan and Pakistan for regional peace and stability.

Afghanistan was pursuing a policy of good neighbourly relations with Pakistan, Ghani said in an interview with a Pakistan television channel on Saturday night. While calling for unity against terrorism, Ghani

praised Afghan security forces for their bravery in combating the menace in partnership with their international allies.

He thanked Pakistan for hosting millions of Afghan refugees for decades, saying his government was keen on managing their return to their homeland.

Asked why his administration broke the news of Mullah Omar's death when



peace talks were making headway, the president replied the Taliban had disclosed the development. (Pajhwok)

## 6,100 Foreign Terrorist Active in Afghanistan: Saikal

KABUL - Pakistan-based terror groups are attacking Indian interests and goals in Afghanistan, the Afghan ambassador to the United Nations has alleged, Mahmoud Saikal blamed Lashkar-i-Taiba (LeT), Taliban, Jaish-i-Mohammad (JeM) and al-Qaeda for seeking sanctuaries and safe havens in tribal areas on both sides of the border.

"In Afghanistan, regional terrorist groups have cooperated with the Taliban based on their common goals and mutual interests," the diplomat was quoted as saying by the Press Trust of India.

Addressing an open briefing of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, Saikal said:



"These groups pose a strategic threat to the security and stability of Afghanistan." The pullout of foreign troops, creating safe havens in northern and northeastern provinces and using them as a platform for toppling secular governments in Central Asia

were among the objectives of the groups, he added. Up to 6,100 foreign fighters were active in Afghanistan, based mainly in eastern and northeastern provinces, the envoy acknowledged, saying 2,000 of them were loyal to the ISIS (Daesh). (Pajhwok)

## Atmar Heads to Russia for Talks on Closer Defence Ties

KABUL - National Security Advisor Mohammad Hanif Atmar heads to Moscow for talks with Russian authorities on equipping the nascent Afghan Air Force (AAF), his office announced on Sunday.

During Atmar's trip, the two sides will discuss the delivery of Mi-17 and Mi-35 helicopters to Afghan security forces, the advisor's office tweeted. AAF equipment repair in Afghanistan and maintenance of the existing Russian weapons used by Afghan forces would also come up for discussion. Expansion of security cooperation will also figure at the meetings.

Following Saturday's deadly terror attack in Kabul, President Vladimir Putin signaled



his willingness to cooperate with Afghanistan in jointly combating the scourge of terror. (Pajhwok)

## Ghani Participates in Kabul Attack Victims' Funeral

KABUL - President Ashraf Ghani on Sunday participated the funeral and Quran recitation ceremonies held for the victims of suicide attacks on protest demonstration in the capital Kabul. A day earlier, 80 people were killed and 231 others injured in two suicide attacks on a protest demonstration in Deh Mazang area of the city. The Islamic State (IS) or Daesh militant group claimed responsibility for the assault.

According to a statement from the presidential palace received by Pajhwok Afghan News, a special funeral ceremony was held in the palace's mosque on Sunday. The source said the president and other participants of the ceremony have prayed for the victims and their families and demanded urgent health recovery for the injured people. Additional participants of the ceremony included the first vice-president, Sarwar Danish, deputy executive chiefs, Ulema Grand Council head, members ... (More on P4)...(5)

## Bamyán PC Offices Closed to Protest Kabul Rally Attack

BAMYÁN CITY - The provincial council (PC) members on Sunday locked their office doors in central Bamyán province in protest against yesterday's deadly attack on the Hazara minority in central capital Kabul.

The twin suicide blasts ripped through crowds of people who had gathered in Kabul to protest against a change in a multimillion dollar power line from Turkmenistan.

The Saturday's rally demanded the government pass the 500kv line through Bamyán rather than Salang pass.

At least 80 people were killed and 231 others wounded in the twin explosions in Kabul on Saturday, the Ministry of



Public Health (MoPH) said. Abdul Danishyar, a civil society activist in Bamyán, told Pajhwok Afghan News they closed the gate of the Bamyán airport soon after the explosions took place in the rally.

He, however, said the airport

gate was reopened in order flights could not be interrupted and also residents mostly avoided journey by roads due to insecurity.

Danishyar said civil society activists and the PC members on Sunday agreed to close the ... (More on P4)...(6)

## Trapped Residents of Qala-I-Zal District Face Food Shortage

KUNDUZ CITY - Local officials and civil society activists on Sunday said the Qala-i-Zal district of northern Kunduz province has been under Taliban's siege for the past few days and its inhabitants are faced with food shortages and other problems.

Safiullah Amiri, a Provincial Council (PC) member, told Pajhwok Afghan News last week the Taliban had captured the district and security forces retreated from their posts to the Abdan desert and the district bazaar. "No operation for the recapture of the district has been launched so far while residents are facing multiple problems, including a shortage of necessary food items," he said.

Some residents warned more parts of the province were being threatened by the insurgents. Additional territory could be grabbed by the militants if prompt action was not taken, they said. Enayatullah Khaleq, a civil ... (More on P4)...(7)



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