

<b>Jalalabad</b> Partly Cloudy 29°C 17°C	<b>Ghazni</b> Partly Cloudy 18°C 5°C	<b>Kandahar</b> Clear 24°C 9°C	<b>Mazar</b> Partly Cloudy 22°C 11°C	<b>Herat</b> Partly Cloudy 22°C 7°C	<b>Bamayan</b> Cloudy 17°C 4°C	<b>Kabul</b> Partly Cloudy 19°C 4°C
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## SIGAR Backs Kabul's Efforts to Curb Corruption

KABUL - Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) John Sopko has promised support for anti-corruption measures of the Ashraf Ghani administration. The American federal watchdog would cooperate with the Afghan government in fighting corruption, Sopko said at a meeting with President Ashraf Ghani late on Thursday. A brief statement from the Presidential Palace in Kabul said the two sides exchanged views on ways of combating administrative corruption in the country. Satisfied with the successful conclusion of Warsaw and Brussels Conferences, Sopko briefed the president on SIGAR's recent report, the press release



added. Ghani commended SIGAR's activities in Afghanistan, saying his government was trying

to eradicate corruption in line its commitment to the people and international partners. Progress had been made in the anti-graft

drive, claimed the president, who urged cooperation from SIGAR in building systems and databases in the country. (Pajhwok)

### Group of Azerbaijani Peacekeepers Return from Afghanistan



BAKU - A group of 50 Azerbaijani soldiers serving within NATO's "Resolute Support" mission in Afghanistan has returned to Baku on a rotating basis, said the message from Azerbaijan's Defense Ministry on Thursday. The peacekeeping contingent of the Azerbaijani Armed Forces has been serving under the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan since November 20, 2002. Currently, 90 servicemen, 2 medical officers and 2 sappers of Azerbaijani Armed Forces are participating in a mission in Afghanistan. (APA)

### Germany Arrests Afghan, 19, Suspected of Taliban Membership

BERLIN - German authorities say they have arrested a 19-year-old Afghan man suspected of fighting for the Taliban. Federal prosecutors said in a statement that the suspect, identified only as Wajid S., was arrested on Thursday. They gave no further details, and didn't specify when or how he arrived in Germany. He is suspected of membership in a foreign terrorist association. Prosecutors say that he is believed to have joined the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2013 and was repeatedly involved in fighting. The Taliban have been waging war against the Afghan government since 2001. (AP)

## President Orders Emergence Aid to Pachiragam Victims

JALALABAD - President Ashraf Ghani has ordered the Nangarhar government to deliver emergency aid to victims of recent violence in Pachiragam district. Ghani issued the directive through a video conference with top provincial officials, the governor's office said on Friday. National Security Advisor Hanif Atmar also attended the conference. Defence and interior ministers, governor, acting head of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG), commanders of the 201st Selab Corps, Shamsad Police Zone, Public Order Police, border police chief and the intelligence director were also in attendance. He particularly instructed the security personnel to speed up raids on Daesh militants in Pachiragam district. Officials of the 201st



Selab Corps, Shamsad Police Zone, intelligence department, Public Order Police and border police attended the meeting. The corps commander informed the president that reinforcements had been dispatched to the district to crush Daesh militants there, said a statement from the governor's office. Governor Gulab Mangal gave participants information about recent casualties among civilians and securi-

ty personnel in Pachiragam. He demanded air raids on Daesh bases in the district. He assured the president that cash, food and non-food aid would be delivered to the victims with the cooperation of the departments concerned. A day earlier, the security forces launched an operation, codenamed "Shaheen Shall", in Pachiragam. Officials say 33 Daesh members have been killed so far in the offensive. (Pajhwok)

### Airstrike in Nangarhar Causes Civilian Casualties

KABUL - An airstrike in Nangarhar on Friday hit the home of a Taliban commander and caused several civilian casualties, government and insurgent spokesmen said. The strike targeted the home of Mawlawi Mohammad Alam, a Taliban commander in the Sherzad district, said Attaullah Khogyani, a spokesman for the provincial governor, adding that there were casualties but he could not confirm numbers. A police official said the strike was carried out by an unmanned aircraft and killed four people inside the house. A dozen wounded civilians, among them seven children and five women, were taken to the local hospital, said Najibullah Kamawal, the director of provincial health services, four of them in critical condition. U.S. forces had carried out a strike in Sherzad on Friday in defence of "friendly forces", a spokesman for the NATO-led Resolute Support mission said in Kabul, the capital, but gave no details. ... (More on P4)... (14)

### Kunduz Governer Elements within Govt. Support Illegal Armed Groups



KABUL - Assadullah Omarkhail, the governor of Kunduz province on Friday alleged that certain elements within government including ministers and lawmakers are exploiting the illegal armed groups in the province to sue their personal interests. According to Kunduz governor, the number of illegal armed men operational in the province are estimated around 5,000 with majority of them involved in a number of horrific crimes such as drug trafficking, kidnapping and creating chaos in the society. He said elements with the ARG (presidential palace) and Qasr-e-Sapidar (CEO's palace) are supporting these individuals to follow their personal motives. "One side of government

rejects them (illegal armed groups) while the other corners of the government supports them," Omarkhail said. He stated that the presence of illegal armed groups in the area has left major implications on the security and stability. "Even we were directed from the center and high level places to give their weapons back. Individuals have made the calls including lawmakers and ministers," he said. Meanwhile, a number of Kunduz lawmakers in the Wolesi Jirga (Lower of House Parliament) also confirmed the presence of illegal armed groups in the volatile province. "Kunduz suffered human tragedy twice in a year, but ... (More on P4)... (15)

