

Jalalabad Clear 36°C 26°C	Ghazni Clear 28°C 12°C	Kandahar Clear 36°C 16°C	Mazar Clear 35°C 19°C	Herat Clear 37°C 14°C	Bamayan Clear 26°C 8°C	Kabul Clear 28°C 16°C
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Eight Major Corruption Cases under Investigation

KABUL - The Attorney General's Office (AGO) on Wednesday said they have started investigation into eight major corruption cases through the Anti-Corruption Judicial Center.

"These cases involve corruption in the ministries of communication, defense, interior, public health as well as the electronic identity cards department and contracts of a township project," said Jamshid Rasuli, spokesman for the AGO. "The result of the in-



vestigation will be shared with the people," Rasuli said. Meanwhile, the institutions monitoring the anti-corruption activities urged the AGO to continue its efforts against corruption. "It is a good work that makes people to be hopeful. But it should not be for a short time. I mean that if it is just for the Brussels Summit, then it will not be useful for fighting corruption," said Khan Zaman Amarkhel, head of Afghan anti-corruption network. (Tolnews)

NAI Dubs Current Year 'Worst' for Access to Information

KABUL - Free media advocacy group NAI on Wednesday dubbed the current year as "worst" for journalists with regard to access to information and said the period saw 72 percent of reporters subjected to violence.

The organization, which supports free media in Afghanistan, said this year more restrictions were placed on access to information compared to the past seven years. Head of media watch at NAI, Sediquallah Tawhidi, told a press conference on the occasion of International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI) that 575 cases of violence against journalists were registered during the past seven years, of which 190 incidents happened when reporters were in search of information.

Tawhidi said NAI findings during this Gregorian year showed 58 cases of violence against journalists occurred including 42 incidents that took place when journalists attempted to gain access to information. He said 2011 was best year compared to past seven years because 80 cases were registered that year including just 15 cases when journalists sought information (IDUAI) that ... (More on P4)...(6)

SAARC Summit in Pakistan Postponed after Member States Pull out

KARACHI - The upcoming South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit scheduled to be held in November in Pakistan has been postponed after India refused to participate, Pakistani media reported on Tuesday.

According to the eight-member body's charter, the conference is postponed should any member state decline to participate. Following India's announcement, Bangladesh said it was also pulling out. Afghanistan and Bhutan -- both close India allies -- have since followed suit, according to an official with the Nepali government, current chair of SAARC.

Announcing Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's decision to not participate in the conference, India's external affairs ministry had said there were other countries that had expressed reservations about participating in the summit amid heightened tensions over terrorism. "India has conveyed to current SAARC Chair Nepal that increasing cross-border terrorist attacks in the region and growing interference in internal affairs of member states by one country have created an environment that is not conducive to the successful holding of the 19th SAARC summit in Islamabad," said the Indian foreign ministry. (Monitoring Desk)

Search Mounted As 7 Afghan Trainees Go Missing in US

KABUL - A search is ongoing for seven Afghan trainees who disappeared from US military facilities this month, after terror attacks in New York and New Jersey, the Pentagon says. According to a US news channel, four students were considered absent without leave, AWOL, from International Military Student programs over the Labor Day weekend, and three more during the September 17-18. Fox News quoted Patrick L. Evans, a Pentagon spokesman, as saying the four students who disappeared during the Labor Day weekend included two from Fort Benning in Georgia, one from Fort Lee in Virginia and one from an Army facility in Little Rock, Arkansas. More recently, the channel reported, two students disappeared from Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri and one from Fort Gordon in Georgia.

But authorities see no connection between the disappearances on the same weekend when the terrorist attacks occurred. A spokeswoman for the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) service told the Washington Free Beacon that authorities had been looking for the missing Afghans. ... (More on P4)...(8)

US Awards \$109 Million Contract for the Purchase of 433 Humvees to Afghan Forces

KABUL - The United States Department of Defense (DoD) has awarded a contract worth \$109 million for the purchase of 433 Humvee vehicles to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF). The contract was awarded to AM General by the Department of Defense (DoD) as efforts are underway to boost capabilities of the Afghan forces as they face a resurgent Taliban.



Wheeled Vehicles," (DoD) said in a statement. DoD further added that "Work will be performed in Mishawaka, Indiana, with an estimated completion date of Sept. 29, 2017. Fiscal 2015 other procurement funds in the amount of \$108,766,855

were obligated at the time of the award. Army Contracting Command, Warren, Michigan, is the contracting activity." This comes DoD awarded a contract to AM General for the manufacture and delivery of 1,673 Humvees to the Af-

ghan forces earlier in August this year.

The contract called on AM General to deliver 1,259 units of the M1151A1B1 and 414 units of the M1152A1B2 models.

Vehicle manufacturing will commence in August at the company's military assembly plant in Mishawaka, Indiana, and is scheduled to be completed by 29 July, 2017. The delivery of the vehicles could further boost the protection of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) who are full lead of the security responsibilities with the conclusion of the coalition ... (More on P4)...(7)

Kohistan Road Blockade: Prices of Essential Items Shoot Up



MAIMANA - A number of residents of northwestern Faryab province say the Taliban militants have blocked the transportation road to Kohistan district from the past two months, leaving the residents with acute shortage of food items.

