

Quote of the Day

Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony.

Mahatma Gandhi

Afghan War Costs Country \$9bn a Year

Massoud Claims ANA Appointments are Based on Nepotism



KABUL - President Ashraf Ghani's special representative for reform and good governance, Ahmad Zia Massoud on Monday claimed that nepotism has, for a while, been the basis for appointments within the Ministry of Defense (MoD). Calling the move unprincipled, Massoud maintained that many military officers were appointed based on personal relations and that in many instances they are unable to deal with counter-insurgency actions. He also said a number of newly-appointed officers currently lack military training experience. "We raised the issue with the National Security Council and made it clear that a number of commanders were appointed based on nepotism which undermines war ... (More on P4)...(2)

KABUL - Afghanistan's war and the fight against extremism cost the country a staggering \$9 billion USD last year, said Equality for Peace and Democracy on Monday.

A report released by the organization this week states that the health sector and infrastructure development have been the hardest hit sectors in the country due to the increased cost of war. EPD deputy chief Idris Omarzad said: "During the fiscal year of 2014 just over \$9 billion USD was spent on war and (fighting) extremism."

For Afghanistan, without calculating macro-economic implications, the cost of one year of conflict and violent extremism was calculated at \$9,091 billion USD,



or approximately \$24,906 million USD per day, read the report. This figure is the equivalent of 44% of Afghanistan's GDP. It is approximately 113%

of the total of Afghanistan's 2014 national budget, and amounts to roughly four times the Afghan government's revenue collection target for last year, the report stated. This report was re-

leased in cooperation with the United States Institute of Peace, which says this tally, of \$9 billion USD, is a shocking figure and has warned this amount is set to increase this year.

According to the US's Institute of Peace, Shah Mahmoud Miakhail: "As long as governance is not improved and rule of law is not implemented, it is very hard to put an end to war." This study focused on a number of categories including security, health, compensation, human capacity building, education and infrastructure. Omarzad meanwhile said infrastructural development, health and education sectors have been the worst hit by this cost - ... (More on P4)...(1)

Breakthrough Expected in Stalled Afghan Taliban-Govt. Talks: Pakistan

KABUL - Pakistani premier Mohammad Nawaz Sharif left on a state visit to Washington on Monday. Beside other issues, he is expected to talk to U.S. officials about the Afghan reconciliation process. A high ranking Pakistani official is quoted by the coun-

try's The Express Tribune news agency as saying that the halted talks between Afghan government and Taliban may resume soon. The unnamed official has also said that the resumption of peace talks is arranged by behind-the-scene efforts ... (More on P4)...(3)

Health Minister Accuses Officials of Dealing in Drugs

KABUL - Minister of Public health Ferozuddin Feroz said a number of government officials are involved in dealing in drugs, especially in Kabul. He did not however give names but said this practice

has led to a sharp increase in drug addicts in the country. Feroz, along with the deputy minister of interior affairs on counter-narcotics, had been summoned to the Wolesi ... (More on P4)...(4)

Iran Ready to Invest in Afghanistan



KABUL - Iran is ready to invest in different sectors in Afghanistan, Iranian investors said on Monday saying that that Iran's export statistics to Afghanistan are more than any other countries. Foreign investments role in Afghanistan has always been discussed but insecurity has been the major challenge against this process.

Iran is one of the most important donors to Afghanistan, which has kept its promises to help the reconstruction of the war-ravaged country. Iran has built roads, power transmission lines, border stations and other infrastructure projects. Officials in The Afghanistan Investment Support ... (More on P4)...(5)

Nations to Keep Presence in Afghanistan: Officials

TRAPANI, Italy - Germany, Turkey and Italy are set to keep their deployments in Afghanistan at current levels, senior NATO officials said on Monday after the U.S. government decided to prolong its 14-year-old military presence there. The Taliban's brief takeover of a provincial capital has raised concern about the strength of Afghan state forces and both the United



States and its NATO allies now say events, rather than timetables, must dictate gradual troop reductions. Gen. Philip Breedlove, NATO's top commander in Europe, said he had assurances that NATO countries will continue alongside the nearly 10,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan. While discussions of exact numbers are still continuing, the biggest ... (More on P4)...(6)

Abdullah Meets EU Ambassadors, Diplomats

KABUL - Chief Executive, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, met 13 ambassadors and diplomats of the European Union (EU) countries and exchanged views on matters relating mutual interests including the

situation in Afghanistan. Thanking the EU for its support to Afghanistan, the Chief Executive also termed the recently held RECCA conference in Kabul as successful, saying the conference

has facilitated the way for holding two more conferences on Afghanistan in Brussels and Warsaw respectively in 2016. The ambassadors also projected their questions and the ... (More on P4)...(7)

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