

Quote of the Day

The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting.

Sun Tzu

President Terms Corruption 'a National Shame'

KABUL - President Ashraf Ghani on Thursday termed administrative corruption as 'a national shame' and said nepotistic appointments on key government posts was a legacy of the past government and needed fundamental reforms.

The president expressed these views at a conference "The way ahead for anti-corruption in Afghanistan" organized by the European Union (EU).

Ghani acknowledged earlier appointments on important government posts took place based on relations. He stressed the introduction of a mechanism that could ensure qualified individuals were hired on government posts.



The president warned security institutions against laxity in executing their authorities in a proper way and said they would be held accountable for what they

were doing. He said some security officials had forgotten their tasks and were found involved in contract bidding and other unnecessary engagements.

He said: "We were able to save tens of billions of afghanis in major contracts of the Defence Ministry." He lamented common citizens were being bothered in an unauthorised manner, a practice terrorists and illegal armed men were known for.

The president said he himself had attended 35 meetings of the National Procurement Council (NPC) and processed major contracts in a proper way. In these meetings, he added, 45 ... (More on P4)...(1)

Ghani Appoints Acting Chiefs for Defense Ministry, Intelligence Agency



KABUL - President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani has appointed new chiefs for the Ministry of Defense and National Directorate of Security (NDS), a statement released by Presidential Palace here on Friday said.

According to the statement the acting Minister for Defense Mohammad Masoom Stanikzai was appointed

acting NDS chief to replace Masoud Andarabi who has served as national intelligence agency's chief over the past few months and General Abdullah Khan has been assigned for the post of acting minister for defense.

Stanikzai, who was rejected by the Wolesi Jirga or Lower House of Afghan parliament last ... (More on P4)...(2)

Troops Still Waiting for Helmand Orders



KABUL - Troops on the front line in Helmand have once again called for operational orders to launch a large scale offensive operation against the Taliban in the province.

Security forces on the front line have called for President Ashraf Ghani's war decree to be implemented. "At this point Taliban attack us and we respond to them," said one soldier.

"If Taliban conducts one operation we need to conduct ten operations to suppress them and if we do not conduct operations then we have to wait for six or seven months," said another army officer.

Residents in Nad Ali district of Helmand province told TOLONews correspondent Wali Arian the continuation of war and the Taliban in residents' houses have caused serious problems for them.

"We cannot go to our own ... (More on P4)...(4)

Corruption on the Rise in Uruzgan Judicial Organs

TIRINKOT - The level of corruption has increased in judicial organs of the central Uruzgan province, a gathering complained on Thursday, calling for the menace to be addressed.

The gathering was attended by a number of religious scholars, tribal elders and government officials in Tirinkot, the provincial capital.

Uruzgan Hajj and Auqaf director Maulvi Hamdullah said the level of corruption had highly increased in the provincial judicial organs and needed to be tackled. "The judicial organs released in exchange for money the accused ... (More on P4)...(5)

TUTAP Route Change Triggers Angry Protest in Bamyán

BAMYAN CITY - Thousands of angry residents of central Bamyán province on Friday took to the streets again change in the route of the proposed Turkmenistan-Uzbekistan-Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (TUTAP) power project.

The demonstrators, including provincial council members, representatives of political parties, religious scholars and civil society activists, accused the government of discrimination among residents of different provinces.

Mohammad Hasan Asadi, a



member of the provincial council, told Pajhwok Afghan News the cabinet's recent decision on changing the project route was an obvious injustice to inhabitants of the backward central provinces.

"As a member of the provincial council, I would never put up justice to the ... (More on P4)...(9)

Afghans Reject Sartaj Aziz's Remarks, Call for Action Against Militants

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan's national security advisor Sartaj Aziz has said that despite having announced their spring offensive in early April, the Taliban has not undertaken any major operations in the country adding that this in itself is a positive indication.

But Afghan critics have slammed these comments,

especially after Aziz spoke less than two weeks after the Taliban carried out one of its deadliest attacks on Kabul - a truck bomb that killed 64 people and wounded over 340 others. "Although the Taliban had announced their spring offensive, they have not undertaken any major operation, which gives hope

that if the ground situation remains stable, peace talks may commence soon," Aziz was quoted as saying by Pakistan's Dawn news. "Although the talks did not yield any breakthrough results, officials were left hopeful," Pakistani local media quoted him as saying. It ... (More on P4)...(11)

Mohaqqiq Warns to Stop Cooperation with Govt if TUTAP Not Implemented Via Bamyán

KABUL - A prominent political leader and second deputy to Chief Executive Officer, Haji Mohammad Mohaqqiq, has warned to stop cooperation with the government if the 500kV mega power project is not implemented via Bamyán province.

