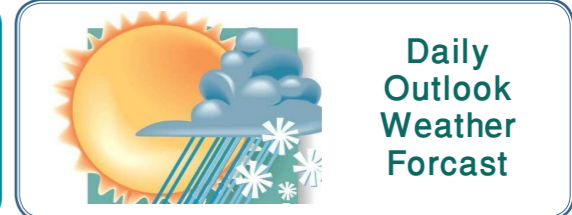


<b>Jalalabad</b>	Clear	<b>Ghazni</b>	Clear	<b>Kandahar</b>	Clear	<b>Mazar</b>	Clear	<b>Herat</b>	Clear	<b>Bamayan</b>	Clear	<b>Kabul</b>	Clear
	30°C 18°C		22°C 07°C		28°C 18°C		27°C 19°C		27°C 09°C		19°C 05°C		23°C 11°C



# Afghanistan Remains a Priority: NATO Chief

KABUL - NATO secretary general has said Afghanistan remains among the alliance's priorities, reassuring continued support for Afghan security forces.

Jens Stoltenberg, who met Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in New York, hailed the performance of Afghan security forces and called them an inspired army, a statement from the CEO office in Kabul said.

Stoltenberg and Abdullah discussed Afghanistan and NATO's support for Afghan security forces and terrorism. Abdullah said Afghan forces had passed a hard phase in their operations last year, preventing Taliban



militants from achieving their goals. But he said the Afghan government's efforts at combating terrorism had not been fully effective. However, Abdullah added the improvement in coordination among Afghan forces had strengthened their performance and morale.

Stoltenberg reassured that NATO would support Afghan forces in fighting terrorists and protecting Afghanistan from internal and foreign threats. He said Afghanistan remained a priority of NATO's support as the alliance had always focused on Afghanistan-related issues. Stoltenberg ... (More on P4)...(8)

## Up to 60,000 Afghans Reach Iran Illegally Every Month



KABUL - An envoy of Afghanistan's Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations in Iran says that up to 2,000 Afghans cross the border into Iran illegally every day.

Mohammad Asif Durzabi says that looking at the daily count, every month up to 60,000 Afghans are illegally arriving in Iran.

He said that most of these people are trying to reach out to European countries through Iran.

In several occasions Afghans have lost their lives while illegally crossing the border into other countries, having traffic accidents or suffocation inside the shipping containers. ... (More on P4)...(9)

### Officials

## ANSF Plan Anti-Daesh Operation in Nangahar

KABUL - As concerns deepen over the increasing number of militants associated with Daesh in some regions of Afghanistan, local security officials said Monday that the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) are planning a massive anti-Daesh campaign in Achin and Haska Mina districts of Nangahar.

As part of his anti-Daesh campaign, Nangahar police chief Fazel Ahmad Sherzad on Monday called on the people to cooperate with the security forces in their bid to defeat



Daesh in the province. Hundreds of security forces are expected to take part in the operation. "The operation has been

launched against Daesh. The operation carried out in Deh Bala and Kot areas are still ongoing. We inflicted massive casualties ... (More on P4)...(10)

## HRW for Full Women's Role in Peace Talks

KABUL - An influential Human Rights Watchdog (HRW) on Monday urged the Afghan government to ensure that women have a full role in any negotiations with the Taliban and other insurgent groups.

The New York-based Human Rights Watch said the current pause in negotiations, due to the disclosure of Taliban leader Mullah Omar's death and worsening relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan created an opportunity for the government to honour its promises to include women.

"Afghan President Ashraf Ghani promised to include women in negotiations with the Taliban at the 'right time,'" said Sarah Taylor, women, peace, and security advocate at Human Rights Watch. "But for full and meaningful participation, every stage of the process is the 'right time' to involve women."

The organization said Afghanistan's foreign donors needed to insist the government improve women's



rights, including by ensuring women's full participation in future negotiations with the Taliban and other groups. Talks between the government and the Taliban have picked up amid increased fighting and insecurity, international donor fatigue, and the disengagement of interna ... (More on P4)...(11)

## High Ranking Chinese Delegation to Visit Kabul

KABUL - A high ranking Chinese delegation is expected in Kabul in near future. A statement released by the Ministry of Finance states.

The statement does not provide detail about the purpose of the visit but it comes after a recent visit of the Finance Minister to China.

Eklil Hakimi attended an economical summit of Asian and European countries where he talked about the Silk Road.

Hakimi had also talked with Chinese officials about strengthening trade and economical ties between the two countries.

China is one of the few countries playing a key role in the reconstruction, peace process and strengthening the capability of the security forces of Afghanistan. China has promised delivering four security scanners to Kabul. The scanners would be installed at the four gates of Kabul. (KP)

## US Tracking Battle for Northern Afghan City

KABUL - The latest developments in a major Taliban assault on the northern Afghan city of Kunduz, where intense battles are underway with government forces (all times local). 7:30 p.m.

A senior U.S. defense official says the U.S. military is tracking what he described as an ongoing battle in the northern Afghan city of Kunduz.



