

Jalalabad Partly Cloudy 25°C 12°C	Ghazni Partly Cloudy 11°C -1°C	Kandahar Partly Cloudy 21°C 6°C	Mazar Partly Cloudy 19°C 9°C	Herat Clear 19°C 7°C	Bamayan Partly Cloudy 1°C -6°C	Kabul Partly Cloudy 15°C 4°C
---	--	---	--	--------------------------------------	--	--

Weather Forecast Brought to You by MTN Afghanistan

Dostum Vows Redress for Taekwondo Protestors

KABUL - First Vice President General Abdul Rasheed Dostum visited the taekwondo protest in Zarnegar Park of Kabul on Thursday, promising the demonstrators, who have been in the park for over a month that their grievances would be addressed as soon as possible. "We will solve this issue no matter what," Dostum told the protestors, who numbered at least 500 on Thursday. "We are ready and I would like to repeat that we are responsible, ...*(More on P4)...(13)*



Kandahar Police Chief Pours Scorn on HRW Report

KANDAHAR CITY - Gen. Abdul Raziq, police chief for southern Kandahar province, on Thursday rejected the Human Rights Watch (HRW) report that accused him and other high profile officials of human right abuses. Gen. Raziq insisted the report had been prepared in understanding with Taliban and



did not have even an iota of truth. He said the United Nations and other international organisation, claiming to be neutral, had always been "on wrong side". Others Afghan officials were also accused of human rights violations in the freshly released HRW report that had been rejected as "baseless and a plot to defame Afghan leaders."

The HRW report released on March 3 calls on President Ashraf Ghani and his government to prosecute officials and commanders "whose serious human rights abuses have long gone unpunished." The report titled Today We Shall All Die: Afghanistan's Strongmen and the Legacy of Impunity, said the "previous Afghan government and the United States enabled powerful and abusive individuals and their forces to commit atrocities for too long without being held to account." The report based on 125 interviews HRW has carried out since August 2012 profiles ...*(More on P4)...(17)*

Civil Society Wants Buddha Statues Repaired



BAMIYAN CITY - Condemning the destruction of Buddha statues during the Taliban regime, a number of social society activists held a rally in central Bamyan province for their rehabilitation. The two Buddha statues, having a 1600 years old history, were dynamited by the Taliban during their regime. They had been a major draw for tourists. Statue Salsal with 55 metres height and Shamama -- 33 metres tall -- were built in a mountain in the northern part of Bamyan City, the provincial capital. Elder Muhammad Nabi Ali Zada said: "Monuments have a cultural and historical value for a county but, unfortunately, Taliban took the extreme step of blowing up our historical sites." Fourteen years on, the government is yet to rebuild the statues. He urged the government to direct the departments concerned to rebuild the statues, which would attract more tourists. *(Pajhwok)*

Former Lawmaker Shehla Atta's Body Found in Kabul



KABUL - The dead body of Shehla Atta, a former parliamentarian and presidential runner, has been found in Kabul, a security official said on Thursday. Brig. Gen. Farid Afzali, the crime branch chief, confirmed to Pajhwok Afghan News the body of Atta had been found in the limits of 10th police district. He said investigations were ongoing to ascertain the causes of her death. "The forensic department would examine her body to identify what caused her death." Shahla Atta was a member of parliament in 2005. She also contested the presidential elections in 2009, but failed in her bid. *(Pajhwok)*

President Orders Investigation into Deh Mazang Murder



KABUL - Ordering a prompt investigation into the killing of a civilian by a speeding jeep of a lawmaker in Kabul, President Ashraf Ghani on Thursday promised the law would take its course against its violators. Four days back, Jahangir, a taxi driver, lost his life when lawmaker Iqbal Safi's vehicle hit him in Deh Mazang locality. Relatives of the victim said the killer was at large because he was an employee of an influential person. Safi approached the victim's family to offer condolences. He said his driver was in hospital for treatment and had not fled. He reassured the family the driver would be brought to court. In a statement from the Presidential ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

Obama Commends Afghan Leaders' Peace Initiative

WASHINGTON - US President Barack Obama on Thursday held a video conference with his Afghan counterpart Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Dr Abdullah Abdullah. During the contact, they American and Afghan leaders discussed the current situation in the country and efforts to improve Kabul-Islamabad, relations, the White House said. "The president commended Ghani and Dr. Abdullah on



their leadership in promoting an Afghan peace process to end the conflict and their initiative to improve Afghanistan-Pakistan relations," White House Deputy Press Secretary Eric Schultz told reporters. The leaders discussed the ongoing ...*(More on P4)...(14)*

