

Quote of the Day

Next in importance to freedom and justice is popular education, without which neither freedom nor justice can be permanently maintained.

Jeph Jacques

Constitution

The state is obliged to provide free means of preventive health care and medical treatment, and proper health facilities to all citizens of Afghanistan in accordance with the law.

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Supreme Audit Office

Budget Spending Needs Streamlined System

KABUL -The Supreme Audit Office (SAO) on Saturday urged Ministry of Finance to take budget reports seriously and asked parliament to develop a system of reward and punishment for officials based on how judiciously they spent the budget. A seven-day training programme to evaluate problems and find solution to budget report was launched in Kabul with the presence of Second Vice-President Sarwar Danish and representatives of finance ministry and parliament. Danish said budget report was a ma-



jeor document in terms of fighting corruption and asked the SAO to take serious anti-graft steps in all government organizations. He also assured government's complete backing for the department's concerns. SAO head Mohammad Sharif said the training programme would also evaluate the challenges of budget reports. He added financial authorities of ministries' would be trained on how to prepare the report professionally. Sharifi ...*(More on P4)...(1)*

Natural Disaster Forces Ghani to Postpone Iran Visit



KABUL - President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani on Saturday said that latest situation at home and tragic deaths caused by avalanches amid incessant snowfall forced him to postpone his Iran visit. During his television address to the nation, Ghani said as many as 287 Afghans have been killed, 143 wounded and

1,248 homes destroyed in the natural disasters across the country. "I prefer to stay at home with my people at this tragic moment," the president said. He thanked his Iranian counterpart for extending him an invitation. He would visit the neighboring country soon.*(Pajhwok)*

Obama to Host Ghani and Abdullah at WH



WASHINGTON - The U.S. President Barack Obama will host both the leaders of National Unity Government (NUG), President Ashraf Ghani and CEO Abdullah Abdullah, along with some other members of the Afghan government for meetings next month in the White House (WH), according to a statement by U.S. press secretary Josh Earnest. The Afghan leaders will meet Obama on March 24th for the first time in Washington since the establishment of NUG, which came into being after the longest electoral process in Afghanistan's history. "The two presidents will discuss a range of issues including security, economic development, and U.S. support to the Afghan-led reconciliation process," the statement said on Friday. Ghani, in the following day, would address a joint session ...*(More on P4)...(3)*

50% of Afghans do not Have Access to Sufficient Healthcare



KABUL - According to the Ministry of Public Health, Afghans spend as much as 300 million dollars on healthcare abroad on an annual basis. In an exclusive interview to Azadi radio, Ferozuddin Feroz, the Public Health Minister said that despite the relative progress that has happened in the public health sector, as much as 50% of the Afghan public still do not have access to sufficient healthcare. The situation is especially dire in remote areas of the country, adding that they have specific plans to help those in these areas. He was also quick to point out that "there are difficult days ahead of us". While the biggest accomplishment of the Public Health ...*(More on P4)...(5)*

13 Insurgents Killed in Military Operations

KABUL - At least 13 Taliban insurgents were killed during a nationwide operation led by the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) in the past 24 hours, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) said in a statement on Saturday. One injured and 12 others were arrested in these operations, the statement said, adding that the operations were conducted in Kandahar, Zabul, Uruzgan, Helmand, Parwan, Ghazni and Herat provinces. "During the same 24 hour period, Afghan National Police discovered and defused three different types of ...*(More on P4)...(6)*

Salang Road Reopen for Traffic

KABUL - The operation to clear the Salang Highway from snow is ended and the strategic route is now reopened to traffic on Saturday, an official said. The Salang Highway which connects Kabul with nine northern provinces, has been closed for traffic after avalanches closed the road following days of heavy snowfall. Lt. Gen. Rajab Ali, the Salang Highway maintenance head, told Pajhwok Afghan News after hectic efforts, the road has been reopened and let traffic move from north to south. Based on schedule, cargo vehicles could use the route on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from north to south and on Saturdays, Mondays and Wednesdays from south to north, Ali said. He asked drivers to abide by traffic rules and drive carefully in order to avoid any mishap. The Salang highway is notorious for tragedies in winter due to heavy snowfalls and cold weather.*(Pajhwok)*



Sayyaf Praises Taliban Peace Talks, Urges Pakistan's Honesty

KABUL - Abdul Rab Rassoul Sayyaf, leader of Dawat-e-Islami party and former Jihadist has welcomed the peace initiatives of the National Unity Government (NUG) with the Taliban, but urged on Pakistan's honesty in the dialogues. In an exclusive interview with TOLONews, Sayyaf expressed that he would support any efforts which would result in the peace and stability of the country. He, however, stressed the need for Pakistan's honesty in the peace process after the country promised the Afghan leaders to bring the Taliban leaders to the



negotiation table. "As Pakistan clearly said that it will push the Taliban to the negotiation table, they need to be honest in it in respect to considering the threats of war in its country and the region," Sayyaf said. He warned that if the process cut or restricted Afghanistan's relations with any other country, such a process would not be acceptable. The former Jihadi leader emphasized ...*(More on P4)...(2)*

