

Afghan Forces Lead Lashkargah Battle: Official

LASHKARGAH - Local officials on Saturday said ground and air operations have been launched in areas around the capital of southern Helmand province. They claimed the insurgents suffered heavy casualties as a result of the operations. Helmand Governor Hayatullah Hayat during a press conference here rejected rumours that the American forces were leading the operation in the province. Flanked by 215 Maiwand Military Corps commander Brig. Gen. Wali Mohammad Ahmadzai, the governor said the Afghan security forces had complete coordination



and they were in the lead of the operation. Brig. Gen. Ahmadzai said during the past three days of the air and ground offensive, 130 Taliban militants had been killed and scores of others wounded. He said besides Lashkargah, clearing operations would be launched soon in other parts of the province. The corps commander said Afghan forces had suffered casualties in areas near Lashkargah but not as much as reported by some media outlets. However, he did not provide exact figures for the casualties among security forces. The governor said reinforcements ...*(More on P4)...(9)*

Stable Afghanistan Key to Regional Prosperity; Asfandyar

PESHAWAR - A veteran Pakhtun nationalist leader has called for efforts to ensure stability in Afghanistan, saying security in the neighbouring country holds the key to prosperity in the region. Awami National Party central president Asfandyar Wali Khan said Pakistan was passing through a critical time in its history, faced with what he called extreme isolation in the region. He added: "Our isolation could be judged from the postponement of the SAARC summit, which was due to be held in Is-

lamabad, but five member states refused to come to Pakistan," he said. Addressing a public meeting in Nowshera, the ANP leader said Pakistan could not prosper until Afghanistan was prosperous. By the same token, he explained, Afghanistan also needed a prosperous Pakistan. Afghans were being repatriated against Pakhtun traditions and international laws, alleged Khan, who suggested the refugees - registered or undocumented - should be sent back with dignity and respect. *(Pajhwok)*

Nearly 2,000 Kunduz IDPs Return Home from Balkh

KABUL - Local officials in Balkh on Saturday said nearly 2,000 out of 8,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) returned to their homes in Kunduz after they left their houses to seek refuge in the neighboring province. Zabiullah Akhtari, provincial director of techni-

cal services of Refugees and Repatriation Ministry, said a number of Afghan businessmen and aid organizations have distributed food and clothes to the displaced families. "Government distributed tents to the displaced families and charity organizations ...*(More on P4)...(10)*



Baghlan-Kunduz Highway Reopens to Traffic

KABUL - Security forces have finally managed to clear Baghlan-Kunduz highway and reopened it to traffic on Friday evening, security officials said. According to the officials the highway was reopened after a military operation and the highway has completely been cleared of Taliban. The highway reopened after ten days. Last week dozens of vehicles belonging to the Ministry of Interior were set alight by insurgents on the highway. "Enemy suffered heavy casualties and their equipment was destroyed and at the moment the highway is fully under military control and people can travel safely on the highway," ...*(More on P4)...(11)*

440 War-Displaced Families Receive Aid in Badakhshan



FAIZABAD - Local officials on Saturday said a survey of families displaced as result of clashes from northeastern Kunduz province to Badakhshan was underway and 440 of them have already received aid. Syed Abdullah Dehqan, the Natural Disaster Management Authority head for the province, said their teams were surveying families displaced as result of war from Kunduz to Badakhshan. "Around

500 families have migrated from Kunduz to Badakhshan, living in different areas of Faizabad, the provincial capital. As many as 440 of the families surveyed have received aid," he said. Dehqan added other families would receive the aid in near future. Badakhshan residents have also helped the displaced households with food and water. Mohammad Ghafoor, an inhabitant of ...*(More on P4)...(13)*

Taliban's Supply Routes Blocked in Uruzgan, Helmand: Hameed

TERINKOT - Local officials on Saturday said reinforcements had arrived in Tirinkot, the capital of central Uruzgan province, after the reopening of the Uruzgan-Kandahar highway. Tirinkot city has been under attack from

Taliban militants, who have captured some areas from Afghan forces in the past one month. Ministry of Defense (MoD) official Gen. Abdul Hamid Hamid, who has come to Uruzgan to lead the battle against militants, said

that reinforcements had reached Tirinkot after the Uruzgan-Kandahar highway was reopened. He added the Afghan forces were ready to drive the Taliban from the city. All government organs, including the governor's

house, have forged good coordination and effective plans for the elimination of the Taliban were being worked out, he continued. Hamid confirmed reinforcements reaching Tirinkot included com ...*(More on P4)...(12)*

