

Jalalabad Clear 19°C 4°C	Ghazni Clear 6°C -6°C	Kandahar Clear 13°C 3°C	Mazar Partly Cloudy 6°C -1°C	Herat Clear 9°C -3°C	Bamayan Clear -4°C -14°C	Kabul Clear 9°C -2°C
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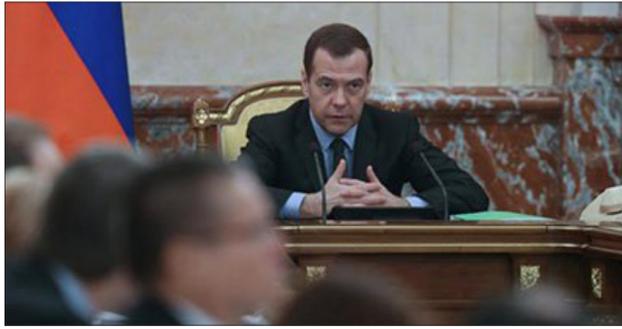


2,100 Adults Including Women Complete Literacy Training

AIBAK - More than 2,100 adult, including 38 percent of women, have completed a nine-month literacy course in northern Samangan province, an official said on Thursday. The 1,308 males and 819 females, between the ages of 15 and 45, attended 118 courses over nine months, said literacy section manager at the Education Department, Fairuzuddin Ahmadi. He said third-grade certificates had been issued to the participants on the completion of the course, funded by non-governmental organisations, especially the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA). "After getting the training, I can read...(More on P4)...(9)"

Russia PM Warns Foreign Offensive in Syria Could Spark 'World War'

MOSCOW - Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev warned Thursday that if Arab forces entered the Syrian war they could spark a "new world war" and urged ceasefire talks instead. Asked about proposals by some Arab countries to enter the conflict under a US command, Medvedev said, "that would be bad because ground offensives usually lead to wars becoming permanent". "The Americans and our Arabic partners must think hard about this: do they want a permanent war?" he



was quoted as telling the German Handelsblatt business daily in an interview. "Do they really think they would win such a war very quickly? That's impossible, especially in the Arabic world. There everyone is fighting against everyone... everything is far more complicated. It could take years or decades." "Why is that necessary?" he added, according to a pre-released excerpt from the daily's Friday edition. "All sides must be forced to the negotiating table instead of sparking a new world war." (AFP)

Taliban Battle Leads to Kabul Blackout

KABUL - Millions of residents in the bitterly cold capital Kabul have been living mostly without power for the last two weeks as critical grid line from neighboring Uzbekistan has been cut off. The Afghan government blames Taliban attacks for the disruption in the power supply. Taliban insurgents blew up two power pylons in the Dand-e-Shahabuddin area in the strategic northeastern province of Baghlan after security forces launched a massive operation against the Taliban, Afghan officials say. The Taliban denied responsibility for destroying power lines and blame Afghan government forces. The state-owned utility company Da Afghanistan Breshna Shirkat (DABS) has not been able to repair the pylons as the military offensive is still going on, DABS officials say. ... (More on P4)...(10)

Hanif Atmar 2016 Would be "the National Stability Year" in Afghanistan



KABUL - National Security Adviser (NSA) Mohammad Hanif Atmar says 2016 would be "the national stability year" in Afghanistan. Atmar expressed these comments in a meeting with Alexander Mantytskiy, Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Kabul, on Wednesday. The two sides also discussed Afghanistan's membership

in the anti-Daesh international coalition, result of the third round of quadrilateral meeting and government policies for stability. Atmar said that Afghanistan is committed to fight regional and international terrorist groups including Daesh but its membership in the international coalition would give more...(More on P4)...(11)

Afghanistan Ranked 149th on Access to Justice for Children

LONDON - Afghanistan has been ranked as 149th in the world on how effectively children can use the courts to defend their rights according to new research from Child Rights International Network (CRIN).

