

Quote of the Day

We can't help everyone, but everyone can help someone.

Ronald Reagan

Senate Decides Against Administrative Board Election

KABUL - Returning from a 45-day winter break, the Meshrano Jirga or upper house of parliament on Monday decided not to hold the house administrative board's elections for next legislative session. But a parliamentary group warned the house management would be disrupted if the board elections did not take place in-time. The Meshrano Jirga on January 17 decided not to conduct the administrative board elections until two-thirds of new members of the upper house were



introduced. However, some senators, reacting to the decision,

walked out of the house in protest before the voting on the matter began.

The protesting senators said the decision was against Article 87th of the Constitution.

The 87th article says: "Each of the two houses of parliament, at the commencement of their work period, shall elect one member as president for the term of the legislature, and two members as first and second deputies and two members as secretary and assistant secretary for a period of one year." One and a half months back, the parliamentary group supporting the legislation complained about the delayed vote and shared the issue with government leaders, the Supreme Court ... (More on P4)...(1)

Iran Completes Vote Counts on Two Key Elections



TEHRAN - Vote counts on Iran's two key elections of the parliament and Assembly of Experts ended on Monday, the Iranian Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli announced. "The turnout was around 50 percent in the capital Tehran and some 62 percent across the country which is a good turnout under the current circumstances," Rahmani Fazli was quoted as saying by

Press TV. The results of the counted polls will be sent to the Guardian Council, the high legislative body of the country, for approval, Rahmani Fazli said. The Iranian minister said that some of the candidates did not win the required number of votes and the fate of the remaining seats will be decided on the second round of ... (More on P4)...(2)

China's Army Chief Arrives in Kabul



KABUL - A high-level Chinese delegation headed by the country's army chief of staff, arrived in capital Kabul on Monday, an official said. The official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said the Chinese delegation would hold separate meetings with President Ashraf Ghani and National Security Advisor Mohammad Hanif Atmar during the visit. China's military cooperation with Afghanistan and other bilateral issues would top the agenda at the meetings, he said. China is a member of the Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG) which has been trying to revive the stalled Afghan peace process as a close friend of Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

Helmand Commander Says Fighting is Not the Solution



LASHKARGAH - Abdul Jabar Qahraman a veteran warrior who has been assigned as the commander of operation in southern Helmand province by President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani says fighting is not the solution. According to a report by The New York Times, when mujahedeen guerrillas captured this southern provincial capital in 1993, Gen. Abdul Jabar Qahraman was the Afghan government commander on the last flight out, surrendering the city. In a resonant twist more than two decades later, Mr. Qahraman is again the face of the Afghan government here as an insurgency threatens to overrun his post. This time, it is the Taliban at the city gates. The insurgents are firmly entrenched in a suburb of the provincial capital, Lashkar Gah, and separated from the seat of government by only the calm waters of the Helmand River. They control or contest at least 10 of the 14 districts in Helmand Province, Afghanistan's largest in both size and opium production. Mr. Qahraman came to Helmand last month as President Ashraf Ghani's representative, taking charge of efforts to hold the province against the Taliban. But insisting that military measures alone are not the government's best chance, the former general has also been trying to engage Taliban commanders in negotiations. "Back then, too, I believed that the solution to the problem of this nation is not in fighting, and I believe that today," Mr. Qahraman said in an interview last week at his command center here, in between aides' frequently handing him the phone with military commanders, local officials and elders on the line. "Artillery, tanks and warplanes are failed instruments and should only be used very rarely, only when you think you will be destroyed." ... (More on P4)...(5)

Afghanistan Welcomes India's Decision to Invest in Chabahar

KABUL - Afghanistan Ministry of Commerce and Industries Spokesman welcomed India's \$156m-investment decision to develop Chabahar and regarded it as profitable for India. Afghanistan welcomes India's decision to invest in Chabahar Mosafer Ghughandi told IRNA on Sunday that undoubtedly Afghanistan will also take advantage of India's investment in Chabahar. Ghughandi



said that increasing the capacity of loading and unloading in Chabahar port is not only advantageous for India but for the countries of the region. He note that Afghan high-ranking officials headed by Abdullah Abdullah visited Chabahar encouraged Afghan merchants to use this port for export and import purposes. He added that based on a MoU signed ... (More on P4)...(3)

