

Jalalabad Clear 40°C 23°C	Ghazni Clear 26°C 10°C	Kandahar Clear 38°C 23°C	Mazar Clear 37°C 23°C	Herat Clear 37°C 19°C	Bamayan Clear 17°C 7°C	Kabul Partly Cloudy 29°C 13°C
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Daily Outlook Weather Forecast

NDS Foils Massive Attack Plot on Kabul

KABUL - Security agencies have said a vehicle belonging to Haqqani network has been seized along with 16 tons of explosives which were planned to be used for destructive activities in Kabul.

National Directorate of Security (NDS) said in a statement on Saturday that the explosives - which were being transferred to Kabul - were seized during a special operation in Urgun district of eastern Paktika province.

Furthermore in a separate operation, the NDS forces killed 15 Taliban insurgents and wounded 29 others in Barmal district of the province, the statement added.

In addition, security forces also seized a large quantity of arms and ammunition. This comes in the wake of a sharp increase in attacks and suicide bombings in Kabul over the past few weeks. (Tolnews)

Badakhshan 5-Year Development Plan Criticized



FAIZABAD - A five-year development plan in northeastern Badakhshan province has been launched amid criticism from economy department and provincial council's that it has neglected remote districts. The plan has been drafted in seven sections that included good governance, rule of law and human rights, education and culture, health and nutrition, social safety, natural resources and sub-soil assets, agriculture and rural development and private sector.

Badakhshan is among the mountainous provinces of Afghanistan, having borders with Tajikistan, China and Pakistan. The restive districts of the province remain cutoff from the rest of the province for six months in a year due to heavy snow-fall.

Abdullah Naji Nazari, provincial council head, welcomed the development plan, saying it was not without shortcomings.

He told Pajhwok Afghan News the plan should have been prepared in a manner that it should have taken grievances of bordering districts into consideration. "In the five-year plan there are lesser projects for far-flung districts." He said the plan's focus should've been those bordering districts residents. Talabuddin Qaderi, provincial council deputy, said one of the shortcomings of the plan was that projects for some districts were allocated while some were given less schemes. He added in remote areas less development projects have been implemented. "Balance has not been taken into consideration in ... (More on P4)...(10)

Wolesi Jirga Amends Health Law to Boost Quality Medical Services



KABUL - Wolesi Jirga (Lower House of Parliament) on Saturday amended the national health law in order to standardize medical treatment in Afghanistan.

The amendments by the Wolesi Jirga will now enable government hospitals and health centers to invoke a fee system for patients seeking treatment in specialized medical departments.

The lack of technology and specialized equipment often force patients to seek medical treatment outside the country - an issue that impacts profoundly on middle-class families, said officials.

According to one MP: "On the basis of the amendments, all sensitive medical services will be provided to the patients in exchange for a fee." Lawmakers opposing the amendments have announced it is unconstitutional and against article 52 of the law which stresses that all medical and health services should be provided free of charge.

"Asking for a fee in exchange for health services in government ... (More on P4)...(12)

Insecurity, Corruption Linked to Govt. Inefficiency

KABUL - Some lawmakers on Saturday vehemently criticized government for spiraling insecurity, rampant corruption and not appointing new officials.

Qazi Abdul Rahim, a lawmaker from northwestern Badghis province, told the house: "It is shame for leaders of the government that they have not delivered what they had promised to people."

He said eight months after formation of unity government, no tangible steps have been taken to eradicate administrative graft, bring about good governance, and ensure security. "Everyone is mired in corruption."

He urged government to pay more focus on ensuring law and order and support people's uprising against insurgents. "The leaders should pay more attention to vital issues. People today have risen against insurgents, lest they stand one day against the government."

Naqibullah Faiq, another MP from northern Jawzjan province, ... (More on P4)...(8)



New Nangarhar Governor Pledges Inclusive Reforms

JALALABAD - Salim Kunduzi, the newly appointed governor to eastern Nangarhar province, on Saturday pledged to work for durable peace and fight corruption and vacate state land.

Ghulam Jilani Popal, director of Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG), introduced the new governor in a ceremony arranged in his honour.

A number of tribal elders attended the gathering demanding the new governor peace and development of agriculture sector were their demands.

Jilani said Kunduzi was a qualified individual and served as acting minister of agriculture and livestock in the past.

Senate Chairman Fazal Hadi Muslimyar hoped Kunduzi would play active role in bringing peace and stability to the province. Kunduzi promised to resolve all problems being faced by the people and he would make sure to hold face-to-face meetings with people to find out how their issues could be resolved. (Pajhwok)

Pew survey Majority of Americans Say US Failed in Afghanistan

WASHINGTON - A majority of Americans believe that the United States has failed in Afghanistan, a latest Pew survey has revealed.

According to a Pew survey, 56 percent of those surveyed said that the US has mostly failed in achieving its goals in Afghanistan. Thirty six percent said the US has mostly succeeded. These views are little changed from early last year, Pew said.

