

<b>Jalalabad</b> Partly Cloudy 17°C 14°C	<b>Ghazni</b> Partly Cloudy 15°C 3°C	<b>Kandahar</b> Chance of Rain 24°C 11°C	<b>Mazar</b> Chance of Rain 16°C 10°C	<b>Herat</b> Chance of Rain 15°C 6°C	<b>Bamayan</b> Chance of Rain 7°C -2°C	<b>Kabul</b> Partly Cloudy 18°C 7°C
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**Daily Outlook Weather Forecast**

# Ex-Taliban Minister Pessimistic about Peace Bid

KABUL - A former Taliban minister on Monday called the Afghan government's peace efforts as "symbolic" but he believed the conflict in Afghanistan could only be resolved through dialogue. The unity government in Kabul has intensified its efforts at establishing peace in the country. The fourth quadrilateral meeting held in capital Kabul announced that Pakistan will host direct talks between the



Afghan government and the Taliban in early March. But after recent deadly suicide attacks in Kabul and eastern Kunar province, the Afghan government said it would not negotiate peace with militant factions hell-bent on creating violence. Sayed Akbar Agha, a former Taliban leader in an exclusive interview with Pajhwok Afghan News said the achievement of peace was the ...*(More on P4)...(8)*

## Uncertainty about Dialogue between Afghan Govt, Taliban

ISLAMABAD - There is great uncertainty in Afghanistan about the proposed dialogue between the government and armed groups led by the Taliban, revealed the Pakistani newspaper The Express Tribune on Monday. Afghan officials familiar with the four-nation negotiations (China, United States, Afghanistan and Pakistan) pointed out that the process could be delayed by noting that optimism generated in recent weeks was an unfair assessment. In the fourth meeting of the group held last Tuesday in Kabul, participants invited the Taliban and Hizb-e-Islami for

matation to join the talks by the first week of March in Islamabad, said one source. However, the Taliban's political office in Qatar was not very keen on that possibility. According to The Express Tribune, the same proposal was made by the representatives of the Afghan and Pakistani governments sent to convince the Taliban, who maintained their position. The insurgent group insists on several conditions to negotiate including the withdrawal of foreign troops, the release of prisoners and the removal of their leaders from a terrorist list. Kabul authorities want to see a ...*(More on P4)...(9)*

## MoI Starts Probe into Arrest of 30 Policemen

KABUL - The Ministry of Interior (MoI) has launched a probe into the arrest of 30 policemen by 215th Maiwand Military Corps in southern Helmand province. The deputy spokesman for the MoI, Najib Dahish, said that a delegation has been sent to Helmand to investigate the issue. "Although the incident was a misunderstanding between police and army troops, the MoI has sent a delegation to Helmand to probe the issue," he added. Meanwhile, Helmand Police Chief, Abdul Rahman Sarjang, said the army troops have confiscated weapons from the policemen. "215th Maiwand Military Corps have apprehended 30 policemen in Sangin district. Acting Police Chief of Sangin district, Mohammad Nabi, was also among those arrested," he added. Reports say that foreign troops were also involved in



the arrest of these policemen; however, Sarjang rejected any involvement of foreign troops and said that there was fighting between army and police during the arrest, which led to the death of a policeman. Helmand Provincial Council said that those supporting the Taliban should be brought to book. "There are reports that the acting Police Chief of Sangin district had links with the Taliban ...*(More on P4)...(11)*

## 'Centuries-Old' Quran Copy Submitted to Khost Museum

KHOST CITY - A "500-years-old" copy of the holy Quran was handed over to the museum in southeastern Khost province by Governor Hukam Khan Habibi on Monday. Habibi told Pajhwok Afghan News the verses of the holy book had been written in black and red colours on a yellowish paper wrapped in a cover made of leather. He said the paper of the old book had lost its quality, but the verses were still readable because of the excellent writing. Maulvi Abdul Qadir, a resident of Khost province, said this piece of the holy book had been brought to their ancestors' house some 500 years ago. He said his family had been taking a special care of the book during the migration period. For better protection and preservation of the copy, Qadir ...*(More on P4)...(12)*

## Ministry of Defense

# Offensive Ops and Night Raids Proving Effective

KABUL - Afghan Defense Ministry (MoD) said on Monday that offensive operations and night raids are proving highly effective in military operations to clear insurgents around the country. The Afghan Special Forces said battles in Baghlan province are being managed by Pakistani generals from across the Durand Line and large numbers of foreign terrorists are fighting against government forces in the province. "With the support of commando forces, air forces and Resolute Support mission forces we have been able to



bring heavy losses to the enemy in Joye Nawo, Aka Khail area and in Salangi village and we cleared the Salangi village of enemies," said Ahmad Jawed Salim a military spokesman in the province. Meanwhile security forces in

Kunduz province said that at least 2,500 Taliban members, including 200 affiliated militant groups, are active in the province and are fighting Afghan forces. "The information we received is that ...*(More on P4)...(10)*

## Afghans Turning to Cosmetic Surgery to Improve Their Looks

KABUL - Dozens of young Afghans are starting to seek out medical help for cosmetic treatment and are even undergoing surgery to get rid of dark spots, wrinkles and other perceived flaws. They say they want doctors to utilize new techniques to make them look beautiful. Tamim Hamid, a reporter from TOLONews, has paid a visit to cosmetic hospitals in Kabul - hospitals that exist even though some people in remote areas still don't have access to medical services. It is believed that capacity of health care services in Afghanistan is rising but there is still a long way ahead to build up the trust of people. *(Tolonews)*

