

Obama Admin Seeks 3,000 Special Immigrant Visas for Afghans

WASHINGTON - The Obama administration has urged Congress to approve an additional 3,000 special immigrant visas for Afghan citizens, a call thus far rejected by the Republican-controlled house. "It's an additional 3,000 (visas)," State Department spokesman John Kirby told reporters when asked about the number of Special Immigrant Visas requested by the US government. He underscored the importance the State Department and US government attaché to continued look after those, who carefully and skillfully looked after American soldiers and diplo-



matic corps. "We know we have an obligation to them, and that's why we're going to continue to work with Congress to see if we can't get more opportunities for them to avail themselves of this program," he said. The State Department has expressed its disappointment over decision of a Congressional committee on rejecting the proposal. In an op-ed in The Washington Postm former US ambassador Ryan Crocker opposed efforts to limit the number of special immigrant visas for Afghan citizens. "We have seen the ambassador's opinion piece, and ... (More on P4)... (10)

21 Schoolgirls Poisoned in Khost

KHOST - At least 21 schoolgirls were poisoned in eastern Khost province on Tuesday afternoon, local officials said. Bakht Noor Bakhtiyar, the head of the provincial education department, said the incident happened at Anar High School and that the poisoned girls had been taken to hospital for treatment. "It started when the girls were in class. At first one or two collapsed but then during a break more girls faced the same problem. They were all taken to hospital," he said. Gul Ahmad Shah, an official at Khost hospital, said "the cause is not yet clear but investigations continue. We have also asked for help from Kabul over the incident." Officials said that the girls were discharged from hospital after treatment and all are in a stable condition. ... (More on P4)... (11)

Remaining Afghan Treasure Admired on World Museum Day

KABUL - The National Museum of Afghanistan lost 70 percent of its artifacts during the country's civil wars but fortunately at least 60,000 items were saved. Marking International Museum Day, TOLONews visited the museum, which sees up to 300 visitors a day. According to museum officials, their main aim is to serve the people and despite the high volume of visitors, their monthly turnover seldom exceeds



40,000 Afghans. "Some items in the museum belong to the geographic location called Bakhtar, which encompasses north and northeastern parts of Afghanistan and ... (More on P4)... (12)

Afghan Forces Kill 130 Terrorists in 24 : MoD

KABUL - According to the country's Defense Ministry, Afghan servicemen killed a total of 130 terrorists in the past 24 hours. Afghan servicemen killed a total of 130 terrorists in the past 24 hours, the country's Defense Ministry said on Wednesday. "Over the past 24 hours, Afghan security forces with national defense carried out an offensive to

crush insurgents and protect people's lives in a number of districts.... with the result of 130 suspected terrorists killed, including seven local commanders, 76 injured and two people arrested," the ministry said in a statement. The joint operation was carried out in 18 out of 34 Afghan provinces, the ... (More on P4)... (14)

ALP Commander Gunned Down in Taliban Attack

MAZAR-I-SHARIF - Afghan Local Police (ALP) Commander Gul Jan has been killed in the Taliban attack in the Chahar Bulok district of northern Balkh province, an official said on Wednesday. Deputy Police Chief Col. Abdul Razaq Qaderi tol Pajhwok Afghan News in the incident happened late on Tuesday in the

Shash Pikal locality when Gul Jan was on his way to check-post from his home. one ALP official was wounded in the attack. Hafizuddin, the resident of locality, told Pajhwok Afghan News Gul Jan was a prominent commander and reduced Taliban influence in the ... (More on P4)... (15)

27 Taliban, Daesh Militants Killed in Nangarhar Clashes

JALALABAD - Twenty-seven militants have been killed and nearly a dozen others wounded as a result of infighting and clashes with security forces in eastern Nangarhar province, an official said on Wednesday. Security forces clashed

with Taliban insurgents in the Khogyani district last night, the governor's spokesman told Pajhwok Afghan News. Attaullah Khogyani said four commanders were among nine Taliban gunmen killed and several ... (More on P4)... (16)

US Congressman Slams Denial of US Visa to Gen. Dostum

KABUL - The US House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats has voiced his concern over the denial of a US visa to Afghan Vice-President Abdul Rashid Dostum. Dana Rohrabacher, a California Republican, said: "I was dismayed to learn Dostum has been denied a visa. President Obama's team has yet again done damage to a foreign leader who is



struggling against radical Islamic terrorism... "Thus, we witness the spectacle of the U.S. government undermining efforts to defeat radical Islamic terrorism. The latest example is a senseless slap in the face of Afghanistan's vice president," he wrote in an article. ... (More on P4)... (17)

