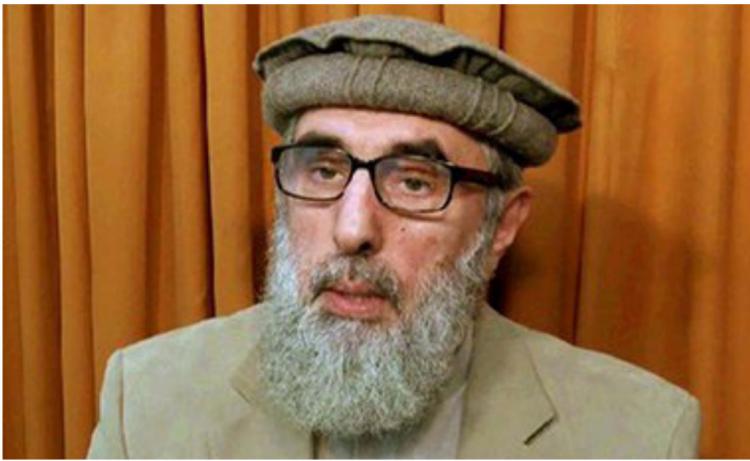


Jalalabad Clear 24°C 11°C	Ghazni Clear 17°C 1°C	Kandahar Clear 23°C 6°C	Mazar Partly Cloudy 21°C 8°C	Herat Partly Cloudy 26°C 8°C	Bamayan Clear 16°C 2°C	Kabul Clear 16°C 1°C
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Hekmatyar Refuse to Apologize Over War Crime Allegations

KABUL - The leader of Hezb-e-Islami Gulbuddin Hekmatyar has refused to apologize over war crime allegations as efforts are underway to remove his name from UNSC sanctions committee following the conclusion of a peace deal with the Afghan government. In an audio message to AFP, Hekmatyar said "Those who have committed crimes or have been charged by a reputable court should apologize. Not those upon whom war is imposed, who have resisted the invaders, defended themselves and defended the country." Hekmatyar is accused of serious human rights violations during the devastating civil war in Afghanistan in 1990s. His party joined the peace



process following months of negotiations with the Afghan high peace council as the Afghan officials are optimistic that the reconciliation with Hezb-e-Islami will open doors for the other militant groups to join peace process and end the ongoing violence through reconciliation. A member of the party said late in September that Hezb-e-Islami has apologized to the victims of the devastating ...*(More on P4)...(10)*

3,000 Pul-i-Alam Families to Find Access to Clean Water

PUL-I-ALAM - The foundation stone of a drinking water supply project worth 65 million afghanis has been laid in Pul-i-Alam, the capital of central Logar province. The project will be completed in one year with funds from the Ministry of Urban Development, Governor Mohammad Halim Fidai told a ceremony here. "This project will cost 65 million afghanis and will supply drinking water to 3000 families", the governor said. Fidai said digging three deep wells, installing a heavy generator, two water pumps and a tank to hold 12,000 square meters water. On the sidelines of the project launch ceremony, a member of the provincial council, Sayed Qaribullah Sadat, told Pajhwok Afghan News that water and electricity were basic requirements of local population and the project would prove beneficial. Ajmal, a resident, said currently most residents of Logar province lacked access to clean drinking water. *(Pajhwok)*

21 Taliban Militants Killed in Sar-i-Pul Clashes

SAR-I-PUL - At least 21 militants have been killed during clashes with security forces in northern Sar-i-Pul province, the governor said on Wednesday. Mohammad Zahir Wahdat told Pajhwok Afghan News the insurgents launched attacks security posts near the provincial capital, Sar-i-Pul City, three days ago. He said militants began their attacks on Tuesday night after coming together from Sar-i-Pul, Ghor, Faryab, Jawzjan and Balkh provinces. He said the rebels were pushed back and inflicted casualties after commando forces arrived from Kabul. Over the past 24 hours of clashes in Balghali, Adrang, Baghawi, Sanq-i-Dut areas of Sar-i-Pul City and on the Sar-i-Pul-Jwzjan highway, at least 21 militants were killed and 28 others wounded. The dead rebels included notorious commanders Mullah ...*(More on P4)...(14)*