Mohaqqiq was speaking during a gathering in Mazar-e-Sharif city, the provincial capital of northern Balkh province of Afghanistan.

He said "We are not in favor of the collapse of the government



but will opt to go with the people if injustice exceeds the limit." In his earlier remarks regarding the change of TUTAP route from

Bamyán to Salang, Mohaqqiq had said "Rejecting the demands to change the route of project from Salang to Bamyán is a clear discrimination and bullying against the people of central provinces." The remarks by Mohaqqiq comes as thousands of Bamyán residents organized peaceful demonstration in this province to protest against the change of TUTAP route to Salang. Meanwhile, a number of the prominent political figures, including ... (More on P4)...(3)

Time for Exercising Military Option Yet to Come, Pakistan Believes

PESHAWAR - Military action against the Taliban refusing to join the Afghan peace process remains an option but the time for it has not yet come, a Pakistani official has said.

Last week's visit to Karachi by a three-member team from the Taliban's Qatar office failed to produce any tangible progress towards the resumption of Afghan peace talks.

During their trip that was denounced by Kabul, Shahabuddin Dilawar, Jan Muhammad Madani and Mullah Abbas held exploratory meetings with Pakistani officials, Dawn reported on Thursday.

The newspaper quoted one unnamed senior official as saying

about the visit: "The Taliban did not say no... they are now introspecting and reassessing the situation."

If the Ashraf Ghani administration demonstrated greater clarity in its stance on the peace dialogue, the official believed, the Taliban could be brought back to the negotiating table.

Ghani has hardened his stance on reconciliation after a recent attack in Kabul that left scores of people dead and hundreds wounded. He has called for action against the Taliban, having safe haven in Pakistani.

In response, Aziz ruled out the use of force against the Taliban, saying it was not feasible and ... (More on P4)...(6)

ANA Demonstrate Capabilities during Kabul Drills

KABUL - The Afghan National Army (ANA) Special Operation Forces (Commandos) demonstrated their capabilities during a drill in capital Kabul.

According to the Ministry of Defense (MoD), the drills were conducted in the vicinity of Darul-Aman in west of Kabul up to Reshkhora area.

The drills caused panic among the residents of the area as the Afghan special forces were practicing aerial and ground maneuvers in the area.

The video shows the Afghan commandos using state of the art military equipment, including the surveillance planes to detect the movements of the enemies.

The Afghan forces received ScanEagle unmanned aerial vehicle from the United States last month with the inaugural launch of the planes taking place in southern Helmand province of Afghanistan.

"The ScanEagle systems provide the Afghan National Army with airborne ISR [intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance] capability, so they can see the battlefield from a different perspective," said U.S. Army Maj. Jason White, ... (More on P4)...(11)

TEFA Parliamentary Polls Not Possible in October



KABUL - The Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan (TEFA) on Thursday declared as 'impossible' the conduct of parliamentary and district council elections this year, citing numerous problems.

The election watchdog said the long-delayed elections to the lower house could not be held due to security, logistic, technical and financial problems, asking the Presidential Palace to officially announce that new commissioners would set a new date for the polls.

TEFA head Mohammad Naeem Ayubzada told reporters here at a gathering that government leaders and political elites did not want the parliamentary vote to happen. Ayubzada said those promising the nations this year were actually deceiving the people because the ballot was not possible in the face of financial

and logistical problems.

The gathering was organised to encourage the youth to actively participate in future election process.

Ayubzada said it would be difficult to hold free and fair election at a time when insecurity was on the rise with each passing day.

The TEFA head alleged all institutions, including the international community, were not interested in the election and had been trying to delay the process.

Ayubzada accused the unity government leaders, some lawmakers and government officials of being behind the protracted delay in holding the parliamentary and district council polls.

Former Independent Election Commission (IEC) chairman Ahmad Yousuf Nuristani had set an Oct 15 date for holding ... (More on P4)...(7)

94 Girls, Boys Attempted Suicide in Jawzjan's Darzab Last Year

SHIBERGHAN - At least 94 girls and boys attempted suicide by self-immolation and drinking acid in Darzab district of northern Jawzjan province during the past one year, with 15 of them losing lives, an official said on Thursday.

Rahmatullah Hashar, the district administrative chief, told Pajhwok Afghan News 79 individuals got their body organs paralysed due to their suicide attempt. He said undesirable customs, poverty, joblessness

and pressures from militants had badly affected the lives of youngsters in far-flung areas of the province.

Hashar lamented there were no opportunities available for the youth to utilise their energies and make life ideal for themselves. The waste of their valuable time and bleak future encouraged the youth to attempt suicide and other dangerous things, he added.

He called the figures on suicidal attempts and incidents as authentic, though some families denied sharing such incidents in public due to cultural restrictions and embar ... (More on P4)...(12)

