

Jalalabad Chance of Rain 19°C 11°C	Ghazni Chance of Rain 11°C 3°C	Kandahar Clear 20°C 10°C	Mazar Clear 18°C 11°C	Herat Clear 22°C 11°C	Bamayan Chance of Rain 5°C -3°C	Kabul Chance of Rain 11°C 4°C
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NSC Takes Serious Measures to End Abduction

KABUL - After beheading seven civilian hostages in Zabul province, the National Security Council (NSC) Tuesday session devoted to hostage-taking. Presidential Palace said that the meeting of national Security Council was on ending the hostage-taking process. Deputy spokesman of President, Sayed Zafar Hashemi announced about the releasing of eight hostages by National Directorate Security NDS following an operative operation. Hashemi noted that the council decided to punish those who neglect in releasing seven passengers beheaded by Daesh two days ago in Zabul province. ...*(More on P4)...(8)*



8 of Remaining Bus Hostages Freed

KABUL - At least eight of the remaining 12 hostages out of 31 bus passengers abducted earlier this year have been freed, said the Afghan intelligence agency. The freed abductees constitute five men, two men and a teenager, said National Directorate of Security (NDS) in a statement on Tuesday. The abductees - who were held for nearly nine months - will join their families soon, it added. At least 31 bus passengers were kidnapped earlier this year on February 24 by unknown armed masked men when they stopped several buses on Kabul-Kandahar highway. The kidnapers reportedly took the hostages to Shah Joy district in southern Zabul. Nineteen of those abducted were released on 11 May as a result of an alleged prisoner swap ...*(More on P4)...(9)*

Turkey's Erdogan Calls for new Constitution, Reform in Next four Years



ANKARA - Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan on Tuesday called for reforms and the creation of a new constitution in the next four years, steps that would move the country closer to the executive presidency he has long sought. The ruling AK Party founded by Erdogan swept back to single-party rule at a snap election on Nov. 1, taking 317 of the 550 seats in parliament, just shy of the 330 seats required to hold a referendum on changing the constitution. Erdogan argues that Turkey needs an executive presidency similar to that of the United States or Russia, while his critics fear that will consolidate more power in the hands of an authoritarian leader who brooks little dissent.

"The Nov. 1 election ushered in four years of stability and confidence. Let's make this period a time of reforms, prioritizing a new constitution," Erdogan said at a commemoration ceremony for Turkey's founding father, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. The comments were later echoed by Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, who said the country would embark on a major reform process in the next six months and would carry out economic, social and judicial reforms, without giving further details. Davutoglu also said that the new constitution must ensure freedoms and be based on the separation of powers. The current system creates tensions between the president and the prime minister, he said. (Reuters)

Afghans Protest Against Beheading of Civilians



GHAZNI - Thousands of Afghans demonstrated on Tuesday in Ghazni city, capital of the eastern Ghazni province, to protest against beheading of seven civilians by militants. On Saturday night, militants loyal to the Islamic State (IS) group beheaded seven civilians, including two women and a child, in southern Zabul province, bordering Ghazni. The victims were kidnapped by the militants along a main road months ago. The protesters were carrying the bodies of the victims while marching toward the provincial government office building to demand justice. "We demand the government bring to justice all those involved in the brutal killing

of innocent civilians," protester Mohammad Jaffar told Xinhua. Carrying banners with "murderers should be brought to justice," and "death to Taliban, death to Daesh" the demonstrators called upon the government to protect the roadways and provide security for traveler. They also demanded punishment for those behind the barbaric murder. Earlier in the day, members of Afghan civil society also held a protest in the Afghan capital of Kabul calling for punishment of those who committed the crime. On Monday, Afghan President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani and the government's chief executive ...*(More on P4)...(10)*

Officials Vow to Trail Culprits Raised Taliban, IS Flags in Students Protest

KABUL - Anyone who has raised Taliban, ISIL, and Al-Qaeda flags in a university student's protest in eastern



Nangarhar province will be trailed soon, a police official said Tuesday.

A number of students from Nangarhar University staged a protest on Sunday and raised Taliban, ISIL, Al-Qaeda and Hezb-e-Islami flags and reportedly they have torn the flag of Afghanistan and were calling 'Long Live Islamic Caliphate' and 'Death to Republic'. Najib Danish, Deputy Spokesperson for the Ministry of Interior (MoI) said the government will investigate this issue as these students have staged a protest against the national security and law of Afghanistan. "Supporting terrorist groups is against the law, Ministry of Interior has assigned police to take legal actions against this issue," Danish said on Monday.