Insurgents Overrun Surkh Kotal Area of Baghlan

PUL-I-KHUMRI - Taliban have captured the Surkh Kotal locality of northern Baghlan province after several days of fighting, with security forces managing to flee the area, officials on Wednesday. One security official, who wished to go unnamed, confided Pajhwok Afghan News the insurgents had intensified attacks in the area early on Wednesday and security personnel had to retreat after the locality fell to the militants. Sources revealed a number of security personnel, who had been under siege for the past four days, managed to flee the neighbourhood. A Taliban spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, said the Surkh Kotal locality had fallen into their hands and scores of security men had been killed or wounded. Meanwhile, relatives of security officials, who had been trapped in Tapa-i-German locality, said they had no ... (More on P4)... (18)

US Drone Strike Kills 4 Militants

KUNDUZ - Some four militants had been killed in an airstrike in Afghanistan's northern province of Kunduz, a local official said on Wednesday. "On late Tuesday, an unmanned plane of the coalition forces conducted an airstrike on a running vehicle in Bajawori area of Dasht-e-Archi district, causing four militants aboard the vehicle killed," district governor Nasruddin Nazari told Xinhua. A local Taliban commander named Mohammad Nasir was among the killed, the governor added. The province has been the scene of sporadic clashes between Afghan security forces and Taliban militants over the past couple of months. The Afghan security forces have beefed up security operations against militants since early April after Taliban militants started their so-called annual spring offensive and stepped up attacks across the country. Nearly 13,000 NATO-led forces are currently stationed in the militancy-hit country and backing Afghan forces in the war on insurgents. (Xinhua)

78 Baghlan Security Men Rescued from Taliban Siege

PUL-I-KHUMRI - The governor said about 78 security officials, including local police and uprising members, were on Wednesday rescued after being besieged by Taliban militants who captured Surkh Kotal locality of northern Baghlan province. Abdul Sattar Barez told Pajhwok Afghan News security forces launched an operation to rescue of the trapped security men early on Wednesday, killing 13 Taliban gunmen. Barez said the security forc-



es made 'a tactical retreat' from Surkh Kotal and would launch an operation to recapture the area. Earlier in the day, Taliban captured the Surkh Kotal locality after several days of fighting, with security forces managing to flee. A Taliban spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, said the ... (More on P4)... (13)

Outlook Horoscope

Aries (Mar. 22-Apr.20)

There's no need to any work harder today than is necessary or you could overdo it and exhaust yourself in the process. The gentle Libra Moon suggests that relying on grace is more effective now than brute force. No matter what, forget about your ambitions for a while and let your senses be your guide. Flow with the emotional tides, instead of struggling against them.

Taurus (Apr.21-May 20)

Your nerves wear thin today as every little event highlights how far you have to travel before reaching your goal. Unfortunately, anyone who seems impractical just adds to your annoyance. Thankfully, the socially astute Libra Moon's presence in your 6th House of Employment enables you to detach from your emotions by practicing diplomacy at work.

Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You are juggling contradictory desires today and may find it difficult to settle on any one particular avenue of expression. You can be quite adept when it comes to skillfully managing conflicting emotions. However, interactions with others might still be confusing if you try to hide your feelings. There's no justification for keeping secrets now; surprisingly, your inner angst will fade once your true intentions are out in the open.

Cancer (June 21-July 20)

Staying home sounds like a great idea today, especially while the Libra Moon unwinds in your inner-directed 4th House of Roots. But even if you can't take the day off, find ways to make your work environment feel a bit cozier. Little things like wearing comfortable clothes, packing your favorite lunch and adding personal touches around your office can make a big difference.

Leo (July 21-Aug. 21)

You have colorful stories to tell today and are eager to listen to the tales that others want to share, too. The sociable Libra Moon is visiting your 3rd House of Communication, amplifying the simple joy you feel while conversing with a chatty friend. However, the current key to your happiness is sharing the spotlight. Playing the game of life is a team sport now in which everyone wins together or no one wins at all.