Film Dept. Slams Finance Ministry over Undelivered Budget

KABUL - The state-run Afghan Film Department on Wednesday blasted the Ministry of Finance (MoF) for failing to pay out the department's budget. The Afghan Film Department officials claimed that the lack of a budget has prevented them from being able to shoot new movies and TV series. The budget is \$220,000 USD, which was supposed to be allocated for film production costs, said chairman of the Afghan Film Department Ibrahim Arefi Kaihan. But, the finance ministry has hit back at the allegation, saying so far the ministry has not received notification from the ministry of information and culture to pay out the budget. "We do not have any problem to allocate budget and bring about other financial facilities; our expectation is



that the honorable ministry of information and culture discusses the Afghan film issue with us," said Ajmal Hamid Abdul Rahimzai, spokesman to MoF. The Afghan movie industry has been hard hit over the past few years. Even popular cinema venues in Kabul have either been totally destroyed or changed into commercial business centers. Eighteen cinemas were once found in Kabul - but now only a handful are still in business. "We have movie shows from eight o'clock in the morning until six in the afternoon, but fans are few," said Mohammad Hashim Haidari. "The culture of watching movies has declined, but cinema is a good platform to revive this culture," said Abdul Saboor Kahkashan, an employee of Kahkashan Cinema. The majority of films screened at these cinemas are ...*(More on P4)...(11)*

Amir Declared 'Education Star' in Kabul Academic Contest

KABUL - Amir, a student of Ghazi Abdullah High School, has been declared "Education Star" of Afghanistan after securing first position in a national academic competition in Kabul. Fariha and Nikbakht achieved 2nd and 3rd positions respectively in the contest that featured 53,000 grade 11th students from Kabul schools. The Ministry of Education (MoE) in a statement said the Education Star, Amir, son of Ayoub, was a resident of Kabul City. Fariha, a student of Abdul Ahmad Javid High School, is daughter of Abdul Ghafoor and Nikbakht is a student of Lamia Shaheed High School. The MoE said Amir was given a Corolla model car and a laptop, Fariha received a laptop and some cash and Nikbakht was given cash. Saeed Mansoor, Kabul education director, said nearly 53,000 grade 11th students from public and private schools participated in the competition. MoE officials said the grade 11 students were chosen because the 12th grade students were busy preparing for the university entrance exam. *(Pajhwok)*

Trump Called 'a Complete Maniac' by Local Daesh Commander

WASHINGTON - Abu Omar Khorasani, the top Daesh commander in Afghanistan, said President-elect Donald Trump's "utter hate towards Muslims" will make it much easier to recruit more supporters for Daesh. After the Paris attacks in 2015, Trump had stated that Muslims should be temporarily banned from the country until they figured out "what the hell was going on". Trump has always said that the safety of Americans was paramount and it was not about religious discrimination. Now that he is the President-Elect, he said that he would suspend immigration from countries which have "a history of exporting terrorism," Reuters reported. "This guy is a complete maniac. His utter hate towards Muslims will make our job much easier because we can recruit thousands," said Khorasani, as reported by Reuters. "Our leaders were closely following the US election but it was unexpected that the Americans will dig their own graves and they did so."



According to him, Obama was a moderate infidel with slightly more intelligence than Trump. According to a senior Taliban commander in Afghanistan, the group had kept a track of Trump's speeches and anti-Muslim comments. "If he does what he warned in his election campaign, I am sure it will provoke Muslim Ummah (community) across the world and jihadi organizations can exploit it." But Hisham al Hashemi, an adviser to the Iraqi government on Sunni jihadist movements, stated to Reuters that "Al Qaeda is known for its recruitment strategy that heavily quotes speeches of the White House and other ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

Special Forces Rescue 36 Civilians from Taliban Prison in Helmand

KABUL - At least 36 civilians, including children, were rescued from a Taliban prison during a special operation by the Crisis Response Unit (CRU) in southern Helmand on Tuesday night, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) said in a statement on Wednesday. "Those released included children and men. They were rescued following a special operation in Greshak district of southern Helmand province," according to the statement. There were no casualties among the CRU members during the operation. *(Tolonews)*