Govt. Fails to Prosecute Kabul Bank's Felons

KABUL -The findings by the Integrity Watch indicated that it had been more than four months since the Kabul Bank case was reopened by the new government but it failed in the prosecution of Kabul Bank's felons and the recovery of embezzled asset. In a statement, the Integrity Watch said the government has recovered \$228 out of \$977 million from Kabul Bank's debtors, out of which \$179.1 million is in cash and the remaining \$48.9 million worth assets that has been sold to the government.



But the amount has not been paid by the relevant institutions to the government treasury yet. Sayed Ikram Afzali, Executive Director of Integrity Watch Afghanistan said: "Kabul Bank corruption has badly affected the state, ...*(More on P4)...(4)*

Zabul Mediators Optimistic About Release of Hazara Passengers



QALAT - Carrying out dialogues and efforts for the last three days, the 25-member mediation team of southern Zabul elders has expressed optimism about the release of 30 passengers abducted last week by unknown masked men on Kabul-Kandahar highway. The elders noted on Saturday that they have found so far during their three-day efforts that the passengers were abducted by the armed robbers. However, the acting governor of Zabul Mohammad Ashraf Nasiri had recently blamed the abduction on local Taliban, the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Jhangvi militant outfit and the Chechens. At least 30 passengers belonging to Hazara ethnic minority were abducted last week from Shah Joy district of Zabul by armed masked men. According to the drivers and eyewitnesses, the abductors drove the passengers away to Khak Afghan district after identifying them to be Hazara men. Since the incident, some local officials have attributed the abduction to Taliban while some others to Daesh group; however none of these ...*(More on P4)...(7)*

Call to Rescue Marooned Families in Avalanche-Hit Areas

KABUL - Civil society organizations on Saturday expressed concerns over inordinate delay of dispatching assistance to the people



trapped in the avalanche-hit area in central Panjsher province. The death toll from a series of avalanches and flash floods rose to 260 on Friday, with the bulk of deaths coming from central Panjsher province, where above 200 lost their lives, including women and children. Ahmad Zaki, a civil society activist, said the number of casualties could soar because a large number of wounded and dead were still trapped under the snow and could not be retrieved.

The Afghan cabinet announced a three-day national mourning to express solidarity with families who lost their beloved ones to

avalanches in several parts of the country, a statement from the Presidential Palace said on Saturday. Mohammad Aslam Sayas, deputy chief of the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA), said the army was distributing supplies to people in areas of Panjsher still unreachable by road. "Helicopters are dropping medicines, blankets and other necessary items to remote areas of Panjsher," Sayas said. *(Pajhwok)*

Up to \$1,000 Wage for Female Teachers

SHARAN - Officials of the Education Department of southeastern Paktika province say that they are recruiting female instructors for girls schools who will receive a monthly wage of up to 1,000 US dollars. Kochai Zazai, head of the education department of Paktika province told Khaama Press that any female teacher looking to work as an instructor in girls schools Paktika Province will receive a monthly wage of up to 1,000 US dollars. Zazai said that they are recruiting female instructors who have studied at least up to 12th grade. He said for instructors who are graduated from 12th grade the monthly wage is \$600, the ones graduated from 14th grade the monthly wage is \$800 and the ones with a bachelor's degree the wage is \$1,000. According to Zazai this wage is being paid by the International Bank to improve educational system in Paktika province. Kochai Zazai says that due to the lack of female instructors, there are fewer female students in Paktika province compare to any other province but they are trying to improve this number.

The announcement of such a high wage of \$1,000 for instructors in Afghanistan comes as there were only seven girl students graduated from 12th grade in entire province of Paktika in the educational year 1393. Paktika is one of the volatile provinces of Afghanistan where the insecurity has also affected the educational system. Indian Also, an Indian author and health worker who was encouraging female for education and serving them as a health worker was shot dead by insurgents in Sharana, provincial capital of Paktika province. The tragic incident took place in September 2013 after unknown gunmen took Sushmita Banerjee out of her residence and sprayed bullets on her. Doctors found 20 bullet holes on the body of the community servant who had recently moved to live in Paktika Province together with her Afghan husband. She was married to an Afghan who was also present at his residence by the time of ...*(More on P4)...(8)*