## Kabul Attack

# Ghani Visits Hospital to Inquire After the Injured

KABUL - President Ashraf Ghani on Monday visited the Sardar Mohammad Daud Khan Hospital in Kabul to inquire after those wounded in a recent suicide attack in the capital. At least 15 people were killed and 31 others wounded in the suicide attack targeting the Ministry of Defense on Saturday. A number of the injured are in the hospital for treatment. President Ghani, while visiting the injured, denounced the attack a cowardly terrorist



act. The Taliban have claimed responsibility for the bombing. A statement from the Presidential Palace said doctors at the hospital briefed Ghani on the condition of the wounded people. The president prayed for the early recovery of the injured and asked hospital officials to treat the injured as best as possible. *(Pajhwok)*

## 28 More Taliban Eliminated in Dostum-Led Faryab Offensive

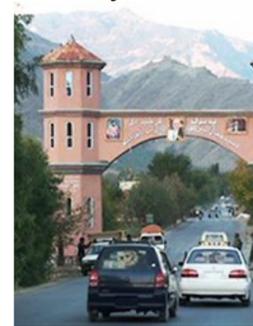
MAIMANA - Twenty-eight insurgents, including notorious commanders, have been killed and hundreds of families displaced by the ongoing fighting in the Pashtoonkot district of northwestern Faryab province, an official said on Monday. Maj. Reza Rezaee, spokesman for the Shahin Military Corps, told Pajhwok Afghan News scores of rebels had been killed during the clearing operation codenamed Shamsheer-25, spearheaded by First Vice President Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum. The offensive kicked off two days back, he said, adding



that arm, police and personnel from the National Directorate of Security were taking part in it. He said six security officials had been wounded so far during the operation. A military vehicle which developed technical fault was set a light

by security force before it could be captured by the Taliban. Rezaee added 4,000 leaflets had been airdropped from helicopters, warning the Taliban to surrender within six hours or face the music. But ...*(More on P4)...(13)*

## Kunar Residents Raise Concerns over Spike in Security Threats



ASADABAD - Residents and members of the Kunar provincial council have raised concerns over what they say is a sharp increase in insecurity in the province. They said the situation will directly impact the residents unless government steps up efforts to curb the threats. However, the Kunar governor has rejected the claims, and said government forces have been on red alert to tackle any challenges emerging from insurgents' activities. "We strongly reject claims of an increase of security threats in the province. But sometimes the insurgents increase their movements in some districts, however, security forces are ready to thwart their plots," Kunar governor Wahidullah Kalimzai said. Residents have said that security threats have drastically intensified in several areas of the province in recent weeks after insurgents increased their activities in the areas. Jamaluddin Sayyar, head of Kunar provincial council said that the insurgents are trying to increase their deployments beyond ...*(More on P4)...(14)*

## Gen. Salangi Slams ISI for its Destructive Role in Afghanistan

KABUL - The former senior deputy interior minister for security Gen. Ayub Salangi slammed Pakistan's military intelligence - Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) for supporting the anti-government armed militant groups in Afghanistan. Gen. Salangi was speaking during his farewell ceremony in the Ministry of Interior (MoI) compound, a day after President Ghani nominated General Abdul Rahman Rahman to replace him as Senior Deputy Interior Minister for Security Affairs. He reiterated his stance towards ISI's interference in Afghanistan by taking into his official Twitter account which he was usually using to provide regarding the security situation of the country. "ISI continues to play a destructive role in Afghanistan. ISI is responsible for bloodshed, chaos and destruction in Afghanistan," a Twitter post he published earlier today reads. The four star general further added "Without support of ISI, Taliban can't be this strong. ISI's support for Taliban, Haqqanis and other terrorist groups is very clear." He also urged the leaders of the government of national unity to refrain from taking the security institutions to political affairs, saying "As I said in my farewell ceremony at MOI, urge leaders of NUG not to politicize ANSF, police in particular. Sadly, I experienced the politicization of police in last 16 months or so. ANSF are the real heroes. They ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

## In Remote Paktia Districts, School Education in a Shambles

GARDEZ - Students in three districts of southeastern Paktia province have been unable to complete their courses due to ongoing insecurity and a shortage of professional



al teachers. Schools in Wazi Zadran, Shwak and Garda Cherai districts have been faced with the twin problems, as well as other issues that negatively impinge on students' future, locals complain. Habibullah, a resident of Shwak district, told Pajhwok Afghan News no student could pass high school in the three districts due to the negligence of the provincial education department. "There is no high school here, with teachers evincing little interest in their job. In the current situation, professionalism will look too big ask," the man remarked. Noor Agha, a resident of Wazi Zadran district, held a similar view. He said the government had been asked several times to pay due attention to resolving the plight of students, but no remedial step had been taken so far. "These three districts are located in mountainous areas, with sparse populations. Teachers don't come here because these schools do not have hostels or other facilities. Insecurity is another concern," he explained. *(Pajhwok)*

As a result, children could not complete their school education, according to Agha, who urged the authorities to work for providing the required facilities for students in the three districts. "The education sector has significantly developed in the past 14 years in other parts of the province, but no one from our area has graduated from school, which is a blatant injustice," he continued. A resident of Garda Cherai district, Ahmad Shah, asked the government to provide education facilities for the children of the Zadran region. Acting Education Director Luqman Hakim said some specific circles had tried in the past 14 years to impede the education process in Zadran-inhabited areas. However, he did not name the circles. Hakim added education officers had visited the three districts. Based on their observations, they have drawn up a plan to open secondary schools. Deputy Governor Abdul Wali Sahi promised a survey for the construction of new schools would be launched soon in the regions. He said a number of high schools would be opened there with the help of local residents. *(Pajhwok)*