Abdali Defends Boycott of SAARC Summit in Islamabad

PESHAWAR - Afghanistan's Ambassador to India Shaida Mohammad Abdali, hailing the Kabul-Delhi ties as unique and deep, on Friday said his country would soon open a consulate in the southern city of Hyderabad. "We are going to open a consulate in Hyderabad which will not only focus on trade

and business, but this is going to be a step forward towards expansion of our ties at all levels," the Afghan diplomat was quoted as saying by the Indian media. Bilateral relations in the fields of education, commerce, people-to-people contacts, culture and health would see a major boost ...*(More on P4)...(14)*

house, have forged good coordination and effective plans for the elimination of the Taliban were being worked out, he continued. Hamid confirmed reinforcements reaching Tirinkot included com ...*(More on P4)...(12)*

house, have forged good coordination and effective plans for the elimination of the Taliban were being worked out, he continued. Hamid confirmed reinforcements reaching Tirinkot included com ...*(More on P4)...(12)*

Pak-Afghan Journalists Forum to Honour Legendary Singer

PESHAWAR - A music and cultural week will be arranged from October 24 to 30 in honour of renowned Pashto singer Khyal Mohammad, organizers say. A string of events marking the week would be held at Nishtar Hall and Peshawar Press Club, said office-bearers of the Pak-Afghan Journalists Forum. SailabMahsud and Syed Bukhar Shah hailed the elderly singer as a living legend of Pakhtuns on both sides of the Durand Line. Journalists, singers, poets and writers from Pakistan

and Afghanistan have been invited to participate in the events. "The main purpose of the week is to acknowledge the services of Khyal Mohammad to Pashto music," said Sailab Mehsud. On the first day of the Khyal Mohammad Week, a function would be held at Nishtar Hall, said popular Pashto singer Bakhtiar Khattak. Participants will pay tribute to Khyal Mohammad. "On the evening of October 24, a music concert will be held at Nishtar ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

Outlook Horoscope

Aries (Mar. 22-Apr.20)



A failure to address an existing relationship issue can suddenly turn into a major kerfuffle today. A menacing Mercury-Pluto square could undermine trust, while an extreme Sun-Uranus opposition inspires you to ignore all warning signs and blast ahead anyhow. Although you may want to flee if you don't find any obvious answers, letting go of your fixed expectations leads to the breakthrough you seek.

Taurus (Apr.21-May 20)



Chasing a fascinating idea might take you on a scenic route today, but this detour can turn into a wild ride if you try to fight the inevitable. Unfortunately, you set yourself up for a day of unpleasant surprises unless you possess a little faith and a good deal of flexibility. However, staying open to the possibilities may be all it takes to unlock a stagnant relationship issue.

Gemini (May 21-June 20)



It's as if the cosmos is inviting you to play a game of Truth or Dare, requiring you to be honest to a fault. But the rules state that you can't distort the facts, even if your disclosure upsets the proverbial apple cart. In fact, tiptoeing around the edges of a touchy subject won't be enough to prevent an unstable house of cards from tumbling down. You might experience a few uncomfortable exchanges today in your quest for transparency.

Cancer (June 21-July 20)



You might not be able to skirt around conflict today as unresolved fears lead to a verbal showdown. Nevertheless, open confrontation isn't the best response to your current concerns. Of course, denying your feelings isn't helpful either; avoidance only increases the dissension in the long run. Think carefully before you speak and use your innate emotional sensitivity to build bridges rather than to tear them down.

Leo (July 21-Aug. 21)



Someone close to you may have an agenda that's at odds with yours today, creating an impasse in finalizing your plans. Unfortunately, this isn't a light and easy disagreement that you can just disregard. You have abruptly come to the end of a road and can't determine where to turn next.

Virgo (Aug. 22-Sep 22)



You can feel the pressure to hold your ground today even if a part of you wants to run away from everyone and everything. Your innate tendency to do what's right is challenged by the Sun's revolutionary opposition to Uranus in your 8th House of Transformation. Saying less is better than trying to convince others that your way makes more sense at this volatile time.

