

Quote of the Day

The particular human chain we're part of is central to our individual identity.

Elizabeth Stone

120,000 Afghans Seek Asylum in 44 Countries: UNHCR

KABUL - As the refugee crisis continues in Europe, the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) reported Sunday that 120,000 Afghan nationals sought asylum in 44 countries during the first eight months of this year.

The report does not include the thousands of Afghans who have since fled the country in the past two months. According to UN statistics, Afghans constitute almost 15 percent of the total number of 640,000 refugees who reached Europe between January and August.

In addition, there has been a significant drop in the number of return refugees from Iran and Pakistan in this



time, said the UNHCR in a statement.

"Up to 122,080 Afghans have submitted applications for asylum in 44 industrial countries in the world until August," UNHCR spokesman Nadir Farhad said.

According to critics, security and poverty are what is driving Afghans to flee the country.

One senator, Anarkali Honryar, sharply criticized government and said it "is responsible to

After assuming office, leaders of the National Unity Government committed themselves to address a number ... (More on P4)...(1)

Ukraine Polls Marred by Cancelled Vote in Key Port



KIEV - Western-backed Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko's fragile ruling coalition faced a major survival test Sunday in local elections swiftly marred by polls failing to open in the strategic port of Mariupol.

A smooth vote and show of support for Poroshenko's unpopular austerity and anti-corruption measures could help his loosely-knit alliance gain momentum and keep the ex-Soviet republic on track to apply for EU membership by 2020.

The elections come during a lull in fighting with pro-Russian rebels, who control parts of the country's east, as fears grow in Kiev that Ukraine is slipping off the global radar.

Voters began to line up across government-administered regions apart from Mariupol - the southeastern city of 500,000 which could act as a land bridge between pro-Moscow rebel regions and the Russian-annexed Crimea peninsula.

Poroshenko's Solidarity party said the Mariupol vote was pushed back to next month "due to the improper preparation of election ballots, the absence of control over their printing and number, and reliable storage."

The Ukrainian leader himself called the situation "categorically unacceptable" and demanded a swift investigation.

But locals and the pro-Russian party that had hoped to do well in the city both blamed Kiev.

"It seems that someone wants the city to remain rudderless and without proper authorities," said 90-year-old Olena Kholodenko after being turned away from a polling station. (AFP)

Satellite-Based Map to be used to Preserve Cultural Heritage

KABUL - The U.S. Embassy in Afghanistan has announced the launch of a new project with the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago and the Afghanistan Institute of Archaeology to help preserve Afghanistan's cultural heritage.

The project, formally launched on October 21, 2015 in a ceremony with Minister of Information and Culture Abdul Bari Jahani and Director of the Afghanistan Institute of Archaeology, Abdul Qadir Timori, will produce a satellite-based map database of Afghanistan's cultural heritage sites and train young Afghans in the field of archaeology and Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

The database will be the first of its kind in the Middle East and Central Asia, and will allow the Afghan government to map all archaeological heritage sites in the country, document the current state of site preservation, monitor looting, and serve as a planning tool to incorporate heritage protection into mining and other economic development projects.

Director of the Oriental Institute, Dr. Gil Stein, noted that this project "is explicitly focused on capacity building at the Afghan Institute ... (More on P4)...(3)

Senate Wants Kabul-Islamabad Policy Reviewed

KABUL - Criticizing recent remarks by Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif following his official visit to the U.S and meeting with President Barack Obama last week, senators in the Meshra-ni Jirga on Sunday called for Kabul to review its policy towards Islamabad.

The Afghan senators blamed Pakistan of having double standards where Afghanistan is concerned. In line with this, the senators urged government to review its policy towards its neighboring country.

Speaking in the U.S. on Friday, Sharif said he told Afghan President Ashraf Ghani



that Pakistan was prepared to assist with the peace talks process but could not bring the Afghan Taliban to the negotiating table "and be asked to take action against them at the same time."

"We are concerned about such an issue. The statement by Nawaz Sharif is a slap in the face of the failed government in Afghanistan," said Faisal Sami, a senator. "We ... (More on P4)...(2)

US, KSA to Bolster Support for Moderate Syrian Opposition

RIYADH - The United States and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia agreed to increase support to Syria's moderate opposition while seeking a political resolution of the four-year conflict, the U.S. State Department said after Secretary of State John Kerry met King Salman on Saturday.

Kerry was in Riyadh for meetings with the Saudi monarch, crown prince, deputy crown prince and foreign minister -



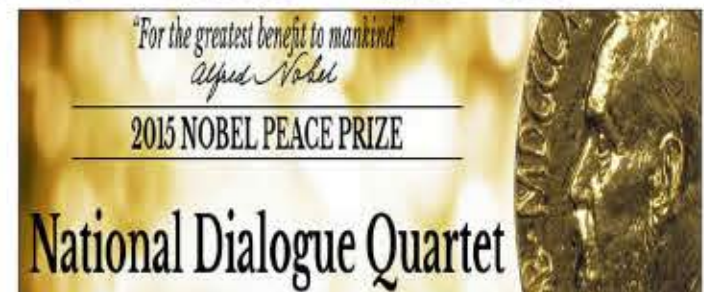
the last stop in a trip that also included Vienna, where he met counterparts from Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Russia. "They pledged to continue

and intensify support to the moderate Syrian opposition while the political track is being pursued," the State Department ... (More on P4)...(4)

2 Afghan Women Grab 2015's N-Peace Awards

KABUL - Two Afghan women, Mariam Durrani and Hassina Neekzad, were among the ten peace advocates honored by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) at the N-Peace Awards 2015.

This year's awardees were recognized across three different categories. Neekzad was the winner in the Untold Stories: Women Transforming their Communities



category, and Durrani was recognized for her works in the Winners in Peace Generation: Young Women and Men Building Peace category. Neekzad has founded the Western Afghan Women's ... (More on P4)...(5)

MoPH Praised Medical Team Involved in Kunduz War



KABUL - Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) appreciated doctors who have provided health services during the war in northern Kunduz province.

Afghan health minister said that the threats to the health workers in the provinces, lack of professional and diagnostic medical equipments, and lack of financial budget are the most common challenges to the doctors in Afghanistan.

"In a lot of places despite our doctors are providing services to the people with their white coats, but they are still under threats. For example in Parwan, Kabul and other provinces, instead of appreciations, legal and illegal armed persons are threatening our doctors," Ferozuddin Feroz said.

"Regional staffs that travel to provinces to provide health services are being threatened," Dr. Richard Peeperkorn, World Health Organization (WHO) representative in Afghanistan said.

At the same time, Ahmad Zia Massoud the Special Envoy of the President for Reforms and Good Governance Affairs who was speaking at the session said, "our calculations show that only four doctors are available for ten thousand people in Afghanistan which is not sufficient".

These statements come as Afghan officials have recently announced that annually Afghans spent about \$1,200 million for treatment out of Afghanistan, especially in India and Pakistan countries. (ATN)

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