UN Chief Syria Truce Holding Despite Growing Breaches

BEIRUT - U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said Monday that a shaky cease-fire in Syria is holding "by and large" despite sporadic fighting that continued across Syria and growing accusations of violations that threatened to derail the truce, now in its third day. A war of words between the Syrian government and Saudi Arabia, a key backer of the Syrian opposition, added to the rising tensions. The Syrian Foreign Ministry said recent statements by Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir were "lies meant to boost the morale" of militants who have suffered setbacks in Syria in recent weeks and demonstrate the kingdom's "destructive role" in Syria. Monday's statement came a day after al-Jubeir reiterated Saudi Arabia's longstanding

ing position that Syrian President Bashar Assad has no place in the future of Syria and that he must leave power, either peacefully or through military means. Al-Jubeir also accused Syrian forces of violating the cease-fire. Speaking to reporters Monday in Geneva, Ban confirmed receiving a letter from the High Negotiations Committee, the main umbrella opposition group, complaining of continuing violations by the Syrian government and its Russian and Iranian backers. The letter sent Sunday urged the U.N. to help "specify the territory covered by the truce to prevent hostilities in the designated inclusion zones." The Russia-U.S.-brokered cease-



fire that went into effect at midnight Friday excludes the Islamic State group as well as al-Qaida's branch in Syria, the Nusra Front. The cease-fire has significantly reduced violence across the war-ravaged country, bringing some respite to civilians particularly from airstrikes. (AP)

Migrants Protest at Greece-Macedonia Border as Bottleneck Builds

ATHENS - Stranded migrants lay with their children on rail tracks at Greece's northern border, demanding to be allowed to continue their journey, as Germany warned that Europe cannot let the country "plunge into chaos". German Chancellor Angela Merkel was speaking as Athens said that the number of migrants trapped in Greece could triple after Balkan countries announced a daily cap on migrant arrivals. Tensions between European nations worst affected by the migrant crisis are running high, with Austria's Chancellor Werner Faymann accusing Greece of "behaving like a travel agency" for migrants hoping to start new lives elsewhere in Europe. "We estimate that in our country the number of those



trapped will be from 50,000-70,000 people next month," Greek Migration Minister Yiannis Mouzalas said in an interview with Mega TV, up from 22,000 at present. Merkel said Europe could not allow debt-crippled Greece to plunge into chaos by shutting countries' borders to refugees, just months after Athens' third huge international bailout. Some 6,500 migrants remained stuck in a camp at Idomeni on

Greece's border with Macedonia, unable to move on after Macedonia and Serbia, as well as EU members Slovenia and Croatia, imposed a daily limit of 580 migrant entries. The build-up at the Idomeni camp, which can hold up to 1,500 people, began in earnest last week after Macedonia began refusing entry to Afghans and imposed stricter controls on Syrians and Iraqis. The ... (More on P4)...(6)

Kerry Commends Pakistan's Tough Fight against Terrorism



WASHINGTON - US Secretary of State John Kerry has praised Pakistan's campaign against terrorism, noting its deployment of 180,000 troops along the border with Afghanistan. "We do believe that Pakistan is engaged legitimately in a very tough fight against identifiable terrorists in their country..." the secretary said in a statement on Sunday. Rising tensions with India could force Pakistan to bring some of those troops to its eastern border, allowing the insurgents to move freely in and out of Afghanistan, defence ... (More on P4)...(4)

Afghan Female Cyclists Nominated for Noble Peace Prize



KABUL - The Afghan women's cycling team has been nominated for the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize which is being hailed a historic event in the traditional society. Italian lawmakers nominated the Afghan female cyclists for the peace prize. On hearing the news, Zahra Hussaini, one of the cyclists said the nomination was a great achievement and an historic event. "We have had six domestic competitions, with two big ones which saw cyclists from Kabul and other provinces taking part," she said. Masooma, 19, is another Afghan female cyclist and a member of the national cycling team. She has represented Afghanistan at several events and hoisted the national flag on a number of occasions. "I ... (More on P4)...(7)

Ghani Orders Construction of Sardar Mohammad Daud Khan Mausoleum

KABUL - President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani has issued orders for the formation of a committee for the construction of a mausoleum for Afghanistan's first President Sardar Mohammad Daud Khan. During a meeting with the tribal elders of southern Kandahar province, President Ghani pledged personal financial contribution for the construction of the mausoleum, saying he will pay \$20,000 from his own budget. The Office of the President in a statement said the tribal elders and influential leaders of Kandahar province led by Mohammad Nader Naeem requested President Ghani for the construction of the late President's Mausoleum in Taj Bek hill of Kabul. President Ghani also added that a Fund Box would be set up to collect funds for the construction work of the mausoleum besides the funds that would be allocated by the government. He said the representatives of the security institutions will also be part of the committee members for the design, planning and construction of the mausoleum. Born on 19th July 1809, Sardar Mohammad Daud Khan served as the Prime of Afghanistan from 1953 to 1963 before serving as the first President of Afghanistan. He declared himself as the first president of the country by overthrowing the monarchy of his first cousin Mohammad Zahir Shah in 1973 and continued to serve the country until he was assassinated in 1978. Well known for his progressive policies, Daud Khan was martyred along with his family members as a result of a revolution led by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan. Daud Khan was also well known for his efforts for the improvement of women's rights and for initiating two five-year modernization plans which increased the labor force by about 50 percent. (KP)