33 Weapons Handed over to DIAG in Laghman

MEHTARLAM - Thirty-three different light and heavy weapons were handed over to the Disarmament of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG) programme officials in eastern Laghman province on Wednesday. Laghman Governor Abdul Jabbar Naeemi told a ceremony here that the weapons had been confiscated by security forces during their operations. The weapons released to DIAG officials included seven Kalashnikovs, 20 pistols, one rocket launcher, 9 different old arms and 1350 bullets and ammunition. The governor said the confiscation of weapons and their surrender to the DIAG programme was helpful in maintaining peace and security. He praised security forces for their efforts and sacrifices and asked them prevent illegal arms. Brig. Gen. Noorullah Qaderi, the 201 Selab Military Corps first battalion commander in Laghman, and Laghman police chief Matiullah Safi said they were making efforts to maintain order in Laghman and frustrate the enemy's nefarious designs. *(Pajhwok)*

WFP Launches 9-Month Operation to Assist Returnees

KABUL - The World Food Programme (WFP) has launched a nine-month operation to help Afghanistan deal with the growing number of returnees from Pakistan and internally displaced people (IDPs) by providing emergency food and funds, the UN says. On a daily basis, thousands of refugees are crossing the border at the main entry point of Torkham, some with identity documents and others without. More than a million people are expected to be on the move across the country by the end of the year. In cooperation with the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation, WFP plans establishing a digital registration platform at the border to capture the returnees' biometric data using SCOPE -- the UN agency's beneficiary management application. Mick Lorentzen, WFP's country director in Afghanistan, said in a statement: "We need sufficient and timely funds in the coming weeks and months to ensure that we can help returnees as



rapidly and efficiently as possible." WFP and other United Nations agencies are working closely with the Afghan government to increase the capacity of humanitarian response and meet immediate shelter, sanitation and food needs, which also required an urgent appeal for \$152 million. Having stepped up assistance in eastern Afghanistan, WFP is providing food and cash support for 163,000 undocumented returnees, 200,000 registered returnees, 150,000 IDPs and 35,000 refugees in Khost and Paktika provinces. WFP acknowledged receiving generous and timely contributions from Australia, Belgium, Italy and Norway. *(Pajhwok)*

Insecurity, Corruption Major Obstacles to Peace: Hadid



MAZAR-I-SHARIF - Civil society activists from two provinces on Wednesday began a three-day session titled "The Balkh and Kunduz Peace Caravan" in Mazar-i-Sharif, the capital of northern Balkh province. The day one of the session, inaugurated by Mediothek Afghanistan, an Afghan-German non-government

organization committed to peace and democracy in Afghanistan, was attended by provincial council members and dozens of civil society activists from Balkh and Kunduz. Mediothek in-charge in Balkh, Sabir Naqashbandi, told Pajhwok Afghan News the Balkh and Kunduz Peace Convoy was a three-day event. ...*(More on P4)...(12)*

Baghlan Child Bride Seeks Justice after Being 'Tortured'

KABUL - A 14-year-old child bride from Baghlan province on Wednesday called on the Afghan legal and judicial system to serve justice on her husband and in-laws whom she claims tortured her on a daily basis. The victim who got married

a year ago said she was continually tortured, particularly by her husband and brother-in-law. She claims that she is badly scarred from these beatings. "My husband hit me with a hot grill and burnt me. His brother also beat me and

shot my leg," said the victim. Meanwhile, the victim's husband who is now in police custody, has reportedly confessed to the violence against his wife. "I tried hard to advise her, but she never listened to me, then I resorted to torturing her," he said. Meanwhile officials from Baghlan police department have said that the police arrested the victim's husband and his brother in connection with the attacks. "Baghlan police have arrested the woman's husband and his brother. In the initial investigation, her husband confessed that he had mistreated the woman," said ...*(More on P4)...(13)*



Contract Signed to Reconstruct Kunduz Airport

KABUL - The Afghanistan Civil Aviation Authority (ACAA) on Wednesday signed a contract with a private company for reconstruction of the airport in northern Kunduz province. A statement from the ACAA to Pajhwok Afghan News said the airport's reconstruction project would cost 389 million afghanis to be

paid by the government. The project is expected to take one year to complete, the statement said, adding the runway of the airport -- 620 meters lengthy and one meter deep -- would be fundamentally reconstructed. The statement said a temporary runway with 2,020 meters length has been constructed for flights on a

short term basis. For protection of the airport, a 12 kilometer long fence would be erected and 10 security towers built around the airport, the ACAA said. The construction process of Kunduz airport terminal would also complete in near future and would have modern facilities, the statement said. *(Pajhwok)*