A declining share of Americans sees prospects for long-term stability in Afghanistan. Just 29 percent say it is likely that Afghanistan will be able to maintain a stable government ... (More on P4)...(9)



Zamir Unveils Solid 100-Day Plan for Agriculture

KABUL - After only a month as Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation, Assadullah Zamir, on Saturday presented his 100-day action plan that looks set to benefit farmers in the long term.

Zamir, who represents a younger generation of leadership, is mandated to oversee major growth in the country's agricultural sector.

He is the youngest member of the new cabinet and said soon after taking oath last month: "My working vision stands on six principles: balance and development will be on the basis of planning and not on the basis of personal projects; reforms in the structure and formation of the ministry will be carried out on the basis of qualification; a focus on insecure regions; fighting corruption; and ... (More on P4)...(11)



Travel Ban for 5 Former Taliban Detainees in Qatar Expires in 2 Days

WASHINGTON - The travel ban imposed on five high-ranking Taliban leaders released by the U.S. from Guantanamo Bay two years ago will end in two days. The Afghan High Peace Council (HPC) has warned of damaging consequences if the former prisoners are allowed to rejoin the Taliban and contribute to their insurgency.

In Washington, the White House has assured that the U.S. will prevent the five men from becoming threats to Afghanistan once again.



In the past, Taliban prisoners freed under former president Hamid Karzai, and across the border in Pakistan, have often reintegrated with militants and taken up arms against the Afghan government again.

Based on the agreement signed between the U.S. and Qatar, the release of the five Taliban commanders came originally as part of a prisoner swap for American soldier Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, who had been abducted by the Taliban. The Taliban leaders have been under how arrest in Qatar since their release from Guantanamo, however, that restriction will end in two days. Afghan HPC members ... (More on P4)...(13)

Kunduz Residents Praise Provincial Council Role

KUNDUZ CITY - The residents of northeastern Kunduz province have registered around 500 complaints about growing insecurity specifically militants' high-handedness and inefficiency of judiciary, provincial council officials said on Saturday.

The provincial council election results of the April 5 ballot were announced in November 2014. After the elections result, the parliament decided to curtail role of provincial council regarding evaluation of performance of local departments and let them only to advise local officials.

However, provincial council members opposed the parliament's step and as a protest they closed the councils' offices for a month.

After getting back the powers, Kunduz provincial council members said that they evaluated performance of local departments and complaints of hundreds of people were referred to the council's office.

Mohammad Yousuf Ayubi, provincial council head, told Pajhwok Afghan News his office addressed more than 500 complaints of people from Imam Sahib, Dasht-i-Archi, Chahardara, Khanabad, Al-iabad and Qala-i-Zal district. Most of the complaints, he said were related to insecurity, emergence of militants in rural areas, project implementations, tribal disputes, judicial and other issues.

He added the complaints were addressed in shortest possible time. He said that they also attracted attention of officials to tackle corruption in some offices in the province after evaluation of departments by the council.

Ayubi did not reveal the names of the departments accused of corruption but said that ... (More on P4)...(14)

Takhar Land Suitable for Saffron Crops Cultivation: Official

TALUQAN - The official of agriculture department in northern Takhar province said they cultivated saffron over 16 fields to test it cultivation and growth and the result of the crop was extremely positive.

The crop was cultivated in Taluqan, the provincial capital, and Farkhar, Rostaq, Dasht Kala, Bangi and Shakmash districts where saffron was cultivated over half acres of land and each crop produced 600 kilograms of saffron.

The Saffron Development Director Farima termed the production satisfactory, adding that normally half acre of land produced 500 to 600 kilograms of harvest.

He said currently the price of one gram of saffron was ranges between 200 to 250 Afghani in open market. (Pajhwok)

Outcry over Closure of Hospital's Main Entrance

KABUL - The closure of the main entrance of the Kabul Police Hospital has sparked an outcry as ambulances carrying injured soldiers are forced to use the long rutted route around the back of the building - which is believed to jeopardize the lives of critically wounded patients.

A source from the hospital told TOLNews that the decision was taken by the Council of Ministers on the recommendation of the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE). The hospital is situated next to the Kabul Polytechnic University.

However, Afghan National Police (ANP) members have complained that this move means that wounded and injured police officers are subjected to more discomfort when being transported by ambulance.

They complained that the added distance to the hospital now also puts critical patients' lives at risk.

Meanwhile, an ambulance driver confirmed the ... (More on P4)...(15)

Kandahar Departments' Performance Being Evaluated

KANDAHAR - A delegation from the Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC) has arrived in southern Kandahar province to evaluate the governmental department's performance.

Samim Khpalwak, the governor's spokesman, told Pajhwok Afghan News the seven-member delegation headed by Dr. Yama Turabi met with Governor Dr. Humayoon Azizi and provincial council head Haji Sayed Jan Khakrezwal.

He added the delegation would closely look at anti-corruption efforts in the province and would also evaluate the performance of local officials and departments.

The delegation's head Yama Turabi said matters of land usurpation and taxing the foreign imported goods would also include in the evaluation. ... (More on P4)...(16)