Pressure on Govt. to Secure Release of 31 Hostages Mounts

KABUL - Relatives of the 31 innocent people kidnapped nearly three weeks ago in Zabul province staged a protest on Thursday in Kabul. The family members of the abducted, who were ostensibly targeted for being ethnic Hazaras, criticized the Afghan government for not doing more to find a solution and get their loved ones home safely. "Citizens' Safety is the



responsibility of government" and "Living freely are the rights of every citizen" were the slogans chanted during the protest in the capital on Thursday. "In their ...*(More on P4)...(16)*

Lack of Progress on Peace Talks Raises Questions



KABUL - Despite initial optimism surrounding the announcement of possible peace talks with the Taliban, the ensuing weeks have seen little to no tangible progress made, with no delegation, no location and no date selected for any such negotiations as of yet, according to comments made by representatives of Chief Executive Abdullah Abdul-

lah on Thursday. Meanwhile, although some sources have said China has already been chosen as the venue for the talks, a number of former Taliban commanders on Thursday maintained that the militant group has in no way agreed to attend talks with anyone or in any place in particular. It was originally expected that ...*(More on P4)...(19)*

ACSEN Warns Against Politicising Electoral Reforms

KABUL - The Afghan Civil Society and Elections Network (ACSEN) on Thursday warned procrastination in electoral reforms would damage the credibility of the election process. ACSEN said the public, civil society networks and donor countries had attached high expectations with the unity government to embark on

electoral reforms without further delay. Jandad Spinghar, ACSEN head, said there was no impediment to reforms in the electoral panels. He warned people would lose trust in the elections process and the number of voters would decline in future. "We are worried about politicisation ...*(More on P4)...(20)*

NSC Calls Torture Unacceptable; Seeks End to Traffic Jams

KABUL - The National Security Council (NSC) on Thursday decided traffic on city roads would not be stopped for high-ranking government officials except in some emergency situations. National Security Advisor Mohammad Hanif Atmar presented a list of action plans for improving defence and security across the county. The reports were approved by the NSC, said a statement from the Presidential Palace.



The NSC also decided traffic should not be closed for officials, something the citizens had complained about many times. Officials were also urged to obey traffic rules and avoid creating ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

Hundreds of Zabul Residents Rally Against HRW

QALAT - Hundreds of residents of southern Zabul province, at a protest meeting, on Friday rejected the latest Human Rights Watch (HRW) report as a bundle of lies. The HRW report released on March 3 calls on President Ashraf Ghani and his government to prosecute officials and commanders "whose serious human rights abuses have long gone unpunished." The report -- Today We Shall All Die: Afghanistan's Strongmen and the Legacy of Impunity -- said the previous Afghan government and the United States enabled powerful and abusive individuals and their forces to commit atrocities for too long without



being held to account. Based on 125 interviews HRW carried out since August 2012, the report profiles eight "strongmen" linked to police, intelligence, and militia forces responsible for serious abuses in recent years. The eight men named were Hazara leader Abdul Hakim Shojoyi, former Takhar police chief Khair Mohammad

Timur, Afghan Local Police Commander Azizullah from the Urgan district in Paktia province, Atta Mohammad Noor, the incumbent acting governor of northern Balkh province, Najibullah Kapisa, the National Directorate of Security chief for Takhar, Mir Alam, a former commander with the Jamiat party, Asadullah ...*(More on P4)...(21)*

Preemptive Steps Urged to Stop IS Emergence



ASADABAD - A number of residents of different districts on Thursday asked the government to adopt preemptive measures to stop the emergence of the Islamic State (Dayesh) in eastern Kunar province. At a well-attended gathering arranged in Asadabad, the provincial capital, tribal elders, religious leaders and people from different walks of life called nipping

the evil in the bud. Haji Mohammad Rozi, a former jihadi commander, told participants that Taliban's existence in Afghanistan was a project, which was about to be replaced by Dayesh with the support of different countries. "We don't want Afghans to be killed on different pretexts. Now the backers of Taliban paint this terror group ...*(More on P4)...(22)*