Residents and a number of influential individuals said prices of basic commodities had soared in Kohistan due to the road blockade by the Taliban. If the government failed to reopen the road in the near future, the people would get caught in snows and they would face complete starvation in the upcoming winter, they warned.

Mohammad Asghar, hailing from the Lolash area of Kohistan, told Pajhwok Afghan News the rate of 50 kilograms of flour had shot up to 2,800 afghanis, a tin of 18 liters of ghee to 2,500af, a kilograms of sugar to 120af and a 20kg bag of rice to 2,600af. He criticised the government for ignoring the area and said they should be informed whether the road to Maimana, the provincial capital, would reopen or residents themselves should do something

before the winter's advent. Dakhtar Saadat, an Afghan Local Police (ALP) commander, said the Taliban had blocked the road after their attack on Kohistan district was thwarted two months ago. More than 3,000 families are currently under the Taliban siege and the militants do not allow entrance of food and other essential items to the district, he said. He added the government should reopen the road or at least restrict transportation of food items and fuel to the Taliban region. Police chief, Brig. Gen. Abdul Nabi Elham, confirmed the militants had closed the road to Kohistan district. However, he said the government planned to reopen the road as soon as possible. The Taliban would not be able to capture Kohistan district by harassing civilians and applying economic sanctions on them, he said, adding the government never lacked equipment and food items. However, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahidsaid the road had been blocked only for government officials, not for civilians. (Pajhwok)

Most Jailed Drug Offenders are Poor, Illiterate

KABUL - Due to the government's ineffective counter-narcotics policy, most of the convicted drug traffickers are illiterate and poor individuals who support their families, not the high level drug kingpins who control the industry.

A survey conducted by the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) shows individuals who have been imprisoned for drug-related crimes were driven to crime by poverty and may have no choice but to go back to it after release due to un-



employment. Eight of each 10 were illiterate. The survey was conducted during the last six months of 2013 in which 185 prisoners convicted of drug crimes in six zones of the country -- Kandahar, Herat, Kabul,

Nangarhar Badakhshan and Balkh provinces -- were interviewed. The survey was released in 2014. The UNODC study found that of 25,872 prisoners in Afghanistan, 3,880 (three in twenty) were ... (More on P4)...(9)

Int'l Day of Access to Information Marked in Kabul



KABUL - Tadamichi Yamamoto, the United Nations Special Representative in Afghanistan said at a gathering on Wednesday that the implementation of the law on access to information will help reduce corruption in the country.

"This law is essential to increase transparency in government institutions and then the entire citizens, the media and civil society organizations to more actively participate in the political process including by adversively or necessarily reforms,"

Yamamoto said at the ceremony of marking the International Day of Access to Information. Meanwhile, Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah said the National Unity Government (NUG) continues to implement the law on access to information. "We will take the necessary steps to support access to information in the country," he stated. The law on access to information was approved two years ago by President Ashraf ... (More on P4)...(10)

Journalists Boycott Wolesi Jirga Proceedings

KABUL - Journalists on Wednesday boycotted the Wolesi Jirga or lower house of parliament proceedings after what they said the house security guards treated them with a harsh behavior. The journalists when wanted to enter the parliament building were prevented by security guards in compliance with directives from the Wolesi Jirga secretary. The journalists were told they could not enter until the house's session starts.

However, the journalists criticized the action of guards and collectively decided to boycott the session. Romal Khuram, one of the journalists, told Pajhwok Afghan News it was not for the first time that the guards created problems for them. He said the reporters always faced similar behavior while covering parliament events. He said most often the guards

prevented reporters from taking photos inside the parliament and even sometimes forcibly snatched cameras from journalists, he added. Khwaja Basir Fitri, a Pajhwok Afghan News reporter, also parliament journalists' committee head, said: "We boycotted the Wolesi Jirga meeting due to bad behavior of security guards, the absence of chairs for reporters and poor sound system, we would not cover parliament meetings until the problems are resolved." He said the mentioned problems had been shared several times with the Wolesi Jirga secretary, but reporters were not allowed to take pictures of events from different corners. Zabih Zahir, another parliament reporter, said: "The journalists waited for half an hour outside the parliament and they ... (More on P4)...(11)

UNHCR Opens New Repatriation Centre in KP

KABUL - The UN's refugee agency (UNHCR) on Wednesday inaugurated its second voluntary repatriation centre in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province to facilitate the return of Afghan refugees to Afghanistan.

The new centre in Azakhel area of Nowshera district, about 40 kilometres east of Peshawar, will enhance UNHCR capacity to facilitate the return of up to 10,000 refugees a day through the Torkham border crossing. A high-level delegation comprising of ambassadors of Afghanistan, Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, European Union, Charge d'Affaires of the Netherlands, head of ECHO Pakistan, Chief Commissioner for Afghan Refugees, Dr. Imran Zeb Khan and UNHCR Representative Indrika Ratwatte attended the inauguration ceremony. Ratwatte commended the government of Pakistan for extending the stay of Afghans refugee in Pakistan until 31 March 2017. Ratwatte said: "The extension is an important decision by the Government of Pakistan which recognises the importance of policies to manage the legal stay of registered Afghans in Pakistan." Imran Zeb Khan said: "The Government of Pakistan has ensured that the repatriation remains voluntary and that returns are conducted in safety and dignity." Dr. Zeb also acknowledged the ... (More on P4)...(12)