Meanwhile, official in the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) says those students who have committed this illegal action will be introduced to the legal and judicial institutions. "First these students have gathered inside the university, then they have staged a protest and a number of people have abused this protest. As they have committed an action which violates the law we will let you know about their submission to the law," Safiullah Jalalzai, a spokesman for the MoHE said. Provincial higher education official in Nangarhar says we will not accept any demand which violates the law. "They have the right to ask their requirements, but we cannot accept any of their demands which violate the law," Babrak Miakhail, head of the higher education in Nangarhar said. (ATN)

Donor Community Pledges to Support Afghanistan's Agriculture Sector

KABUL - The officials of the United States and the World Bank have pledged to support Afghanistan's agriculture sector at a high-level meeting in Washington, a statement from the Afghan Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) stated Tuesday. Afghan Minister Assadullah Zamir met with senior representatives from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), United States Department of State, United States Institute of Peace (USIP), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), United States Congress, and the World Bank during his trip to the US. The donor commu-



nity recognized Afghanistan's agriculture sector as the backbone of the economy and key to the growth and stability of the war-torn nation. The officials emphasized on the strengthening of the agriculture sector for the prosperity of the country. The US and the World Bank pledged to

continue funding to the Afghan Agriculture Ministry and help them achieve their goal of food security and wheat self-sufficiency by 2020. Afghanistan's agricultural sector employs over 80% of the population and contributes one third of the country's GDP. (Wadsam)

Number of Tajik Border Guards on Afghan-Tajik Border Makes 16,000 People

BISHKEK - The Taliban's growing strength in the northeast Afghanistan has forced Tajikistan to upgrade border defense arrangements, reports the Institute for War and Peace Reporting. The 16,000 armed border

guards who patrol some 1,300 kilometres of frontier with Afghanistan will now be supported by the army, which will form a second line of defense to repel any incursions. This second line can provide artillery and air support for the lightly-

armed border guards. Unlike Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, both of which border on Afghanistan, Tajikistan would be able to call on direct Russian military assistance in an emergency. A 7,000-strong Russian army division ...*(More on P4)...(11)*

Italy Won't Pull out of Afghanistan Mission: Pinotti



ROME - Italy will not pull out of the NATO-led Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan, Defence Minister Roberta Pinotti told a joint session of parliament's defence and foreign commissions on Tuesday. The mission took over in an advisory role after the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) ceased combat operations and was disbanded in December 2014. US President Barack Obama said in October he would maintain the current force of 9,800 troops in Afghanistan through most of next year to combat a growing Taliban insurgency, then draw down to 5,500 troops in 2017. Premier Matteo Renzi indicated

that Italy, too, would keep up its commitment to the Taliban-plagued Asian country. The mission has cost Italy 54 casualties and many wounded over the past decade, and now numbers 750 personnel. Of these, about 60 are deployed to the Kabul headquarters of the Resolute Support and the rest are deployed in the western city of Herat. The Italian mission is made up of logistics, a security task force, a helicopter division called Phoenix, and some 100 military advisors from the Army and Carabinieri military police, whose job is to train the Afghan military. It is currently financed with 59 million ...*(More on P4)...(13)*

EU Expects G20 Battle to Recognize Migration Crisis as A Global Issue



BRUSSELS - The European Union expects a battle at the summit of world leaders in Turkey on Sunday to have its migration crisis recognized as a global problem needing a global response, an EU official said on Tuesday. Leaders of the world's 20 biggest economies (G20), including the United States, China, Japan, Russia, Canada, Australia and Brazil, are to meet next Sunday and Monday in the Turkish sea resort of Antalya to discuss global economic issues. But Europe, which is facing an unprecedented inflow of

refugees from the war-torn Syria, Iraq and Africa, also wants the G20 to help it address what has become a crisis with one million refugees expected to come to Europe this year alone. Turkey, which hosts the summit, has itself already taken in two million people from neighboring Syria and Iraq. Hundreds of thousands continue their journey to Europe. "The G20 has to recognize the scale of the problem and the fact that it is a global issue," one senior EU official said. ...*(More on P4)...(14)*

Bodies of Beheaded Passengers Arrive in Kabul



KABUL - Families of seven beheaded passengers on Tuesday evening moved the bodies of their beloved ones from Ghazni to Kabul in a bid to seek justice from government. Three women were among seven passengers beheaded by alleged Daesh militants after kidnapping them few months ago on the way between Ghazni and Zabul provinces. Broke into tears, hundreds of Kabul residents gathered in a Mosque in Dast-e-Barchi area where the bodies were moved. Some angry participants of the gathering accused the government of neglecting the kidnapped passengers. They warned they will not remain calm on what they said was a barbaric act. Meanwhile, some other attendees stressed the need for unity among all ethnic groups of Afghanistan and urged the government to bring the per-

petrators to justice. "Here the people of Ghazni including members of Tajik, Pashtun and Hazara ethnic groups are gathering to show solidarity and seek justice for the families of victims," said a resident of Ghazni who came along the caravan of bodies to Kabul. Meanwhile, the government on Tuesday said necessary preparations had been taken for the funeral of the victims. Second Vice President Mohammad Sarwar Danish, second deputy of CEO Mohammad Mohaqiq, Minister of Borders and Tribal Affairs Mohammad Gulab Mangal and Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation Mohammadullah Batash will visit the families of victims in Ghazni, according to Ghani's deputy spokesman Sayed Zafar Hashemi. In addition, a number of civil society activists accused the government of not doing enough for the release of abductees. ...*(More on P4)...(12)*