

Quote of the Day

For a gallant spirit there can never be defeat. Wallis Simpson

President Ashraf Ghani

Govt. Ready to Embrace Basic Reforms this Year

KABUL - President Ashraf Ghani on Tuesday said last solar year was the year of Afghanistan's survival but the new year was the year of action when the government would be ready for fundamental reforms.

While meeting representatives of public councils and elders from Paktia, Paktika, Khost, Ghazni, Logar and Maidan Wardak provinces and representatives of Kuchi tribe, Ghani discussed with them issues concerning security, health, roads, recruitment of experts, construction of dams, prevention of land grabbing, corruption and smuggling and problems Kuchis faced with regard to grazing land and



other issues. A statement from the Presidential Palace said the president told the elders that participation in the government was people's right, but people should be recruited based on merit. He said there was budget this year for construction of 29 small dams, but the ministries concerned still lacked enough capacity to spend the fund properly. The country could be built with a strong intention, he said, adding 600 newly graduated military personnel Monday went to southern Helmand as part of the nation's strong intention, while ...*(More on P4)...(1)*

Resigning Officials Asked to Share Reasons with Senate



KABUL - Meshrano Jirga or Senate members on Tuesday expressed their concern over government's affairs being run by acting ministers and departmental heads and over recent resignations of some officials. Recently, former National Directorate of Security (NDS) chief Rahmatullah Nabil, Interior Minister Noorul Haq Ulumi, the Independent Election Commission (IEC) head Ahmad Yousuf Nuristani and mines and petroleum minister Daud Shah Saba resigned from their positions, but Saba's resignation is yet to be approved by the president. Senator Gulalai Akbari from northeastern Badakhshan province said the resignations

could lead the country into crisis, so reasons behind the move should be identified. "There are speculations these officials have resigned under pressure from the government leaders and their illegal demands. If true, the resigning officials should share their problems with lawmakers in order we are able to properly monitor activities of the government," he said. Senator Juma Din Giyanwal from southeastern Paktika province said illegal demands from the government leaders might be a reason behind their resignations. Senator Zalmai Zabuli believed with such resignations, the government could face several ...*(More on P4)...(2)*

Khairkhana Blast MoI Suspends 5 Police Officials



KABUL - The Ministry of Interior (MoI) on Tuesday suspended a district police chief in Kabul due to his negligence in preventing a bomb attack in Khairkhana area. MoI spokesman Seddiq Seddiqi said the four other policemen of the 11th district had also been suspended. A day earlier, MoI said security officials in areas where kidnappings and security incidents happened would be punished. He added a delegation of MoI had been appointed to thoroughly investigate the incident and question other officials of the district as well. At least four people were killed and 15 wounded in the bomb blast in Khairkhana. (Pajhwok)

US Donated \$858m Military Bases to Afghan Govt: SIGAR

KABUL - The US military donated \$858 million real property to the Afghan government between January 2010 and February 2015, an American federal watchdog said on Monday. Stars and Stripes quoted a fact sheet from the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) as saying that the former bases could not be sold to the Afghan government. If not transferred to another military department or federal agency, the bases could be abandoned, dismantled or donated, SIGAR explained. But Christine Abizaid, deputy assistant secretary of defense,

wrote in a letter attached to the report that donating the property to Kabul was more cost effective than the other options. "Of the 715 bases the US operated over the course of the war, 391 were turned over to the government of Afghanistan, with the majority -- 57 percent -- going to the Afghan National Army," the report said. The Afghan National Police were given 30 percent of the bases, with the rest donated to other components of the Defense Ministry and the Interior Ministry. The US closed 219 bases, and

the total value of property destroyed or abandoned amounted to roughly \$48 million. Six bases were transferred to other US government agencies. (Pajhwok)



Rabbani to Attend UAE Conference on Mideast Security

KABUL - The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has agreed to ease visa restrictions for Afghan citizens, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said on Tuesday. Details of previous/old passports have to be inserted on the last page of their new computerised passports, according to a statement from the ministry. The charge d'affaires of the UAE embassy made the an-

nouncement during a meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs Salahuddin Rabbani on Monday. The diplomat delivered an invitation from the UAE foreign minister to Rabbani to attend a conference on "Security and Peace in the Middle East". While accepting the invitation, Rabbani called the conference important for the region and agreed to participate in it. (Pajhwok)

Body of Journalist Found in Spin Boldak

KABUL - Young writer and journalist Bashir Ahmad Reyhan's body was found in the Spin Boldak district of southern Kandahar province, the Khabaryal Website chief editor said on Tuesday. A student of the Kandahar University, Reyhan wrote more than 20 books and occasionally contributed articles to Khabaryal -- an online media outlet offering latest news, features and interviews. Shafiq Reyhan, the victim's brother, told Pajhwok Afghan News the upcoming writer had been tortured in different ways, including electric shocks, before he was murdered. After his final exams, Bashir wanted to go home but went missing on the way. He accused police of killing his brother. Police had previously confirmed having his brother in custody. Shafiq said police did not give them any information except saying that they had evacuated the body of his brother to hospital. Earlier, police chief Gen. Abdul Raziq's secretary had claimed Bashir was in their custody. Kandahar police and the governor's office said they had no information about the incident. But a source, who wished to go unnamed, said that Reyhan cooperated with Taliban's website Al Emara -- a charge rejected by his family. Shafiq said his brother faced severe financial problems and was unable to meet his university expenses. If he had links with the Taliban, his financial position would have been stable, he argued. The last time Bashir came to the university, Shafiq said, he give his brother 15,000 afghanis to buy a laptop. The writer would translate books to meet pay his university fee and other expenses. (Pajhwok)

