

Quote of the Day

The highest proof of virtue is to possess boundless power without abusing it.
Lord Macaulay

Senate to Decide Electoral Reform Decree's Fate on Tuesday

KABUL - The government has launched a campaign to get approved the second legislative decree on electoral reform from the Senate or Meshrano Jirga, but at the same time incumbent commissioners on the two electoral bodies are demanding the upper house reject the decree. Reforming the electoral regime is a key part of the unity government deal reached between then presidential candidates Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah after the 2014 disputed election. Therefore, the president issued two legislative decrees but both were rejected by the lower house of parliament or Wolesi Jirga. The second decree was rejected on June 13. The Meshrano Jirga has also rejected the first presidential decree on electoral reform and the upper house is all set to decide the fate of the second decree on Tuesday. Hasibullah Kalimzai, deputy Senate chairman told today's session that over the past one week, the government had started a campaign for approval of the second reform decree, but election commissioners were also making efforts at rejecting the decree by the upper house. He said both sides (the government and commissioners) along with administrative boards and individually had met all senators. ...*(More on P4)...(1)*



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Korea to Host Afghanistan's Hidden Treasures

KABUL - Afghan government and South Korea signed agreement on holding of Afghanistan's hidden treasures exhibition, BNA reported, adding that based on the agreement reached by the directors of the museums of the two country, the Korean side would host the exhibition. The Bactrian Treasures Exhibition from Afghanistan which will include 231 pieces would be organized from July 04, 2016 to 4th September 2016 in national museum of Korea and then from September 26, 2016 to November 27, in Cheongju ...*(More on P4)...(2)*

Government Slammed for not Protecting Investors

KABUL - Investors have slammed the Afghan government for its lack of adequate action against the unprecedented rise of kidnappings and hostage-taking incidents in Kabul city and on the nation's highways. This follows only hours after a group of armed men on Sunday attempted to kidnap an investor in the city center. Reacting to the recent spate of security threats and the rise in the number of attempts to abduct investors, the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries criticized the government for not ...*(More on P4)...(4)*

Khost Custom Officials Accused of Blatant Corruption



KHOST CITY - The provincial council head and other quarters in southeastern Khost province have accused a number of custom officials of involvement in rampant corruption.

In an exclusive interview with Pajhwok Afghan News, the provincial council head, Abdul Wali Wahidzai, alleged the employment of under-qualified individuals in the custom department had paved the ground for corruption. He claimed graft had reached its peak in the department since Sangar Niaza's appointment as director. For example, Wahidzai said: "Some days earlier, security forces seized a truck full of ammonium nitrite in Musakhel district.

"But custom officials released the vehicle on the pretext that it was carrying feed for birds," he revealed, accusing custom officers of receiving bribes from traders and truck drivers on one pretext or another.

"The director pockets 100,000 afghanis from each custom post every month. We have documents in support of this claim," the public representative claimed.

Haji Jamal Tanai, head of the Khost Urban Union, told Pajhwok fundamental reforms were needed in the custom department to resolve the current problems.

"The custom duty should be assessed on a daily basis, but some people here don't do so and thus facilitate corruption," he believed.

Pajhwok tried to get comments from Custom Director Sangar Niaza on the issue, but he referred this scribe to the Ministry of Finance.

Meanwhile, the governor's spokesman, Mubarez Zadran, confirmed corruption in the department and said the government was committed to eradicating the scourge from all offices.

"Unfortunately, I confirm corruption in the custom department and capital flight from the province, but it does not mean the local government is not taking action to remedy the situation," he observed.

Also, Ministry of Finance spokesman ...*(More on P4)...(7)*

Torture Continues in Jails, Despite World Day in Support of Victims

KABUL - While the 26th June is Marked as International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, Afghanistan's Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) says prisoners were still being tortured in the country's jails. Earlier the United Nations said that progress had been made to curb torture in Afghan jails, but claimed were still are cases of cruelty against prisoners.

Murtaza Nekzad is a victim. He was in jail for five years during the civil war and was subjected to constant torture. "I had a stroke last year because of the impact of psychological issues stemming from difficulties of the time. I have got a lot of torture injuries to my head," victim Murtaza Nekzad said. "Regrettably the government of Afghanistan has not made significant progress in ending torture. Perpetrators are not brought to justice." AIHRC spokesman Rafiullah Bedar said. Torture has also left a major impact on his psychological health. "There was severe torture during the era of the Taliban regime as well as at the time of the Mujahedeen government," ...*(More on P4)...(3)*

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Afghanistan Still World's Largest Opium Producer by Far: Report

KABUL - Afghanistan is by a long way still the world's largest opium producer, accounting for some 70 percent (3,300 tons) of global opium production, according to the United Nations World Drug Report of 2016. Myanmar is the second largest producer of the drug at 14 per cent (650 tons) of global production.

