

Quote of the Day

Action may not always bring happiness; but there is no happiness without action.

Benjamin Disraeli

Unity Govt to Complete 5-Year Term: Abdullah

KABUL - Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah Abdullah on Monday said the national unity government's term was five years and acknowledged the incumbent leadership did not meet people's expectations, but assured of shaping Afghanistan's real foundation in the remaining three years.

Talking to a meeting of the Council of Ministers, Abdullah said the government's constitutional tenure was five years and it would continue its duty for the next three years.

"The national unity government was formed under a specific situation and it represents the votes of all Afghans,



though we failed in addressing people's problems during our two years in office, but the country's real development would happen in the next three years," he said.

The national unity government still has the opportunity and would try to resolve people's concerns, the CEO added.

Abdullah alleged some figures were trying to question the continuation of the government's term, but the government would continue discharging its duty and was committed to honouring pledges held out to the nation.

Calling electoral reforms as crucial, the CEO said the world was also not willing to fund the election... (More on P4)...(1)

No Hope Pakistan will Help with Peace Talks: Atmar

KABUL - The National Security Adviser Mohammad Hanif Atmar has said there is no hope Pakistan will help Afghanistan with the peace talks with the Taliban group.

During an interview with Gandhara/RFERL, Atmar said "We have received messages from Pakistan as we have diplomatic relations. Our president has told them we have no hope that they will help us with peace talks."

Atmar further added "He told Pakistan that they promised they would go against those who do not want peace talks, but Pakistan did not do this. They lied to us."

Questioning Pakistan's honesty in fight against terrorism, Atmar said "Islamabad said the Taliban leader was not in Pakistan, but then we saw Mullah Mansur had a Pakistani ID card when he was killed while traveling inside Pakistan."

"We asked them very... (More on P4)...(2)

Parliament Returning from Summer Break Today

KABUL - The National Assembly is returning from its summer break today (Tuesday), as the electoral reform decree's fate remains undecided and the vice-president on Monday said a new decree will be finalized within hours.

According to Article 107th of the Constitution: "The National Assembly shall hold two regular sessions annually. The term of both regular sessions shall be nine months every year, and when needed, the Assembly shall extend its term. Extraordinary sessions of the Assembly during recess shall be convened by Presidential order." The assembly is returning from a one and a half months summer vacation that commenced from July 22.

Eng. Haseebullah Kalimzai, Meshrano Jirga 2nd deputy chairman, on Monday told Pajhwok Afghan News the second annual session of the current year would take... (More on P4)...(4)

Security Forces Recapture Qala-i-Zal District of Kunduz

KUNDUZ CITY - Afghan security forces recaptured the Qala-i-Zal district of northeastern Kunduz province on Monday, a month after it fell to the insurgents, an official said.

Acting police chief, Col. Mohammad Masoom Hashimi, told Pajhwok Afghan News the district was wrested back from the militants during an operation this morning.

He said all government facilities in the district were completely cleaned of militants as a result of the operation, which was supported by the Afghan Air Force. Casualties were inflicted on the rebels, he added.

Without giving specific casualty figures, he said the Taliban had been flushed out of the area and the Afghan forces had launched a clearing operation in surrounding villages. (Pajhwok)

Taliban Claims Responsibility for Twin Bombings



KABUL - Twin bombings near the Afghan Defense Ministry have killed at least 24 people in an attack claimed by the Taliban.

Public Health Ministry spokesman Ismail Kawasi says another 91 people were wounded in Monday's attack. Army and police personnel as well as civilians rushing to help victims of the first blast were caught in the second explosion, triggered when a suicide bomber blew himself up. Interior Ministry spokesman Sediq Sediqqi said a district police chief and five other police officers were among those killed.

Deputy Defense Ministry spokesman Mohammad Radmanish said the second bombing was caused by a suicide attacker who struck the area of the first blast after security forces gathered there. He said civilians, police and soldiers were among those killed in the attack, which came as ministry employees were leaving their offices for the day. (Agencies)

Electoral Reform Decree to be Finalised in Hours: Danish

KABUL - The second vice-president promised on Monday a decision on long-awaited electoral reforms would be made to the satisfaction of all political groups and the people.

Sarwar Danish discussed the issue -- a key part of the agreement on formation of the unity government -- during a meeting with UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan Tadamichi Yamamoto.

A statement from the VP's office said the two officials conferred



on the electoral reform process. It added a legislative decree on the subject would be issued soon.

"The decree on electoral reforms has been prepared and the amended election law will be approved under the presidential decree.

"We have been trying to reform the election law in a way that will convince all political parties and the Afghan people," the statement quoted Danish as saying.

