

Jalalabad Clear 21°C 6°C	Ghazni Clear 7°C -5°C	Kandahar Partly Cloudy 18°C 5°C	Mazar Clear 16°C 6°C	Herat Clear 15°C 2°C	Bamayan Clear -1°C -11°C	Kabul Clear 13°C -2°C
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Daily Outlook
Weather Forecast

Protect Afghans from Bombers, Ghani Tells Military Graduates

KABUL - President Ashraf Ghani on Thursday called on the Afghan security forces to protect the people from rebels and suicide bombers. The president said this at the graduation ceremony of military officers from the military university in Kabul. It was the ninth batch of 343 military officers graduating from the Marshal Mohammad Qasim Fahim Defense University. "Afghanistan is fighting against terrorism and you have chosen a hard way of sacrificing your lives for the protection of your people and human values, but your this duty is far sacred and pridedful," Ghani told



the graduates. The brave Afghan security forces were protecting the country's independence and national sovereignty in order to help ensure a peaceful environment for the sake of stability and economic development in the country, he said. "You are in trenches not only for the defense of your country, but also to fight on frontline against the international terrorism ... (More on P4)...(7)

Afghanistan Finalizes Law to Criminalize Bacha Baazi

KABUL - The Afghan government for the first time has finalized a law to criminalize the bullying and sexual abuse of children (Bacha Baazi). Officials in the ministry of justice of Afghanistan have said the draft law finalized by the government criminalizes the abuse of children. A spokesman for the ministry of justice Aman Riazat told BBC's Afghanistan service that the draft law has been approved by the cabinet of ministers. He said the abuse of children has been criminalized in the draft law and the perpetrators will face prosecution by the government. The latest step by the government to finalize the draft law prohibiting Bacha Baazi comes as numerous reports emerged during the recent years regarding the worsening situation of the children subjected to abuse and bullying. The issue attracted attention of the global human rights activists as there are concerns regarding the health and mental condition of the victims of the stigma. The Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission also expressed concerns regarding the mental situation of the victims, saying the majority of the children kept as slave are repeatedly raped. On the other hand, the international human rights activists are saying that in majority of cases the victims become perpetrators which help the stigma to further continue after they become adults and keep other children as their slaves. (KP)

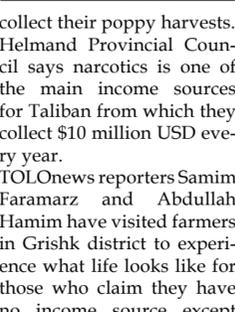
Tehran Rally Highlights Iranian Support for Afghan Refugees on Syrian Front

WASHINGTON - After at first covertly sending thousands of undocumented Afghans to fight on the Syrian front, Iran is trumpeting their sacrifice with increasingly public funerals for the fallen and a giant rally planned for Friday in a Tehran square. Authorities in Kabul and human rights groups have roundly criticized the Iranian government for sending Afghans living in Iran to Syria to fight alongside forces of the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah and Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) in support of the government of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Thousands of Afghans from Iran are in the "Fatemiyyon Brigade," the second-largest group of foreigners fighting for Assad in Syria. Western media estimate their numbers at between 10,000 and 12,000. Many of the Afghans were reportedly sent against their will, Human Rights Watch reported, or agreed to fight because of economic remuneration to their families. Roughly 3 million Afghans live in Iran. Most settled there after fleeing war and conflict in their homeland. Many Afghans in Iran lack basic rights and live without a formal status. About 950,000 are classified as refugees. Commemoration ceremonies According to Iranian pro-state Mashregh News, the Tehran municipality will hold a ceremony on Friday to honor at least four members of the Afghan militia killed in Syria. "A commemoration ceremony for the Fatemiyyon Brigade martyrs will be held on Friday in Tehran," the pro-IRGC news portal said. Sayed Hassan Sajjadi, a high-ranking conservative cleric with links to the IRGC, has been reportedly invited as a keynote speaker to the event. There are no official figures as to how many Afghans from Iran have been killed in ... (More on P4)...(10)



Helmand Farmers Await Poppy Harvests

LASHKARGAH - While part of Helmand are witnessing war and conflict, some farmers in Grishk district of the province are just waiting to



collect their poppy harvests. Helmand Provincial Council says narcotics is one of the main income sources for Taliban from which they collect \$10 million USD every year. TOLONews reporters Samim Faramarz and Abdullah Hamim have visited farmers in Grishk district to experience what life looks like for those who claim they have no income source except poppy cultivation. Faramarz said in plain areas of Grishk, parts are under government control while other parts are held by the Taliban. People living in these areas cultivate poppy as their only income source. "Government and Taliban have not told us anything about poppy cultivation. We have cultivated poppy for many years," Abdul Samad, a farmer in Helmand, said. Faramarz said they found families in Helmand who rely on poppy cultivation economically and their children grow up walking on poppy fields. "There is no job here. Our children are doing nothing but cultivate poppies when they grow up," Sayed Gul, a farmer said. There are other farmers in the district who cultivate poppies with a bit more modern facilities and use sun energy. "We have activated a solar system because we have been prevented from using fuel," said Hamdullah, a farmer. According to the farmers, they will collect the poppy harvest in the next two months. Part of the harvest will be moved to Farah and Nimroz provinces on the border with Iran. "From this area ... (More on P4)...(11)

Afghans Duty-Bound to Work for Peace: Khalili

KABUL - Deputy High Peace Council (HPC) head Karim Khalili on Thursday said working for peace was the responsibility of every Afghan, believing no one from outside would help. Khalili was speaking at the awards distribution to a Seerat-un-Nabi (Life of Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (P.B.U.B)) contest winners in Kabul. The former vice president said the country's current situation was pitiful despite suffering from continued bloodshed for four decades. "Bringing peace to the country is the responsibility of all of us, we can ensure peace by a homegrown mechanism, our Ulema can play a vital role in this process," he said. Khalili said Afghanistan needed a change and a movement towards peace and stability, a vital need of life that could not be



brought by foreigners. "We will not witness any changes until we ourselves work for that," he said. Seerat-un-Nabi contest was launched by the Islamic Revolution Movement of Afghanistan about a month ago and was ended on Wednesday. Abdul Hakim Munib, head of the Islamic Revolution Movement of Afghanistan, on the occasion said around 1,400 people from capital Kabul participated in the competition.