According to the UN report, the total value of the illicit opiate economy in Afghanistan was \$2.8 billion USD in 2014 - equivalent to 13 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

The Afghan Ministry of Counter Narcotics (MoCN) said the income from illegal drugs business in the country is at \$70 billion USD annually, but down by nearly



\$9 billion. "A limited budget and not enough facilities are among the main problems in our campaigns against the illicit production of drugs. Our budget is insufficient. It is claimed the United States has so far spend \$8.5 billion USD to combat the drugs trade. We want

an explanation about the process through which the money was spend to fight drugs trade," said MoCN spokesman Mohammad Hanif Danishyar. He added: "We are not satisfied with the result of the campaign and neither are the American people." ...*(More on P4)...(5)*

India Should Supply Tanks and Artillery to Afghan Army: Indian War Veteran



DEHLI - An Indian war veteran and strategic analyst has said India should supply heavy military equipment to the Afghan armed forces, including tanks and field artillery.

In an Op-Ed published in New Indian Express newspaper, Maj. Gen. (Retd) G D Bakhshi, said "Rapidly do capacity building of the Afghan army, so that it has a military edge over the Taliban and can defend its territory against Pakistan's incursions." The Retired Indian General further added that India should

"Complete the Chabahar-Zaranj-Delaram road and beltway via Iran. Till then, supply tanks, artillery guns, attack helicopters and trainer jets via Russia."

"Once the Chabahar beltway opens up, it can supply large numbers of T-54/T-55 tanks and 105 mm field guns lying in our depot stocks and salvage yards," Gen. Bakhshi added.

The Op-Ed by Gen. Bakhshi was published days after a bloody ...*(More on P4)...(6)*

Government Slammed for not Protecting Investors

LASHKARGAH - Mashooq served in the ranks of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and assigned to combat duty in the southern Helmand province five months ago where he and his fellow soldiers were helping to secure the nation against insurgents.

Two weeks ago Mashooq lost his life doing his duty. He has left five children and a widow behind, his oldest son is also a heart patient.

Mashooq's body was handed over to his family in Kabul's Sardar Mohammad Dawoud Khan Hospital and buried in his native town in Kapisa province.

"I am proud of the sacrifice of my brother made for the country," said Mashooq's brother Maqbool.

Mashooq was the only breadwinner of his family. Mashooq's father and two other brothers were in prison for their alleged involvement in a murder. "I heard about Mashooq's martyrdom an hour ago, I attended his burial ceremony on bail," Mashooq's father said.

"The government should help Mashooq's family," a relative of the deceased soldier said.

"Mashooq has left five children and a widow behind, his younger child is ...*(More on P4)...(10)*

State Accused of Neglecting Counter-Narcotics Duties

KABUL - A number of drug addicts in a drug rehabilitation center at Camp Phoenix on Sunday accused the government of neglecting its duties by keeping silent about the increase of poppy cultivation, drugs production and trafficking in the country.

They said the main reason behind drug addiction is the rise in poppy cultivation and opium production in the country, adding that Afghanistan will face a big crisis if this was

not stopped. "I want to regain the respect and dignity I had among the people," said Mujtaba Haidari, a patient at the rehab center, who had worked as an interpreter with foreigners. Another Afghan citizen, Mohammad Omar Mirzaee, who was addicted to drugs after migrating to Iran, said he has a graduate in Dari literature, but due to his addiction to drugs, he had now been ostracized from society. "I was a drug addict when I

was 18 years old. I could never quit my addiction. This is the first time that I have come here to the facility to recover," he said. Ahmad Zahir Sultani, head of the rehab center said "addicts that do recover and quit addiction are introduced to Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. The ministry then provides them with job opportunity and skills." Sunday June 26 is the International Day Against Drug ...*(More on P4)...(8)*

Child-Mother Mortality Rate Down in Uruzgan

TIRINKOT - Professional and skilled midwives and nurses have been appointed at 96 percent of health facilities in central Uruzgan province during the past one and a half decades, significantly reducing the child-mother mortality rate.

Years ago, Uruzgan had been lacking lady doctors, skilled midwives and nurses and people had to take their female patients

to neighbouring Kandahar province.

During the past 13 years, six batches of midwives and nurses had graduated from various nursing and midwifery training programmes and as a result, the mother-child mortality rate has drastically decreased.

Uruzgan public health director Dr. Khan Agha Miakhel said 150 nurses ...*(More on P4)...(9)*