Libra (Sep 23-Oct. 22)



You take pride in your even-handed approach to disagreements but your gut feeling makes you suspicious of what others are selling you today. You're eager to put this matter behind you, but it's nearly impossible now to tell whose facts are the correct ones. The tension is palpable, motivating you to untangle the variables in this crazy situation, respond accordingly and move on.

Scorpio (Oct.23-Nov.22)



Unresolved issues could escalate in an unexpected moment of emotional drama or, preferably, in a sudden urge for total honesty. Communicator Mercury's dynamic square to your key planet Pluto is a great opportunity to initiate an open dialogue about a sensitive subject. However, your volatile feelings might cause a scene you later regret.

Sagittarius (Nov.23-Dec.20)



Finding common ground between those who resist change and those who insist upon it requires someone with extraordinary vision - and today the job might be yours. The stormy skies are electric with tension as the Sun opposes reactionary Uranus in your 11th House of Community. Unfortunately, people seem to be easily offended by your radical honesty, suggesting that a little discretion works in your favor.

Capricorn (Dec.21-Jan19)



You may be overwhelmed with professional or personal pressures, tempting you to escape from your responsibilities today. Nevertheless, don't let fatigue or frustration dictate your actions because they can keep you from achieving your goals. Unfortunately, you might be swept up in someone else's battle or find yourself torn between sticking to your plan and running off to join the circus.

Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb.18)



Unexpected events require you to refocus your energy today and take the reins, even if everything seems out of control. This paradoxical mix of energy stems from the Sun's opposition to unstable Uranus in your 3rd House of Immediate Environment, tempting you to cut loose and follow your every whim. Resist turning your world upside down in an impulsive attempt to alleviate boredom.

Pisces (Feb.19-Mar.20)



A sudden change in your financial condition might originate from an unplanned expenditure today. Whether you're required to repair something that is no longer working or considering a major purchase, the need to make a decision could come out of the blue. In either case, avoid overreacting while the Sun opposes uncontainable Uranus in your 2nd House of Self-Worth.

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-71.

Across: 1. "Yippee!", 6. Stinging remark, 10. Website addresses, 14. Ancient Greek marketplace, 15. Arab chieftain, 16. Ark builder, 17. Governs, 18. Fit, 19. Greek sandwich, 20. A young unmarried woman (archaic), 22. Indian music, 23. Smelting waste, 24. Fanatic, 26. Gull-like bird, 30. American Dental Association, 31. Eastern newt, 32. Haughtiness, 33. An indefinite period, 35. Achievements, 39. Gleam, 41. Dud, 43. Step, 44. Lots, 46. Component of urine, 47. Destroy the inside of, 49. Website address, 50. Caustics, 51. Bearing, 54. Foot digits, 56. Astringent, 57. Tour of duty, 63. On the left or right, 64. Be agitated, 65. Sexually assaults, 66. Baking appliance, 67. Great affection, 68. Inuit boat, 69. Where a bird lives.
Down: 1. A division of a hospital, 2. Chills and fever, 3. Low, flat land, 4. Chocolate cookie, 5. Fertile area in a desert, 6. Decapitation, 7. Filling material, 8. Small brook, 9. A slight wind, 10. Thankless, 11. Imperial, 12. Very slow in tempo, 13. Young hog, 21. Tablet, 25. F F F F, 26. Droops, 27. A man's skirt, 28. Murres, 29. Task, 34. Dragged in, 36. Breezy, 37. Tall woody plant, 38. Oceans, 40. Not false, 42. Small islands, 45. Outlast, 48. Triple, 51. A worker of stone, 52. Not dead, 53. Naked models, 55. Swagger, 58. Cozy corner, 59. Mother, 60. Sweeping story, 61. Tidy, 62. Sounds of disapproval.

Yesterday's Solution: absurd, ahead, around, buffoon, charm, flint, floss, fore, frost, full, great, guide, ignorant, indicate, individual, kind, microphone, nude, obscure, outstanding, peace, point, quartz, quiet, series, sidewalk, signature, single, stunk, tabby, tact, tern, title, trout.

Word search grid with words: IGNORANT, POINT, MICROPHONE, EOSR, OBSCURE, EMLA, OIO, MSSIGNATURE, EDU, JIQNRS, IUF, ORET, FNUDETT, YDUFWS, LGAIAGBUSN, LAT, OLRCTBUBNDILA, SETAAZAIYKNKN, SYZTAHEADOTH, QUIETPEACEUUI, CHARMBUFFOON, ZDINDIVIDUALG.