

Steps Needed to End Mafia Chokehold on Economy: Rahimi



KABUL - The industry and commerce minister-designate on Sunday suggested the country's economy would continue to suffer badly in the absence of an effective strategy to end the monopoly of foreign mafia. Sardar Mohammad Rahimi, presenting his future programmes before the Wolesi Jirga, identified large industries and state-owned enterprises as the main drivers of economic growth. But such

were affected by the government's negligence, he believed, alleging the Afghan economy was being controlled by some mafia groups behind capital flight. Rahimi urged Afghan traders and investors to focus on generating jobs for the people, something that would eventually translate into economic development. "Given a vote of trust, I...

Road to Economic Self-Sufficiency Long, Bumpy: Oghli



KABUL - Sardar Mohammad Rahman Oghli, the presidential nominee to head the Ministry of Economy, on Sunday pledged to fight corruption and work for the country's economic prosperity. Explaining his programmes to lawmakers, he praised Afghanistan's socio-political and economic achievements in the last decade, saying the country had to travel a long and bumpy road to self-sufficiency. He believed

Afghanistan still had many economic challenges and he, if confirmed as minister, would work hard to overcome them. He identified dependency on foreign aid, lack of investment in the manufacturing industry, focus on short-term investments and low domestic income as main challenges. "If I couldn't make you proud, I will make sure that you won't...

Ghani to Respect Parliament, Replace Dual Citizen Nominees

KABUL - A presidential spokesman on Saturday said President Ashraf Ghani has promised lawmakers in Parliament that he will respect their resolution regarding cabinet nominees with dual citizenship and will replace those nominees who do not have their second citizenship revoked.

"The president's decision regarding the resolution of the House is that those nominees with dual citizenship and ones who have not revoked their dual nationality will be replaced with new nominees," presidential spokesman Nazifullah Salarzai said. "The president has shown from the start of the national unity government that he respects the decisions of MPs."

Of the seven total nominees who suppos-



edly have dual citizenship, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) has confirmed that Noorul Haq Uloomi, nominated for Minister of Interior, as well as Saadat Naderi, nominated for Minister of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled, have successfully given up their respective second citizenships. In addition, The Administrative Committee of the House of Representatives said Salahuddin Rabbani, nominated for Minister of Foreign Affairs, has also given up his second citizenship. Legislators are expected to decide whether to put the three men back on the list of nominees that will be voted on next week.

The issue of dual citizenship has divided Parliament, with some MPs standing un-

NATO Envoy Drums up Support for Unity Govt.

KABUL - NATO's new Senior Civilian Representative (SCR) on Sunday said Afghanistan needed a strong government to deal with the challenges facing the war-torn country.

In an exclusive interview with Pajhwok Afghan News, Ismail Aramaz promised all-out assistance to the national unity government, led by President Ashraf Ghani, in addressing different issues.



"Afghanistan's myriad problems require a strong and visionary government. Both domestic and international stakeholders should do everything they can to support Dr. Ghani

and Dr. Abdullah's efforts to forge a strong partnership." Pleased with his new assignment in Kabul, the diplomat from Turkey said he would support efforts at strengthening the Afghan forces and developing a political partnership. Aramaz hoped Ghani would turn Afghanistan's fortunes around. "The president and chief executive de...

Interpol Allegations against Haidari Baseless: MoI

KABUL - Tax evasion and fraud allegations against Mohammad Yaqub Haidari, President Ashraf Ghani's choice for the agriculture minister, have been found baseless, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) said on Sunday. After Haidari's name appeared on the most-wanted list of Interpol for fraudulent behavior in Estonia, he was forced to decline his

nomination for the ministerial post pending investigations. He had rejected the allegations as baseless. Afghan Interpol found Haidari's entry into Estonia had been banned for untenable reasons and the fraudulent behavior allegations were unjustifiable. A statement from MoI said Haidari had re...

Association Set up to Improve Provincial Governance

KABUL - The creation of an apolitical forum -- known as Afghanistan Governors' Association -- was announced on Sunday to ensure better governance in the country. Involving incumbent and former provincial chief executives, the Afghanistan Governors' Association said in a statement said that was founded with no political role. The association

has been established as per the country's law, the statement said, adding it would strive to promote good governance and reform local governance keeping in view the past experience of its members. The members hoped the association would help institutionalise good governance through sharing experiences. (Pajhwok)

Higher Edu Minister Nominee Outlines Her Priorities



KABUL - The higher education minister-designate on Sunday pledged to improve the university curriculum, fight against graft and introduce accountability if she was given a vote of confidence.

Addressing lawmakers, Khatira Afghan said it was the government's duty to provide quality education for youth. "Afghan students have capabilities and we need to provide them with a level playing field." While seeking a trust vote from the lower house, she promised to address the challenges being faced by students such as hostel shortages and seats in state-run

universities. She pledged to establish coordination between Afghan and international universities to let Afghans benefit from foreign expertise, improve Islamic studies and create new departments and electronic libraries. "I will create a research institute to offer students cutting-edge research facilities and bring our curriculum on a par with global universities. Amid emerging demand, we will try to empower youth with technical and vocational skills," she added. Afghan said her short and medium-term...

Balkhi to Help Refugees Exercise Voting Right



KABUL - The minister-designate of refugees and repatriation on Sunday pledged to introduce reforms in the relevant law, create jobs and pave the way for their participation in parliamentary elections.

President Ghani has introduced 24 cabinet nominees and heads of two independent departments to the lower house for a vote of trust. They have almost completed outlining their programmes to lawmakers.

If granted a trust vote, Sayed Hussaini Alani Balkhi -- explaining his future plans to the Wolesi Jirga -- reiterated that addressing refugees' problems should be among his top priorities.

He called refugees' problem a national issue and vowed to help them return home in a respectable way. Serving Afghan refugees' abroad, providing them with legal assistance and making the ministry more efficient are among his priorities. He would also focus on improving ministry staff capacity, curbing corruption and implementing public awareness programmes. "I will strive to ensure the refugees vote in the elections and continue higher education in the country." Balkhi would also try to get \$170 million from the international community to support refugees. He would...

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