Key HPC Members Work for Foreigners: Shahid

KABUL - A spokesman for the High Peace Council on Tuesday said funding for 2,400 HPC projects has been embezzled and that key members of the council are being paid by foreign embassies. While appearing on a TOLNews current affairs show, Tawde Khabare, Mawlawi Shahzada Shahid, spokesman for the HPC, let slip that prominent members of the HPC's secretariat were working for foreign embassies. "President [Ashraf] Ghani and [Chief Executive Officer] Ab-



dullah Abdullah should know this. A person, who was working in the High Peace Council and is now working at the Ministry of Defense, was receiving €9,000 Euro (about \$10,580 USD)

monthly salary from a [foreign] embassy," he said. Speaking of embezzlement in the HPC, Shahid said that the council was paying \$3.5 million USD to ...*(More on P4)...(3)*

Detained in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 188 Illegal Afghans Deported

PESHAWAR - Pakistan has deported 188 Afghan citizens via the Torkham border crossing in the tribal region of Khyber, a news report said on Tuesday. The Afghans, who had been detained from various parts of northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for staying in the country illegally, were deported on Monday, The News International reported. Also on Monday, Afghan border guards closed the Torkham border for an hour after tense exchanges between the border police and Pakistan's Khyber Rifles soldiers. Afghan border police condemned the Khyber Rifles personnel's insulting attitude towards the Afghan citizens entering Pakistan, the daily said, adding both sides exchanged barbs as a result. As a mark of protest, the Afghans shut the Torkham gate and did not let any cross-border movement -- a move that left thousands ...*(More on P4)...(4)*

KP Collecting Data on Afghan Refugees Living in Hayatabad

PESHAWAR - The Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government is conducting a survey on Afghan refugees living in the posh neighbourhood of Hayatabad in Peshawar, the provincial capital. The Commissionerate of Afghan Refugees (CAR) is collecting data on refugees for the first time with financial support from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), an official was quoted as saying on Tuesday. In an interview with The Express Tribune, Afghan Refugees Repatriation Cell Director Fazal Rabi said the door-to-door survey was focused on the refugees living in Hayatabad for years. He added they would gather details of documented and undocumented refugees living in the city as part of the survey that was launched in January. Initially, the survey was confined to Hayatabad, but it will be extended to other parts of the province as well. Rabi told the newspaper: "This survey will help us understand the needs of refugees. We will be able to ask for seats for Afghan refugees in schools, colleges and universities in Peshawar." The status of all refugees, whose Proof of Registration (PoR) cards have expired, will be treated as illegal aliens, according to the official, who stopped short of sharing the findings of the survey which is in final stages. In October 2015, the Commissionerate said more than 148,225 Afghan refugee families were residing in 43 camps across the province. Of them, 31,662 families were living in seven camps in Peshawar and 14,773 in three camps of Haripur. (Pajhwok)

Stanikzai Pledges to Equip Southern Troops with Modern Weapons



KABUL - The acting minister of defense, Masoom Stanikzai, during his trip to Kandahar on Tuesday assured security forces in southern Afghanistan that they will eventually be equipped with modern weapons. "The Ministry of Defense (MoD) wants to equip Afghan army forces in southern Afghanistan with modern weapons," he said. The trip was aimed at visiting Afghan army troops. Kandahar provincial council members and tribal elders from the province meanwhile commended the Afghan security forces for their bravery.

"We praise the activities of the Ministry of Defense and people in the southern zone, particularly Kandaharis are standing beside their security forces to defend their country," said Sayed Jan Khakrezwal, chairman of the Kandahar provincial council. Mohammad Essa Khan, a tribal elder, said that they say no to war in order to bring lasting peace and security to Afghanistan. The trip comes at a time that Afghan security forces are engaged in fighting in different parts of Helmand, Uruzgan, Zabul and Kandahar provinces. (Tolonews)

AAF Receive 4 More Attack Aircraft



KABUL - The Afghan Air Force (AAF) received additional 4 light attack aircraft on Tuesday from United States which comes amid ongoing efforts to bolster the capabilities of the Afghan air power. The Ministry of Defense (MoD) said the light attack aircraft, A-29 Super Tucanos, arrived in Afghanistan today with the latest deliveries increasing the number of A-29s to eight. MoD further added that the addition of the aircraft will increase the capabilities of the Afghan Air Force to pound the sanctuaries of the militants. The A-29 is a multi-role, fixed-wing aircraft that will provide the Afghan air force with an indigenous air-to-ground capability and aerial recon-

naissance capabilities to support the country's counterinsurgency operations. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Marine Corps Gen. Joseph F. Dunford has said that the addition of MD-530 helicopters and A-29 Super Tucano light attack fixed-wing aircraft to Afghan Air Force will make a difference as integration of aviation assets into the Afghan combined arms campaign will receive more attention this year. Meanwhile, 20 Afghan military students have been sent to United States for trainings in aviation sector recently. "Over the last week, Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan's Security Assistance ...*(More on P4)...(5)*