

Jalalabad Clear 21°C 7°C	Ghazni Clear 12°C -2°C	Kandahar Clear 18°C 4°C	Mazar Clear 12°C 1°C	Herat Partly Cloudy 19°C 3°C	Bamayan Clear 4°C -5°C	Kabul Partly Cloudy 11°C -2°C
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Ghani May Seek More Military Assistance from India

KABUL - Afghanistan may seek additional military assistance from India in battling a relentless Taliban insurgency, a New Delhi-based newspaper reported on Wednesday. President Ashraf Ghani is expected to present Prime Minister Narendra Modi a wish list at their meeting on the sidelines of the Heart of Asia Conference in the Amritsar city of Punjab state next week. As the strategic partnership between the two nations is gradually deepens, India recently supplied the fourth attack helicopter to Afghanistan. Some agreements will also be signed on business and economic ties. The Economic Times quoted Afghan Ambassador Shaiba



Abdali as saying the Amritsar event would provide an opportunity for the two allies to expand their strategic and economic partnership. The Amritsar meeting offered an opportunity to frame a strategy for

dealing with countering security challenges and ushering in regional prosperity, believed the diplomat, who opined: "This is very much achievable". Ghani will hold official talks with

Modi for the second time this year. "The two sides are firming up some agreements to be signed at the Modi-Ghani talks... This includes pacts on quality control for goods and air cargo zone for bilateral trade." (Pajhwok)

Worsening Security Forces More Afghan Schools to Shut



GARDEZ - Afghanistan's worsening security has forced about 1,000 schools to close this year, more than double last year's total, adding to problems that children face in getting an education, officials said. Education officials fear next year could be even worse if Taliban insurgents seize more territory. "Our students are the first victims of the war," said Mujib Mehrdad, education ministry spokesman. "If the Taliban continue to gain strength, gains we have made could easily disappear," he said, adding that 24 of the 34 provinces had been forced to shut some schools due to insecurity. Afghanistan's education system has made significant gains since the Taliban were ousted by U.S.-led forces in 2001. Before then, girls were excluded from formal education altogether and fewer than 1 million boys went to school. Aid donors have poured about \$1 billion into schools, helping to provide 8.4 million children with access to education, according to UNICEF. But despite progress, poor security has added to problems facing... (More on P4)...(9)

Pakistan in Well Position to Tap Trade Potential of Afghanistan, Cars: Dar



ISLAMABAD - Pakistani Minister for Finance Muhammad Ishaq Dar Wednesday said Pakistan was now well positioned to further tap the trade potential of Afghanistan and Central Asian Republics (CARs). "There is a huge trade potential in Afghanistan and five Central Asian states, namely Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan,

with combined gross domestic product (GDP) of \$ 445 billion and population of 66 million, offer a sizeable market for Pakistani goods, services and investment," Dar said while speaking at the launching ceremony of Pakistan-Afghanistan-Central Asian Republic States Trade Summit (PACTS) here Tuesday night. The Finance Minister appreciated the efforts of RCCI for organizing the summit saying that it would help enhance trade opportunities for Pakistan with Central Asian states and Afghanistan. He said a Joint Business Council, comprising of leading businessmen from both the countries, had also been established to increase business to business interaction. Exports from Pakistan to Afghanistan, he added, had in-

creased from \$1.06 billion to \$ 1.43 billion during the period and there was a big potential to enhance the trade. The minister also said Afghanistan Pakistan Transit Trade Coordination Authority (APTCA) had been established to monitor effective implementation of the Pak-Afghan Transit Trade Agreement 2010 and so far, six APTCA meetings had been held. He said the government's economic policies, under leadership of the Prime Minister, had resulted in macroeconomic stability within two and half years, contrary to international predictions of five years. The minister said the International Monetary Fund (IMF) raised GDP growth forecast for Pakistan for FY 2017 from 4.7 per cent to 5 per cent, and... (More on P4)...(11)

Dostum Rejects Claim of Holding Eshchi 'Illegally'



KABUL - The Office of the First Vice President, General Abdul Rashid Dostum, on Wednesday rejected claims that he is holding former Jawzjan governor Ahmad Eshchi against his will. According to reports, Eshchi, was assaulted and taken into custody by Dostum's guards on Friday during a Buzkashi game. However, Dostum's office said in a statement that Eshchi was jailed by security forces on charges of being in contact with armed anti-government groups and destabilizing the security situation. "First Vice President's office rejects the claim and states that Ahmad Eshchi was arrested after security forces found out that he had received information from different sources on funding insurgents and on charges of deteriorating the security situation," the statement said. Eshchi's family meanwhile rejects this and says he was beaten up and jailed by Dostum's guards over personal disagreements. They said they do not know what has happened to him. "If my father was guilty, the security department should have arrested him. Dostum shouldn't have arrested him on the Buzkashi field," said Babur Eshchi, Eshchi's son. Political analysts however said if Eshchi is being held against his will by Dostum, it is against the law and that this shows power still overrules the law. "Obeying the law starts with ARG (Presidential Palace). When ARG officials violate the law, then powerful men outside ARG will not obey the law," said Sediq Patman, a political analyst. Dostum has in the past been... (More on P4)...(16)