The new report, 'Rights, Remedies and Representation', takes into account whether children can bring lawsuits when their rights are violated, the legal resources available to them, the practical considerations for taking legal action and whether international law on children's rights is applied in national courts. Afghanistan ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1994 but its status in Afghan law is unclear. Children under 18 lack



legal capacity and must rely on their parents or guardians to challenge violations of their rights. As the courts rarely have access to written law, they regularly resort to applying Sharia law to resolve the disputes before them while judicial corruption and the government's

interference with court cases hinder access to justice. Achieving access to justice for children is a work in progress and the report represents a snapshot of the ways children's rights are protected across the world. The report condenses findings from 197 country... (More on P4)...(12)

Thousands Acres of Govt. Land Usurped in Paktika: Governor

SHARAN - Government's land measuring thousands of acres has been illegally occupied by powerful individuals in southeastern Paktika province, the governor said on Thursday. Aminullah Shariq told a press conference in Sharan, the provincial capital, that local tribes sometimes entered bloody clashes as part of disputes over the usurped land in the provincial capital and districts.

"I have also shared this issue with the Cabinet and the President who have assured all the land which is usurped will be retaken," the governor said, adding the land would be re-claimed and the grabbers awarded punishment based on the law. "Most of the government land is usurped in Paktika, a process still ongoing, but the local administration would no longer stay quiet against land grabbers," Shariq said. Deputy provincial council head Niamatullah also said large swaths of government land had been usurped by powerful individuals, tribal elders, former jihadi commanders... (More on P4)...(13)

Remote Areas Residents in Baghlan Lack Health Facilities

PUL-I-KHUMRI - Residents of several districts in northern Baghlan province complain about a lack of health facilities in far-flung areas and as a result many precious lives had been lost. Despite the unprecedented development that took place during the past 14 years, the people of Baghlan still lack health facilities and a shortage of doctors and medicines.

Some residents said due to the lack of health facilities, many patients had lost their lives on the way to hospitals in nearby provinces. Qari Mohammad Karim, a resident of Jumma Ali village in Guzargah district, said there was only one clinic in the district centre. He said health facilities in villages were situated one or two kilometers away from local residences. The roads, he said, were in a dilapidated condition and people had to carry patients... (More on P4)...(14)

President Ashraf Ghani 2015 was the Year of Afghanistan's Survival

KABUL - President Ashraf Ghani on Thursday called 2015 the year of Afghanistan's survival and achievements of the Afghan Air Force (AAF) as he watched the first airshow showcasing the country's new light attack aircraft, the A-29. The president, who joined US

and Afghan security officials at the event at the Kabul airport, said his government would continue to invest more in the air force. President Ghani said: "The solar year 1394 (ending on March 21) was the year of survival of Afghanistan... (More on P4)...(15)"

150 Posts Lying Vacant in Kabul Municipality

KABUL - As many as 150 posts in the municipality of capital Kabul, a city without mayor for the past one month, are lying vacant, an official said on Thursday. Abdul Qadir Arzo, broadcasting department head at the municipality, told Pajhwok Afghan News the post of mayor was a key one and due to the nonexistence of mayor, the municipality was struggling with internal and external problems. He said around 150 posts in the municipality's administration were lying vacant and hoped... (More on P4)...(16)

Sibghatullah Mojaddedi President Ghani Has No Experience of Governance

KABUL - Professor Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, the former President of Afghanistan and a Jihadi leader who backed the incumbent President in his election campaign and asked the nation to vote for him, apparently regrets his support. He has said that President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani has no experience of governance. Mojaddedi has told Ariana News in an interview published on its website on Thursday that the incumbent President reached to power because of his support. According to Mojaddedi, the

country would move towards crisis and the situation would be out of control if fundamental reforms are not made in the government. Mojaddedi seemed doubtful over the ongoing efforts for peace talks with Taliban saying that Pakistan's spy agency would continue shedding the blood of soldiers and civilians in Afghanistan. He has warned Islamabad to eject its hand of interference from Afghanistan or he will announce 'Jihad' against Pakistan as it was declared against the former Soviet Union. (KP)

