Ghani Seeks Report on Education System in 2 Weeks

KARLE - President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani has asked the Education Ministry officials to submit a report on the state of education in Afghanistan in the next two weeks, the Presidential Palace said on Wednesday.

A statement from the palace said President Ghani met top education officials on Tuesday evening and asked for a full report on the number of students, teachers, schools and academic centers.

Ghani also urged the officials to focus on the core responsibilities of providing quality education for all.

Ric Meeting Stresses Support for Afghanistan

ASADABAD - Religious scholars and tribal elders of eastern Kunar province on Wednesday praised Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) courage and patience, gifting flowers and garlands at a gathering here.

Speaking on the occasion, ulama representative Masoom Wazir Ram said the government should increase the strength of the army by recruiting more young people and provide them with necessary training.

He urged the authorities to pay special attention to the education and living conditions of the families of slain and injured security personnel. “The government should support our security forces in their mission,” he added.

Haj Abdul Labib, speaking on behalf of the elders, said all of them had presented their feelings. (More on Pn-6)

China Willing to Host Afghan Peace Parlars: Aziz

KARLE - “Spring Aziz, Advisor on National Security and Foreign Affairs to Pakistan’s Prime Minister, has said Beijing has offered to host peace negotiations between the government and the Taliban.

The National Observer quoted Aziz as saying: (More on Pn-6)

Taliban Ban Polio Vaccination

JALALABAD - In reaction to government’s move to ban polio vaccination in the Ghilgit district of northern Ghor province, the Taliban on Wednesday impeded a polio vaccination campaign, the Ameer Khyber police said.

Dr Noorullah Nazarzad told Pajhwok Afghan News the district had been without a vaccination drive for the last three months. About 100,000 children in the district are five years of age or yet to be rescued.

“Several days before our teams reached the area, the government had stopped the vaccination campaign,” he added. Haj Abul Han, a tribal elder in the district, said the polio campaign had been stopped for a short time, for which he was blaming the government.

He said that the district had been in grip. (More on Pn-5)

Iran, Afghanistan to Strengthen Security Co-operation

Tehroan - A meeting between Iranian Border Guards Commander Brigadier General Qasem Ranjani, and his Afghan counterpart, Major General Mohammad Shafiq Fadul, in the Afghan city of Nain, the two countries revised readiness to combat terrorism to boost security and tranquillity of joint borders.

General Fadul said in the meeting that Afghanistan has been engaged in a war against terrorism, and the borders cannot be opened. (More on Pn-5)

Residents Irfed by Absence of Judicial Officials: AIHC

BAMyan City: Judges and prosecutors are not present and remain absent for months in some districts of Bamyan and Maljan Wardak provinces, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHC) said on Wednesday.

Hasham Farhig, AIHC regional head in Bamyan, told Pajhwok Afghan News the problem was particularly severe in the Shahr district of Bamyan and the Behsud district of Maljan Wardak.

He alleged the judicial authorities’ absence had caused a delay in addressing people’s cases. “Acquittal of the law has left the people in despair, (More on Pn-6)

Ashton Carter on Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, China, Russia

MOSCOW - Ashton Carter gets a full day of compartmented interrogations Wednesday, starting this morning, with the Senate Armed Services Committee set to vet his nomination as Secretary of Defense.

He’s already shared some of his views via written answers to the panel’s questions. Here are some of answers to those three pre-hearing questions on a number of countries.

On Afghanistan, Carter answered simply: “Yes.”

“I am concerned that the Taliban will continue to seek to take over or to amplify their presence in Afghanistan. We are providing funds, training, and equipment to the Afghan national security forces.”

On China, Carter said: “This is a serious problem and the Department should continue to take strong actions to address China’s one of cyber theft to steal U.S. companies’ confidential business information and proprietary technologies. Further, military assistance to such high-risk nations creates additional concerns that misunderstandings about China’s activities could be exploited for the Department’s benefit.”