Virgo (Aug. 22-Sep 22)

Spend a little money to improve your self-image because showing your best side enables you to take on the world. Purchasing something that makes you feel attractive is sensible while the lovely Libra Moon is traveling through your 2nd House of Self-Worth. Although attention to your looks might seem like a superficial indulgence, you're likely to be more confident on every level when you see yourself in a flattering light.

Libra (Sep 23-Oct. 22)

Your natural ability to put people at ease works best when you take the time to understand their concerns. Happily, the kind Libra Moon reflects her gracious light on your relationships today, increasing your sensitivity to those you love. Nevertheless, be careful of becoming so sympathetic to everyone else's emotions that you lose sight of your own needs.

Scorpio (Oct.23-Nov.22)

An issue of trust may be unnecessarily highlighted today, especially if you're concerned that someone is withholding information from you. There are those who have complete and total faith in you and are more than willing to share their deepest secrets. But others might talk about you behind your back and there's nothing you can do about it.

Sagittarius (Nov.23-Dec.20)

You are often content to hang out and listen to your friends when they share their dreams with you. However, so many people may vie for your attention now that it's nearly impossible to attend to your obligations. Although you might hear lots of ideas and promises today that aren't grounded in reality, it's not your job to shatter anyone's illusions. Instead, help others focus on the most practical elements that will benefit their career.

Capricorn (Dec.21-Jan19)

Collaborating on a project isn't easy if others don't work hard enough to live up to your high standards. Further complicating matters, everyone seems overly sensitive and might require more reassurance now than you're willing to give. Interacting as politely as possible enables you to navigate your way through these tricky dynamics without creating collateral damage.

Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb.18)

You may be in your visionary mode these days because you have more ideas about the future now than information about the present. The Libra Moon's presence in your 9th House of Distant Horizons encourages you to connect with other big thinkers and share thoughts about how to create a better world. Your current dreams might not support your practical needs.

Pisces (Feb.19-Mar.20)

Being overly concerned about other people's reactions can prevent you from saying what's on your mind today. But don't be afraid to consciously shake up a cautious companion with the truth about your feelings now. Your disclosure won't end a conversation; in fact, it might actually be an entry point for a deeper and more productive discussion. The first step is the hardest one, but you can't go wrong if you speak from your heart.



Across

- 1. A single time, 5. Hemp, 10. Potato, 14. Medical breakthrough, 15. Scruffs, 16. Roman emperor, 17. Sin, 19. Colored part of an eye, 20. Request, 21. Loamy deposit, 22. Eyeglasses, 23. Upwind, 25. Pale with fright, 27. Estimated time of arrival, 28. Lawyer, 31. Express a thought, 34. Desiccated, 35. Frozen water, 36. A lightly-hit baseball, 37. Goat antelope, 38. Farm building, 39. Santa's helper, 40. Song of praise, 41. Anklebone, 42. Social class, 44. Record (abbrev.), 45. Rates, 46. Simpleton, 50. Curses, 52. Notched, 54. Fury, 55. Murre, 56. Instigator, 58. Crooner Crosby, 59. Unwaranted, 60. Greek cheese, 61. Wise one, 62. SSSS.

Down

- 1. In base 8, 2. Medical professional, 3. Any of several short-billed Old World rails, 4. Poetic dusk, 5. Domestic breed of rabbit, 6. Exposed, 7. Mimics, 8. A stopping, 9. Donkey, 10. Sharpshooter, 11. Appearing every year, 12. Relating to urine, 13. Sleep in a convenient place, 18. Tablet, 22. Not barefoot, 24. Left, 26. Goulash, 28. Deploy, 29. Beige, 30. Cravings, 31. Comply with, 32. Whipper, 33. Making known, 34. Leathers, 37. Went under, 38. Baroque composer, 40. Shallow metal containers, 41. Brusque, 43. Watch and direct, 44. Shoulder firearms, 46. Bicker, 47. Duck down, 48. Mountain crest, 49. Disorderly revelry, 50. Anagram of "Buds", 51. Diva's solo, 53. Terminates.

Yesterday's Solution



ahead, align, berm, birth, carp, depth, doghouse, during, front, hunt, inapt, induct, irrigation, leave, lone, lost minute, muscle, needy, origin, pair, pang, passive, present, puerile, report, rare, rids, rune, sane, scull, severe, slight, spell, stand, static, supper.

