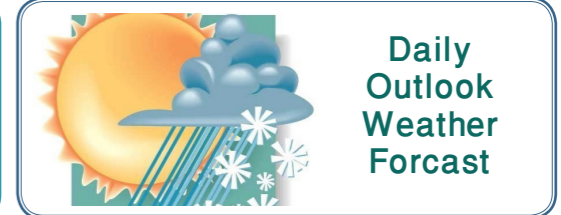


Jalalabad Partly Cloudy 18°C 8°C	Ghazni Clear 6°C -4°C	Kandahar Clear 16°C 3°C	Mazar Partly Cloudy 13°C 5°C	Herat Clear 11°C 0°C	Bamayan Chance of Rain -1°C -11°C	Kabul Clear 7°C -3°C
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Unity Among Afghans is Only Response to Enemies: Abdullah

KABUL - "National unity in our homeland, unity among people of Afghanistan is the only response to enemies of this country, but that unity cannot be ensured if discrimination remains," said the Chief Executive of Afghanistan, Abdullah Abdullah. Speaking at the ceremony commemorating the third anniversary the death of Marshal Mohammad Qasim Fahim, Abdullah said discrimination between Afghans must end. He added insurgents who are intent on destabilizing the country are being supported from beyond Afghanistan's borders where they have safe havens. At the same event, former president Hamid Karzai said



called on the Taliban to join the peace process or face defeat.

"God direct them [Taliban] in the good way. If not, we hope that God give them defeat," he added. The ceremony remembered Fahim's work and his efforts

to support unity by bringing different ethnic groups together. At the event, some participants criticized acts by Taliban and other terrorist groups. "Our message to all armed opposition groups, particularly for the Afghan Taliban, is to join the peace process by using the current opportunity. If they don't, they must realize clearly that they are not standing only against the 350,000 troops; they are standing against a 30-million strong nation," he said. Other participants urged the government to adopt effective plans to eliminate and suppress militants and boost ...*(More on P4)...(10)*

Afghan Leaders, Int'l Community Slam Hospital Attack



KABUL - The attack on Sardar Mohammad Daud Hospital in Kabul was widely condemned by national and international organizations as well as Afghan leaders. Shortly after the incident, President Ashraf Ghani condemned the attack at a ceremony in Kabul. He said it was an attack on all the Afghan people. Ghani said the attack was against religion and against all human laws. The Chief Executive of Afghanistan, Abdullah Abdullah, said the perpetrators of the attack will never be forgiven. At an event in Kabul, former president Hamid Karzai termed the hospital attack an act of Afghanistan's enemies. The Iranian Embassy in Kabul also condemned the attack and sent his nation's condolences to the victims' families and the Afghan nation. The U.S. Embassy in Kabul also condemned the attack on the army hospital and said it demonstrates the blatant disregard for human life by those seeking to disrupt Afghanistan's democratic progress. The International Red Cross Committee (ICRC) condemned the attack and said attacks on hospitals are a heinous crimes against humanity and humanitarian law. No justification was possible. The NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said he strongly condemns the inhumane Kabul attack on hospital patients and staff. NATO stands with Afghanistan in the ...*(More on P4)...(11)*

Sharif Govt. under Fire over Afghan Border Closure



PESHAWAR - Opposition leaders have slammed the Pakistan government's closure of the main border crossings with Afghanistan as an "unwise and illogical" measure. While stressing the need for an objective review of the country's foreign policy, opposition members in the National Assembly also urged the appointment of a full-time foreign minister. The border blockade, which was temporarily lifted on Tuesday, was not a solution to the menace of terrorism, they believed, asking the government to initiate an immediate engagement with the neighbour. The border had been sealed in the aftermath of a series of suicide bombings in the country, with the military claiming the attacks were carried out by the militants op-

erating from safe havens in Afghanistan. Shahida Rehmani of the Pakistan People's Party said the country was increasingly facing international isolation due to the absence of a full-time foreign minister. Naeema Kishwar, whose party Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam (JUI-F) is a part of the ruling coalition, also ridiculed the foreign policy. "We don't have a foreign policy, but do we have a foreign policy?" She asked. "How is Pakistan carrying out strategic action inside Afghanistan when we made a hue and cry over India's strategic actions in our country?" Recent media reports indicated that Pakistani troops had shelled the terrorist camps across the border in Afghanistan. Hideouts were reportedly ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

Call to Let Goods-Laden Trucks Enter Afghanistan



PESHAWAR - The Afghanistan-Pakistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industries has welcomed the reopening of the border as a good decision. Ziaul Haq Sarhadi, senior vice-president of chamber, demanded thousands of goods-laden trucks be allowed to enter the landlocked country. The News quoted him as saying 2,000 trucks loaded with goods were waiting at various places in Khyber