The official said Monday that the U.S. is aware that the Taliban have taken control of a hospital and a number of government buildings, and that both the insurgents and Afghan security forces have sustained a significant number of casualties.

The official says early indications are that Afghan security forces are in position to throw back the attackers and regain control in Kunduz, although the outcome is still in doubt.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity in order to discuss an ongoing military operation.

- Robert Burns in Washington 6:00 p.m.

A spokesman says Afghan President Ashraf Ghani is in "constant contact" with security commanders in the northern city of Kunduz, where the Taliban have launched a major assault and the situation is "fluid."

Deputy presidential spokesman Zafar Hashemi told The Associated Press that "our first priority is the safety and security of residents."

Local police say the insurgents have seized half of the

strategically located city, including a courthouse, a hospital and other government buildings. If Kunduz falls it would be the first major city to be held by the Taliban since their government was toppled in the 2001 U.S.-led invasion. 5:40 p.m.

Hussain Daoudi, an eyewitness in the northern Afghan city of Kunduz, says he can hear "the sound of bullets and blasts almost everywhere in the city" after the Taliban launched a major assault.

Local police say the insurgents have seized more than half of the city, including a courthouse, a hospital and other government buildings.

Daoudi says that after the initial pre-dawn attack residents were told the battle was over, but that "everything changed this afternoon and Taliban fighters took control of different parts of the city."

The Taliban have not held a major Afghan city since their government was overthrown by the U.S.-led invasion in 2001. 4:45 p.m.

An Afghan police official says Taliban fighters have captured more than half of a major northern ... (More on P4)...(13)

## Achin Attack was Organized by ISI: District Governor

JALALABAD - The large-scale coordinated attack on security posts in Achin District of eastern Nangahar province was organized by Pakistan's spy agency Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), the district governor said on Monday.

According to Haji Ghalib, militants planned to seize Achin District and reach out to other parts of Nangahar from there.

"This is a mountainous district which has a border with Tirah (Tirah valley in Pakistan). Roads have been extended to this area across the Duran Line. If they receive equipment through Tirah, they would be able to reach out to Jalalabad. But by the favor of Allah, the 400 militants were defeated," Haji Ghalib is quoted by Radio Killid as saying.

Haji Ghalib told reporters yesterday that around 60 militants were killed and wounded in the clash but the National Directorate of Security (NDS) later reported the killing of 85 militants in Achin District.

Achin has turned into a stronghold of Daesh militants where they not only pose threat to security forces but also to civilians.

On different pretexts, the group has killed dozens of civilians besides torching their homes in Achin. The doors of some schools and clinics have also been closed due to Daesh's threat in this district. (KP)

## WJ Admin Board Accused of 'Incompetence'

KABUL - Unhappy with the so-called weak performance of the admin board of parliament, some Afghan lawmakers on Monday claimed that the Wolesi Jirga's board is involved in corruption and that the board was not strong enough to be effective.

Lawmakers also accused the board of being egotistical and hindering lawmakers in efforts to monitor the government. According to MPs,



the admin board members ignore their legislative tasks and chose instead to work on their ... (More on P4)...(12)

## Emilio Perez de Agreda Spain to Focus on Afghan Women in Future Projects

KABUL - Spanish Ambassador Emilio Perez de Agreda on Monday said his country was concerned about the situation of women in Afghanistan and pledged assistance for their empowerment.

Speaking to reporters here, the envoy said Spain had implemented projects concerning vocational and literacy sectors and more focus would be on women in future projects.

He said security was an essential factor in making women independent in Afghanistan, adding that his country's future projects in the war-torn country would more focus on women.

The ambassador said member states at the European Union's last conference in Kabul had stressed on the need for women's empowerment and their recruitment in government and non-governmental organizations.

The Spanish Embassy-funded vocational training project was underway in 5th municipality district of Kabul to help needy and disaster-hit women become literate. ... (More on P4)...(14)

## AI Calls for Protection of Kunduz Civilians

KABUL - Amnesty International (AI) has called on all parties to the Kunduz battle to ensure civilians are protected in accordance with international law.

In a statement issued late Monday night following 16 hours of heavy fighting in Kunduz city, Amnesty International said: "The Taliban and Afghan security forces must ensure that civilians are protected in accordance with international law and that nobody is targeted in reprisals against their work."

Heavy fighting is ongoing in Kunduz after the Taliban launched a major assault on the provincial capital in the early hours of Monday morning. By late afternoon all strategic government buildings and facilities had been seized by the group.

However, there are unconfirmed reports of civilian casualties and of the Taliban taking over a public hospital, said Amnesty International.

"The Taliban have many times in the past showed their callous dis-



regard for human life and civilians often suffer the brunt of their attacks. As fighting rages in Kunduz, all sides must ensure that civilians and civilian objects are protected according to international humanitarian law, which governs all parties to an armed conflict," said Horia Mosadiq, Amnesty International's Afghanistan Researcher.

"Deliberately targeting civilians not directly participating in hostilities, as well as indiscriminate attacks or disproportionate attacks, would amount to war crimes," the organization says.

"The Taliban must not target any civilian simply for their work - whether they are a journalist, teacher, government official or rights ... (More on P4)...(15)