Nai 7 Radio Stations Closed Due to Security, Financial Problems

KABUL - A free media advocacy group, Nai, on Thursday said seven local radio stations had been closed due to security and financial problems and a large number of other radio stations faced the same issues. Sediqullah Tawhidi, head of Nai, told a ceremony marking World Radio Day said: "The seven radio stations were closed this solar year according to our survey involving of-

officials of 120 radio stations in 34 provinces." He said a radio station was recently closed in western Herat province due to financial crisis and another one was closed in southern Ghazni province due to threats from militants. Based on the survey, 75 percent of local radio stations faced financial problems and 61 radio stations complained about security... (More on P4)...(17)

Displaced Families Delivered Aid in Sar-i-Pul

SAR-I-PUL - The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) on Thursday distributed non-edible aid packages to 114 internally displaced families in northern Sar-i-Pul province, an official said. Repatriation and Refugee Director Eng. Abdul Ahmad told Pajhwok Afghan News the aid was delivered to families displaced by the conflict from Shiramba area to the provincial capital, Sar-i-Pul City. Each family received a wood stove, three bags of coal, two

blankets, a gas cylinder and a set of cooking dishes. Bibi Gul, one of the displaced women, said intense fighting in their area forced them to leave homes and belongings and take refuge in Sar-i-Pul city. "We are happy with this aid but we need more help." A displaced man, Asadullah, said: "I was supporting Afghan Local Police (ALP) force, but Taliban stormed my house and torched all my properties. I shifted to Sar-i-Pul city and now live... (More on P4)...(18)"

Iran Ready to Contribute to Afghan Peace Talks Envoy

TEHRAN - Iranian Ambassador to Kabul Mohammad Reza Bahrami renewed his country's support for the Afghan government and its readiness to help to national consensus and unity in Afghanistan. "Iran believes in the continued support for the government of national unity," Bahrami said in the Afghan capital on Friday.

The Iranian ambassador reiterated that the new threats emerged in the form of extremism are one of the main concerns in the region and Iran is ready to help to advancement of Afghan peace talks.



"Iran also expects the international community to help the government establish peace and security in Afghanistan," Bahrami added. In a relevant development last month, high-ranking Iranian and Afghan officials in a meeting in Tehran conferred on drawing a roadmap for the further development of bilateral relations and cooperation between the two countries. The issue was raised in a meeting between Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and CEO of Afghanistan's... (More on P4)...(19)

US Forces in Afghanistan up Anti-IS Strikes, Presence in Helmand



PENTAGON - The United States is ramping up efforts on two fronts in Afghanistan - "significantly" increasing airstrikes against Islamic State in the country's east while providing more advisers to Afghan troops fighting the Taliban in the country's south. Brig. Gen. Wilson Shoffner, a spokesman for U.S. forces in Afghanistan, told reporters at the Pentagon via videoconference from Kabul on Thursday that the U.S. estimates there are now between 1,000 and 3,000 Islamic State-Khorasan fighters in Afghanistan. Islamic State has designated Afghanistan, Pakistan and parts of Iran as its so-called "Khorasan" province. Most fighters pledging allegiance to Islamic State-Kho-

rasan are in four or five districts in the southern part of Nangarhar province, where Shoffner says he's seen them trying to "establish a base." Nangarhar province borders the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan, allowing IS-Khorasan to recruit both Afghan Taliban and Pakistani Taliban, or TTP. "Additional flexibility" The White House approved military authorization to target Islamic State fighters in Afghanistan late last month. "The change in authorities has given us additional flexibility," Shoffner said. Before the change, U.S. forces could only strike Islamic State militants in Afghanistan if they were a threat to U.S. forces. Asked... (More on P4)...(20)