

Quote of the Day

It is a good divine that follows his own instructions.

William Shakespeare

Anti-Daesh Summit in Washington on March 21

KABUL - The Trump administration plans to hold an anti-Daesh (Islamic State) summit in Washington on March 21, a Saudi newspaper reported on Saturday.

The Arab News quoted Washington-based diplomatic sources as saying administration officials were discussing plans for the summit with core members of the anti-Daesh coalition. More than 60 countries are part of the coalition that holds counter-ISIS meetings every three to four months. "We are continuing with that schedule and planning the next one for March..." a State Department official told the daily.

But details of the ministerial-level meeting are yet to be finalized, as the agenda is still being worked out. In the build-up to the event, the Trump administration is expected to unveil a new anti-Daesh strategy.



On Monday, the Department of Defense submitted recommendations to the White House, following a month-long review of the military, diplomatic and financial options to crush the outfit. (Pajhwok)

Key Taliban Group Member Arrested in Capital Kabul

KABUL - A key member of the Taliban group was arrested by the Afghan security forces in capital Kabul.

The Afghan Intelligence, National Directorate of Security (NDS), said the detained militant has been identified as Idrees son of Ahmad Gul who was involved in various terrorist related activities in Kabul.

According to a statement by NDS, Idrees was arrested during an operation conducted in Bagrami district of Kabul.

Idrees was recruited by two key Taliban group members Nikmal and Abdullah who are involved in transportation of landmines and explosives. NDS further added that Idrees was involved in various insur-

gency activities including bombings and explosions in Bagrami district of Kabul.

The statement by NDS also added that Idrees was specifically involved in bombings in Hussain Khel district that led to the martyrdom of seven Afghan soldiers and destruction of their three vehicles.

The arrest of the key Taliban member comes as the group has been attempting to expand their activities and insurgency in some key cities of the country, including capital Kabul.

The group staged two back to back coordinated suicide attacks in Kabul last week that left at least 22 dead and over one hundred others wounded. (KP)

Contracts Signed to Launch Barikab City Project

KABUL - The practical phase of the Barikab City, which is part of the Kabul New City, was signed-off with Co-3, Excellent and Latifi companies on Saturday.

Barikab Agricultural Economic Zone is an area of 174 square kilometers in the north of Dehsabz district.

The land is intended to become an agriculture economic and industrial development hub for the country and region.

A number of Afghan factory owners have returned from Pakistan and are interested to invest in this city, head of the Capital Zone Development Office Elham Hotaki said.

"The city is designed for 1,000 factories which will provide jobs to almost 35,000 people," he added.

"After assessment of capacity of the board, the National Procurement Authority offered them the procurement processing capacity certificate," chairman of the of National Procurement Authority Yama Yari said.

At the same event, the Kabul Garrison Commander, Gen. Gul Nabi Ahmadzai, said the agricultural zone has been taken out of land-grabbers' control.

"We saved eight lands at the zone from land grabbers in Kabul's 13th district," Ahmadzai stated.

According to the Dehsabz-Barikab Development Authority, the Kabul New City, is approximately 1.5 times larger than the existing Kabul city. It is strategically placed between Bagram Airbase and the Hamid Karzai International Airport. It is mainly located in Kabul province and occupies a small area of Parwan province. The district of Barikab - in the north of Dehsabz - forms the Agricultural Economic Zone of the New City, according to the authority. (Tolonews)

Envoy Asks Kabul to Shift Stranded Afghans through Plane



KABUL - Afghan ambassador in Islamabad Hazrat Umar Zakhelwal on Saturday asked government in Kabul to shift stranded Afghan nationals in Pakistan through aircraft back to the country as there was no hope for the speedy reopening of crossing points. The Afghan envoy lamented the crossing points could not be reopened despite his demand during multinational regional conference from Pakistan Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif. Zakhelwal said he met foreign affairs advisor Sartaj Aziz over the issue and asked him to at least reopen the crossing points for people

who have remained stranded. He said he met Aziz today and demanded the reopening of the gate, adding the Pakistani official claimed the crossing points were open for people who want to go from Pakistan to Afghanistan. The Afghan envoy said he met multiple Pakistani leaders and discussed the issue with them. Pakistan closed the crossing points with Afghanistan on Durand line after terrorist attacks in the country last month. The deadliest of these attacks were the one that target sufi Shrine in Sindh where around 100 people were killed and scores wounded. (Pajhwok)

Belgium to Deport Illegal Afghan Migrants



KABUL - The Belgium government has said that as a member of the European Union, it will implement its agreement with the Afghan government on voluntary return of illegal Afghan immigrants or will deport them. Belgium's Asylum and Migration State Secretary Theo Francken said in 2016 more than 2,700 Afghan citizens sought asylum but applications of many of them were rejected.

According to Francken, those Afghans who violate the law will be detained and deported to Afghanistan. In 2016, Belgium government arrested 530 Afghans who will be sent back to Afghanistan in the near future. The number shows considerable increase in number of Afghan assylum seekers in Belgium compared with 2015. In 2015, 203 Afghan migrants were deported to Afghanistan, reports indicate. (Tolonews)

Afghanistan Security Situation Discussed During McMaster, Ghani Talks

KABUL - The US national security advisor, General Herbert Raymond McMaster, on Friday night talked with President Ashraf Ghani through telephone, a statement from Presidential Office said on Saturday.