Agency and Peshawar to enter Afghanistan. With the closure of the Durand Line 20 days back, all trade activities via Torkham came to a halt. Afghans, who had come to Pakistan, were left stranded. However, the busy crossing reopened on Tuesday when thousands of Afghans crossed over to their country. Some 10,000 Afghans will return home in two days. (Pajhwok)

EU Seeks Role for Afghan Women in Peace Process

KABUL - Despite positive efforts by the government, life remains difficult for Afghan women, especially in rural areas, the European Union said on Wednesday. In a statement from EU, poverty, illiteracy, violence, traditional norms and harmful practices refusing females their rights in having an equal position in society were cited as major challenges to Afghan women. EU Special Representative Ambassador Franz-Michael Mellbin said: "The fight for women's rights and equal opportunities has only started in Afghanistan - there is still a very long way to go." In October last year, the

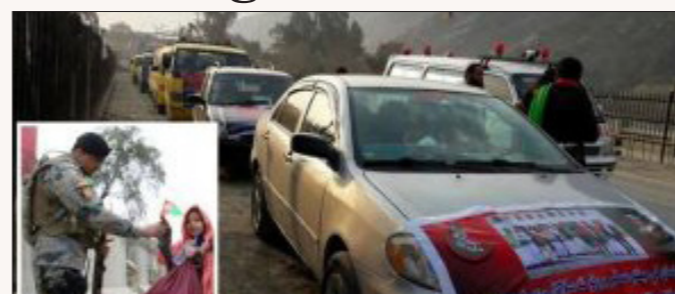


envoy recalled, Kabul in Brussels presented a strong vision for Afghanistan, including plans to improve conditions for women. During the conference, several leaders - including the president and the CEO - expressed their personal

determination to ensure gender equality and combat violence against women. "The EU in Afghanistan now asks the Afghan leadership to live up to their promises and act to improve conditions for women in the country," ...*(More on P4)...(12)*

Govt. Arranges Free Transportation for Passengers Returning from Pakistan

KABUL - The Afghan government has arranged free transportation for the passengers who were stranded on the other side of the Durand Line amid a deadlock between Islamabad and Kabul following a series of deadly terrorist attacks. The Pakistani authorities opted to close the travel and transit routes along the Durand Line after Pakistan was hit by a series of deadly attacks as the authorities of the country claimed that



the attacks were plotted and coordinated by insurgents based in the Afghan soil. The growing tensions resulted into exchange of lists of the terrorists and their

sanctuaries located both in Afghanistan and Pakistan but no further developments were made after Afghanistan demanded ac ...*(More on P4)...(13)*

Women Fight for Equality, Improving Socio-Economic Conditions

KABUL - "The Afghans could absolutely overcome the current challenges if they take further measures for women's empowerment and help strengthen the role of women in society," said an Afghan working lady, as the country marks International Women's Day. "Women can play a key role in affording the living costs of a family. In some instances, they can provide a boost to men to ensure food security of the family and to guarantee a bright future for the next generations," Zahra Narin, who runs a traditional clothes and handicrafts workshop, told Xinhua on Tuesday. International Women's Day, which falls on March 8, was marked by a series of meet-

ings, conferences, and seminars in the capital city and in the provinces, to highlight women's rights and their role in developing society. To boost awareness of women's rights and their role in developing the country, the private media outlets and state-owned media including national radio and television aired special programs related to the topic. "The situation surrounding females is getting better compared with past decades but various challenges still remain ahead. And it has been a long road for Afghan women to travel to finally meet their rights which have been envisaged in the country's laws," Narin, also a women's right activist, noted. ...*(More on P4)...(16)*

Afghanistan Beats Ireland by 6 Wickets in T20



KABUL - Afghanistan's National Cricket Team has beaten Ireland in the first T20 match of the current series in India on Wednesday. Opener for Ireland's team Stuart Thompson hit 56 while Gary Wilson (41 n.o.) and captain William Porterfield (39) added valuable runs as Ireland made 165-5 in Greater Noida. But it was not enough with Samiullah Shenwari (56) and Mohammad Shahzad (47) helping the Afghans to 171-4 with two overs to spare. Wednesday's entertaining performance by Afghanistan's batsmen give the team a 1-0 lead in the 3-match T20 series. They were on top of the game from the very first over. The openers managed to get

their team to a flying start and put on 51 runs before losing Najeeb Tarakai to the last ball of the fifth over. The match was the first T20 of the historic series between Afghanistan and Ireland at Greater Noida Sports Complex Ground. It was also the first international match at this venue. Previously, there have been matches played during the Duleep Trophy of 2016-17. The Board of Control for Cricket in India has given Afghanistan the Noida ground to use as the team's home ground. Afghanistan makes its debut at hosting a home bilateral series at the Indian ground. This happened just after former Indian cricketer Lalchand Rajput became the coach of Afghanistan cricket team back in June 2016. This ...*(More on P4)...(17)*