The imam of the Jamia Masjid, Haji Abdur Rahman, said that the aim of the contest was to increase awareness among the youth and encourage them to study the life of the Prophet Mohammad (SAW). Munib said besides his party's leadership, representatives from the Ministry of Hajj and Islamic Affairs, the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Education were also in attendance at the ceremony. ... (More on P4)...(8)

46 Militants Killed within Day: MoD

KABUL - At least 46 militants were killed amid operations launched by Afghan security forces since early Thursday, the Ministry of Defense said on Friday. "Afghan army, police and intelligence agency personnel carried out several military and cleanup operations over the past 24 hours, killing 46 terrorists and wounding 15 others," the ministry said in a statement. The raids were conducted in Nangarhar, Kunduz, Kapisa, Khost, Paktia, Takhar and Helmand provinces and the joint forces also found and seized weapons, said the statement that provides daily operational updates. Among the killed militants were 17 members of Islamic State (IS) group, including a senior commander of IS named Mawlawi Nahim, the statement added. In addition, 12 fighters of ... (More on P4)...(9)

Daesh Being Equipped & Financed by Pakistan: Mangal

JALALABAD - The governor of eastern Nangarhar province on Thursday alleged the Daesh militant group had not been vanquished in the province because fresh fighters were sent there from Pakistan. Mohammad Gulab Mangal, after a gathering in Jalalabad, the provincial capital, told reporters the newly-launched operation against Daesh codenamed 'Shaheen-25' was successfully going on. He said 10 to 20 Daesh militants were being killed daily but fresh fighters continued to join its ranks. The fighters entered into Nangarhar from Pakistan, making the ongoing operation difficult, he added. According to him, more than 50 Daesh militants had been killed since the commencement of the Shaheen-25 operation in Haska Mena and Kot districts. "Unfortunately, Daesh militants are not only coming from Pakistan, but their military equipment and funds are also provided by the neighbouring country," the governor alleged. Gen. John ... (More on P4)...(12)

Nisar for Resolution of Visa Issues of Afghan Citizens

ISLAMABAD - Minister for Interior, Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan Friday directed concerned officials to immediately resolve visa issues of citizens of Afghanistan in Pakistan. He took notice of difficulties being faced by Afghan citizens in Pakistan due to closure of Pak Afghan border. A statement

issued here said as per Interior Minister's direction Regional Passport Office, Peshawar had been authorized to extend visas of Afghan citizens. The basic purpose of this initiative is to resolve their problems and facilitate those who have legally come to Pakistan. (APA)



Tajikistan to Join Pakistan Road Link Bypassing Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD - While Kabul is reluctant to finalise a transit trade agreement with Islamabad, Tajikistan is poised to join a separate initiative which will connect Pakistan to Central Asia, bypassing Afghanistan entirely. Officials told The Express Tribune that Tajikistan's request for inclusion into the Quadrilateral Traffic in Transit Agreement (QTTA) - a deal between China, Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan for facilitating transit traffic and trade - has been approved. The Central Asian state will now become a formal participant once its parliament approves the

move, they said. Tajikistan looks to promote trade in Pakistan Inclusion in QTTA - which was signed in Islamabad in 1995 - will grant landlocked Tajikistan access to Pakistan's ports, including Gwadar, without having to depend on Afghanistan. It will provide safe passage to traders from both Pakistan and Tajikistan. Trade between the two countries has risen steadily from \$15 million in 2011 to \$90 million in 2016, and Tajikistan wants to bring the volume up to \$500 million. Up till now, Pakistani traders have had to rely on the land route through Afghanistan

to access Tajikistan and other Central Asian States. Pakistan and Afghanistan had been negotiating a transit trade agreement but Kabul's insistence that India be included in the arrangement led to a deadlock in discussions. Due to tensions with India over unrest in Occupied Kashmir and Delhi's attempts to implicate Islamabad in rebel attacks on military installations, Pakistan could not accommodate Kabul's demand. But while Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani threatened to cut off Pakistan's access to Central Asia if it did not include India in the transit deal, ... (More on P4)...(13)

Af-Pak Trade Harmed by Political Tensions: Experts



PESHAWAR - Pak-Afghan trade has been damaged by escalating tensions between the neighbours, experts said on Wednesday. Speaking at the Jang Economic Session in Lahore, Uzma Bokhari said the Punjab government was doing all it could to curb terrorism. The Punjab government was revisiting the curriculum of seminars to prevent them becoming terror nurseries for terrorism, she said. Another panelist, Abdul Basit Khan, called for prioritising national interests. He stressed

the need for an effective tax collection mechanism and population control. Export orders were being delayed due to insecurity, he said, believing the deportation of the Afghans would bring peace to the country. Farooq Tariq urged the government should revisit its relations with Afghanistan. Extremism was a threat to peace both in Pakistan and Afghanistan, he said. Protests, strikes and explosions, if not checked, would trigger an industrial crisis, warned Abdul Razzaq Babar. (Pajhwok)