Both sides conferred on the security situation of the region, combating terrorism, Afghanistan's four-year security plan, and the parliamentary elections.

During the telephonic communications, Ghani's National Security Adviser, Mohammad Hanif Atmar, National Directorate of Security (NDS) chief, Mohammad Masoom Stanikzai, and the Presidential Advisor on public relations and strategic affairs, Ahmad Nadir Nadiri were also present. (Pajhwok)



Russia Closely Monitors Situation in Afghanistan

KABUL - The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has said Moscow would closely watch situation in Afghanistan in the future.

According to Russian media, Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova, during a press conference criticised that the United Nations had no real understanding of the current situation in Afghanistan.

She said Afghanistan's situation was very complicated, terrorist attacks had increased, hence Russia had been seeking serious political steps for changing the situation.

Zakharova said the Russian Foreign Ministry was making efforts to organise meetings through diplomatic efforts to seek political settlement for ongoing conflict in Afghanistan. "We don't have any evaluation and clarification about the US role in bringing security and peace to Afghanistan and about the victory in combating terrorism, and we have always complained regarding the confusions; but still Afghanistan's situation is faced with ambiguity."

She went on to say that from now onward Moscow would monitor Afghanistan's situation from close and would find ways for resolving Afghanistan's crisis through diplomatic efforts after the results of their assessment.

The remarks by Russia come as the NATO commander for Afghanistan; Gen. John Nicholson last week has accused Russia and Iran of intervening in Afghanistan's affairs and that the countries had contacts with the Taliban. (Pajhwok)

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IEC Considers Electronic Process

KABUL - The Independent Election Commission (IEC) says if it finds a way to introduce an electronic election system, an announcement could be made to invalidate past elections card.

Wasima Badghisi, operational deputy of IEC Deputy Head, said on Saturday the IEC was currently discussing the matter.

She added that holding the election in next year has not been finalized. The IEC will announce the election schedule soon. Electoral reforms and holding a transparent election is said to be the only option that would help people trust the process involved.

However, three months have passed since the new commissioners started their work and it is not known what they have achieved thus far.

"Our discussions are ongoing and we are trying to use new technology and bio metric systems. If we use the new technology, then the old election cards will be invalid," Badghisi said. She added that if the current IEC discussions are successful, the next election will be completely free and transparent. "In the scheduled time and according to law, the IEC has sent the electoral outline to the presidential palace and electoral regions will be determined accordingly. Institutions overseeing election process have warned that holding the election without bringing about reforms will damage the process.



"List of voters should be prepared, procedures and codes of conduct of past elections should be reviewed. The matter of electoral regions and the counting of votes are serious issues that have to be made clear," Mohammad Naeem Asghari, program manager of Free and Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan said. Badghisi added the IEC will do its best to prevent a repetition of the last election mess and hold a transparent election. (Tolonews)

A Dozen Seminary Teachers Released from Daesh Captivity

JALALABAD - Twelve teachers and two other staffers of a madrasa, who were kidnapped in the Haska Mina district of eastern Nangarhar province by Daesh, have been released, an official said on Saturday.

Islamic State fighters had snatched the individuals on January 15 in the Shpoli locality of the district, as the teachers were giving exams to their students at Mashar Mullah Madrasa.

The governor's spokesman, Attaullah Khogyani, told Pajhwok Afghan News the kidnapped teachers had been set free without any deal with the militant group.

They were released as a result of mediation by tribesmen. No prisoner swap or other demand from the insurgents had been accepted, he explained.

Haska Mena district chief, Haji Sazwali, said the teachers were released Friday night. He also said no condition had been set by Daesh for releasing the kindapppees. "The day the teachers were kidnapped, we sent a jirga of tribal elders. The group set various conditions, but we didn't compromise." (Pajhwok)

Afghanistan Beat Malaysia 5-3

KUALA - The AFC Beach Soccer Championship 2017 got underway in Kuala Terengganu on Saturday with Group A rivals Afghanistan and Bahrain the sides to collect early wins. With only two games on the opening day - both in the five-team Group A - Afghanistan joined Bahrain on maximum points with a 5-3 win over home nation Malaysia.

The Afghans upset the party somewhat on the east coast as a Raof Qaderi hat-trick helped seal victory and bolster hopes of making the semi-finals, going into Sunday's clash with China. Bahrain and China kicked off the competition as the former began in style, picking up a comfortable 5-0 success to launch their group-stage campaign. In a bright start from Bahrain, a brace from captain Rashed Jamal set his side on course for victory in Kuala Terengganu before Hisham Yusuf Ahmed, Mohamed Abdullah and Ayoub Naseeb Salem joined him on the scoresheet in the latter stages.

Saturday results
14.30: China 0-5 Bahrain
16.00: Afghanistan 5-3 Malaysia
Sunday fixtures
14.30: Afghanistan vs China
16.00: Malaysia vs Iran
(Tolonews)

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