He added the legislative decree, which was still under important discussion, ... (More on P4)...(3)

24 Killed, 91 Wounded in Kabul Twin Suicide Blasts

KABUL - The death toll from twin suicide bombings has risen to 24 with another 91 people injured in the latest attack on central capital Kabul on Monday, officials said.

The twin blasts in rapid succession took place in front of the Defence Ministry building at about 3:30pm when the ministry officials were leaving.

Faridun Obaidi, crime investigation chief at the 101 Asmai Zone police headquarters, told reporters at the scene that first a magnetic bomb was detonated and when police rushed the scene to look for casualties a suicide bomber on foot approached the security forces and detonated his explosives.

However, he did not provide figures for the casualties. Mohammad Ismail Kawasi, the Public Health Ministry



spokesman, said 24 people were killed and another 91 wounded in the twin blasts.

He said the dead and the wounded had been shifted to various hospitals in the central capital.

Earlier sources said the second district police chief and his deputy were among those killed the attack.

Some security officials and eyewitnesses said there were two suicide bombers. A security official, who de-

clined to be named, told Pajhwok Afghan News at the scene that first one suicide bomber blew himself up and a second bomber struck after security forces gathered at the site of the first blast.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid claimed responsibility for the twin bombings which he said killed and wounded several MoD officials.

Security forces have cordoned off the area and were... (More on P4)...(5)

Japan Provides Funds for Sarobi Demining Project

KABUL - The government of Japan on Monday pledged \$538,000 for a new demining project in the Sarobi district of Kabul.

Ambassador Hiroshi Takahashi signed the grant contract with Managing Director of Agency for Rehabilitation and Energy Conservation in Afghanistan (AREA) Arifullah Azimi for the USD 538,009 project. The project will be implemented in Sarobi district by Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects (GAGP). Under the project, around 538,043 square meters of minefields and battle-field will be cleared. The area is high-quality agricultural or grazing land that has been inaccessible for decades due to the presence of mines and explosive remnants of war (ERWs), according to a statement from the embassy. "These projects will save many human lives, and enable the free movement of people and the use of the lands for productive activities,"



the ambassador said at the signing ceremony.

Mine clearance contributed to setting a basic condition for the development of infrastructure and agriculture, mainstay of Afghanistan's economy, Takahashi remarked.

Japan has been assisting Afghanistan's nation-building efforts in various fields including security, education, health, culture, humanitarian assistance, agriculture, infrastructure and its capacity development. (PR)

Afghanistan to Follow its Sustainable Development Goals

KABUL - Afghanistan and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) officials held a roundtable meeting on Sunday to discuss the implementation project of Afghanistan's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Afghan officials promised to follow up the sustainable development goals of Afghanistan across the country by the end of the Brussels conference.

"After Brussels we are going

to launch the SDG at the national level," Afghanistan's Minister of Economy Abdul Sattar Murad Said, "lack of capacity, poor coordination and financial capabilities are some of the issues which are hindering our progress, but we know how to go around these problems and achieve our goals and our targets."

At the same time, UNDP official emphasized that implementation of the SDG's will... (More on P4)...(6)

Afghan Insurgency Challenge to Region: UK Minister

KABUL - Armed insurgency and terrorism is causing immense suffering and posing a danger to the region, the British international development minister has said.

London remained determined to help the Afghan people and contribute to the stability of the region and the security of the UK, Rory Stewart said at an event in Kabul.

"British assistance has had a real impact in vital ways, and

we remain absolutely committed to supporting Afghanistan over the years ahead," he believed.

Stewart also met President Ashraf Ghani, Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah and Minister of Finance Eklil Ahmad Hakimi, according to a statement from the British embassy.

They discussed preparations for the upcoming Brussels Conference on Afghanistan,

economic development and the reform agenda. Stewart reaffirmed the UK's long-term commitment to Afghanistan, including through political support and development assistance.

At a girls' education event, he heard how UK support has helped the number of Afghan children attending primary school rise from 4.3 million in 2008 to more than 7.2m by 2014. ... (More on P4)...(7)

Watchdog Reports Systematic Corruption at Herat Customs

HERAT - The Independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC) on Monday raised concerns over what it called systematic corruption at Herat customs.

The MEC accused members of Herat customs of corruption, saying these officials embezzle millions of Afghani on a regular basis.

"Tax fraud going on at customs has fuelled large-scale corruption. There is credible evidence that proves the existence of corruption at Islam Qala and Herat customs. The trend is going on daily," said MEC chief Khalil Parsa.

According to statistics, hundreds of trucks come from Islam Qala and Torghundi ports every day and are processed at Herat customs - where they have to pay their tariffs and other duties.

But the MEC said in many cases, traders deceive customs officials by overloading their vehicles to escape customs duties.

However, a number of Herat customs officials have been handed over to legal and judicial institutions on charges of corruption.

But the MEC has said there is speculation that... (More on P4)...(8)



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