### Sharbat Gula to be Released Soon: Zakhilwal

KABUL - Afghanistan ambassador to Pakistan Hazrat Omar Zakhilwal on Thursday said the Afghan government would help rescue Nat Geo's fabled girl Sharbat Gula from police custody in the neighbouring country and rehabilitated at her home country. The green-eyed Gula was arrested during a raid on a house in the northwestern city of Peshawar late on Tuesday for fraudulently acquiring a Pakistani Computerised National Identity Card (CNIC). The woman, who made headlines around the globe as a famed Nat Geo girl, has been accused of illegally acquiring Pakistani identity documents with the complicity of three officials. Zakhilwal on his Facebook page wrote that he came to know about the arrest of the world's most famous and recognized personality by Pakistani police through the media. "It is unfortunate that no one contacted us prior to her arrest. As soon as we were informed, we searched for her and found her," said Zakhilwal, also President Ashraf Ghani's special representative for Pakistan. The ambassador said the Afghan woman would not only be released from detention but also encouraged to return to Afghanistan with her family with dignity. Zakhilwal also promised he would urge the Afghan president to provide Sharbat Gula a ready-made home as gift in Afghanistan. "I am confident the president will accept it." Meanwhile, Afghan Consul General in Peshawar Dr. Wahid Pohan also said they held an urgent meeting with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provincial prisons minister Qasim Jan on Thursday and discuss with him Gula's case. He said he himself would peruse the case of Gula and would discuss it with all relevant Pakistani departments in order to get her released at the ... (More on P4)... (13)

### MPs Urge Govt. to Probe Ghor Killings



KABUL - A number of parliament members (MPs) from Ghor province said at a press conference on Thursday that government must investigate the killing of 36 civilians by Daesh on Tuesday. A number of MPs and civil society activists had gathered in Kabul where they condemned the horror shooting. They urged government to appoint a team to probe the incident and deliver the results to the people. "Always when Ghor people raise their voice, government changed the governor, police chief or head of national security (NDS). This cannot change anything as we do not have problems with the local government," said Dawood Ghafar, member of Meshrano Jirga (the Upper House of Parliament) "We want the following issues to be addressed. A team, including Ghor MPs, should ... (More on P4)... (11)

### KP Govt. to Provide Free Health and Education to Refugees

ISLAMABAD - Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's (KP) government has reaffirmed its commitment to provide free education and health facilities to Afghan refugees and said that these facilities were provided by provincial government in the past and it would continue to do so. However, for the better management of the Afghan refugees, the assistance of the international community is very necessary. On Tuesday, a meeting regarding the management of Afghan refugees in KP, was held in the Chief Minister ... (More on P4)... (12)

### Over 65 Militants Killed in Counterterror Operations



MOSCOW - At least 66 militants and at least six soldiers of the Afghan National Army were killed in the past 24 hours during counterterrorist operations in various provinces of the country, the Afghan Defense Ministry said in a statement on Friday. At least six Afghan soldiers lost their lives as they were conducting counterterrorist operations in different parts of the country, killing militants, including Daesh (outlawed in Russia) terrorists, according to the ministry's statement, as quoted in the Khaama Press. It was also noted that the operations were conducted with the support of artillery units of the Afghan National Army and the Afghan Air Force. (Sputnik)

## Mangal Orders Stepped-up Offensive Against Daesh

JALALABAD - The governor of eastern Nangarhar province has directed security organs to step up operations against Islamic State (Daesh) fighters in Pachiragam district, his office said on Friday. At a meeting of the Military

Council, Gulab Mangal ordered intensified efforts to ensure security across the province, a statement from the Governor's House said. He particularly instructed the security personnel to speed up raids on Daesh militants in Pachiragam dis-

trict. Officials of the 201st Selab Corps, Shamsad Police Zone, intelligence department, Public Order Police and border police attended the meeting. The security officials shared their operational plans, achievements and problems with the governor, also a presidential advisor. They promised bringing about a positive change in the Pachiragam security situation in near future. A day earlier, the security forces launched an operation, codenamed "Shaheen Shall", in Pachiragam. Officials say 33 Daesh members have been killed so far in the offensive. (Pajhwok)



## Trade Exhibitions to be Organised in Kabul, Lahore

PESHAWAR - Afghan and Pakistani traders will organise exhibitions in Kabul and Lahore, Afghan Consul General in Peshawar Dr. Abdullah Waheed Poyan has said. He made the announcement at a meeting with representatives of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KPCCI) at the Chamber House on Thursday. KPCCI President Muhammad Afzal called for an immediate halt to the charging of Rs10,000 from each Afghanistan-bound cargo truck in the so-called land route tax.

He also spoke of the problems Pakistani truckers faced in Afghanistan, saying they were forced to pay illegal levies in the name of land route tax. The consul general promised taking up the matter with the Nangarhar governor and other relevant quarters. (Pajhwok)