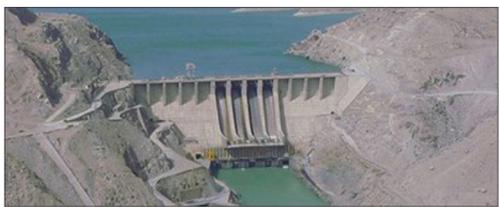
ISIS Loses Ground in Iraq, Libya, and Afghanistan



NEW YORK - The Islamic State, commonly referred to as ISIS or ISIL, is losing territory in Iraq as coalition forces continue to advance on Mosul. The Telegraph noted early Monday morning, large amounts of intelligence have been collected by Iraqi security and international coalition forces throughout the city. Phones, laptops, and hard-drives have been confiscated and will soon be passed along to intelligence agencies for processing. The coalition's recent capture of Manbij, a city in the north of Syria which has functioned as a gateway for ISIS militants entering Turkey and Europe, also pro-

vided intelligence analysts with a trove of data on the terrorist group and its larger network. The intelligence included crucial information on ISIS's recruits, finances as well as plans for international terror plots in Europe and elsewhere. Major General Rupert Jones, second in command of the international coalition against ISIS in Iraq, said efforts to uproot the militants in Mosul are well underway. He reported the international coalition has been degrading the city's defenses for months. Indeed, the Jones acknowledged that, because of the sheer size of the city and the number of civilians remaining within its bounds, clearing the rest of the militants from Mosul will be a slow process. Efforts to retake ISIS's Syrian... (More on P4)...(10)

Taliban Pledge to Protect Infrastructure an 'About-Face'



KABUL - In response to the Taliban's statement Tuesday on its pledge to protect national infrastructure projects, Human Rights Watch deputy director for Asia division Phelim Kine stated that this move was an ironic about-face for the insurgent group but nonetheless a hopeful sign. In an article published on

the HRW website, Kine said: "That's an ironic about-face for the insurgent group synonymous with years of atrocity, mayhem, and destruction, including attacks on the country's electrical power grid. "But the Taliban's interest in protecting infrastructure rather than destroying it is a... (More on P4)...(13)

NATU will not be Shifted from Kandahar: Totakhel

KANDAHAR CITY - The acting head of the National Agriculture and Technology University (NATU) has rejected rumours about the shifting of the university to Kabul or another province. Earlier, reports about the university's shifting went viral on social media. Many posts said the Higher Education Ministry had stopped funds and decided to re-

locate the university to Kabul or another province. But NATU President Hazrat Mir Totakhel explained the university would never be shifted from Kandahar. He denied the ministry concerned was mulling such a move or had stopped funding. Totakhel added the university's objective was to bring about... (More on P4)...(14)

ISIS Militants Suffer Heavy Casualties in Afghan Forces Operations

KABUL - The loyalists of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist group suffered heavy casualties during the ongoing operations in eastern Nangarhar province of Afghanistan. The provincial police commandment said the militants suffered casualties during the operations in Pacher Agam district as the Afghan forces raided the hideouts of the terror group in Kargar Khel, Azar Khel, and Musa Khel areas. The provincial security officials further added that the dead bodies of at least 8 of the militants were left in the area besides several weapons were confiscated by the Afghan forces. This comes as the Ministry of Interior (MoI) said Tuesday at least 25 loyalists of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist group were killed during the joint military operations of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF). The Ministry of Interior (MoI) said "Afghan National... (More on P4)...(15)

Massoud Irked by Ghani Calling King Amanullah a 'National Hero'

KABUL - Ahmad Wali Massoud, chairman of the Massoud Foundation, on Wednesday slammed President Ashraf Ghani for calling the late Afghan King Amanullah Khan a national hero. Massoud said the remark was irresponsible and against the law. He said that by calling King Amanullah a national hero, Ghani was in some way creating distrust among the people of Afghanistan. Massoud called on Ghani to withdraw his statement. Addressing participants at a ceremony during the inauguration of Turkmenistan-Afghanistan railway link on Monday, Ghani called King Amanullah a national hero. "Today I feel very proud that one of the aspirations of our national hero Amanullah Khan is becoming a reality," said Ghani. But, Massoud argues that the title of national hero was awarded only to Ahmad Shah Massoud. "When you bestow the title of national hero on someone else, while he is also a respected person, you offend some people - those who have a major affiliation to the national hero," said Massoud. He... (More on P4)...(17)

Govt. Not Cooperating: Balkh Businesswomen



MAZAR-I-SHARIF - Businesswomen in northern Balkh province complain the government is not supporting them in finding market for their handcraft and industrial products. They expressed the views at a conference on empowering female traders organized by the Afghan Women's Education Center (AWEC) in Mazar-i-Sharif, the capital of Balkh province. AWEC head Hafiza Mirzayee told Pajhwok Afghan News they were trying to share business plans with successful female industrialists in some foreign countries. Businesswomen should think about self-reliance rather than working in projects, she said. However, ... (More on P4)...(12)

162 Arrested over Murder and other Criminal Activities



KABUL - At least 162 individuals were arrested in connection to murder and other criminal activities in capital Kabul, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) said. The suspects were arrested during the operations of the police forces in the past two weeks. The Ministry of Interior (MoI) said at least 4 people were arrested in connection to two separate armed robbery cases and 27 others were held in connection to 15 various robbery incidents. MoI further added that 4 suspects were arrested in connection to 8 murder incidents while 23 suspects were arrested over smuggling and sale of illicit drugs. Seven more people were arrested over land grabbing, 2 suspects... (More on P4)...(18)