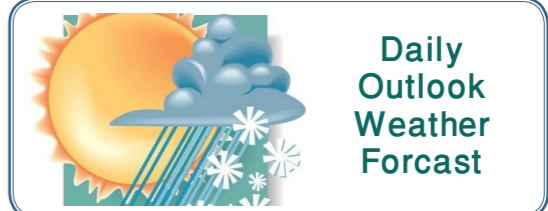


Jalalabad Cloudy 11°C 7°C	Ghazni Clear 10°C -4°C	Kandahar Partly Cloudy 18°C 5°C	Mazar Partly Cloudy 8°C 2°C	Herat Clear 11°C -1°C	Bamayan Clear -2°C -12°C	Kabul Partly Cloudy 6°C -7°C
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Thousands Displaced as Taliban Advance in Faryab

MAIMANA - Afghan forces have broken the siege of Almar district in northeastern Faryab province, but tactically retreated to avoid casualties, local officials said on Tuesday.

Provincial police chief Col. Mir Amanullah Zafer said three security check points had to be relocated in Almar district after hundreds of Taliban rebels launched attacks in many areas.

But airstrikes by the Afghan Air Forces inflicted heavy casualties to the enemy in Qara Ghweli and Chaghatah areas, he said.

A provincial council member and a resident of Almar district, Abdul Manan Qatay, said that Jalgaldi and Qara Ghweli areas had been lost to the Taliban who



were closing in on the Almar center.

One security forces commander, Gul Ahmad, was killed and four others in-

jured in Qara Ghweli clash, he said. Manan said Taliban suffered heavy casualties in retaliatory attacks.

He added an Uzbek and an

Arab rebel were also those killed in the clashes. However, hundreds of insurgents continued to attack Afghan forces in Chaghatah, Sar-

band and other areas of Almar.

A security official, who wished to go unnamed, said the Taliban had deployed three tanks, several mortars and other artillery weapons to highlands in western Almar district, firing at the security forces.

Almar district chief Mohammad Saleh Saleh said more than 1,800 families had been displaced in Qara Ghweli area in the past 24 hours.

The families, fleeing to Almar center, lacked food, water and warm clothes and were dire need of emergency aid, the district chief said.

He said local government was unable to help the displaced families and the central governmental and charity ...*(More on P4)...(8)*

45 New Teachers Appointed to Dur Baba Schools

JALALABAD - Forty-five new teachers have been appointed to different schools in the Dur Baba district of eastern Nangarhar province, an official said on Tuesday.

In line with special orders from Governor Gulab Mangal, the teachers had been posted to different schools in the district, said Attullah Khogyani, the governor's spokesman.

He added 66 candidates with bachelor's degrees, 14th and 12th class certificates, appeared in the test. Of them, the spokesman said, 45 were selected on merit.

Rana Gul Shinwari, head of the local youth council, confirmed the appointments,

saying the new teachers had not yet assumed charge.

Haji Kaftar Khan, a resident of the district, said teachers earlier used to travel from Jalalabad to the district to teach students.

Residents claimed their collective efforts had led to improved security in the district but education and health issues remained unresolved. They previously blamed the provincial government for failing to initiate uplift projects.

They complained no governor visited the district and proper attention to the social security issues was not paid in the past 15-year.

Haji ...*(More on P4)...(9)*

8 Policemen Killed Mysteriously in Helmand



LASHKARGAH - Eight policemen guarding a police check-post in Lashkargah, the capital of southern Helmand province, have been killed mysteriously, a source said on Tuesday.

A security official told Pajhwok Afghan News on condition of anonymity that eight policemen were killed and three others wounded at the check-post in Bolan area Monday night. No more details were immediately avail-

able.

Gen. Abdul Rahim Chakhan-suri, commander of the 505th Bost Zone, said a clash took place between the Taliban and security forces in the area.

He confirmed security forces suffered casualties but did not give specific figures. A delegation had been dispatched to the area for investigations, the commander added.

Border Police Commander Col. ...*(More on P4)...(11)*

Key Taliban Figure Dead in Takhar Blast

TALOQAN - The Taliban shadow deputy district chief for Ashkmath district has been killed and his two colleagues wounded as a result of bomb explosion in northern Takhar province, an official said on Tuesday.

Police spokesman, Maj. Khalil Aseer, told Pajhwok Afghan News the incident took place while Mullah Hukam excavating a planted mine on Monday night.

He said that Mullah Hukam who was expert in mine making led the Taliban in the district and was involved in multiple clashes with security forces.

Quadratullah, the resident of the locality, confirmed the killing of Mullah Hukam and said he was known as Qari Omar in the area and was killed in bomb blast.

Taliban have not yet commented about the incident.

Ashkmath district situated 20 kilometres south of Taloqan, the provincial capital, which is one of the most unstable districts of province. *(Pajhwok)*

Most Cities Lashed by Rain & Snowfall, Ending Dry Spell

KABUL - After months of dry weather, most provinces of the country, including Kabul, received rain and snowfall on Tuesday. The wet spell is expected to continue over the next couple of days.

Plain areas were lashed by rains and mountainous regions of Kabul, Jalalabad, Mazar-i-Sharif, Herat City, Charikar, Pul-i-Khumri, Maidan Shahr and other cities by snowfall.

The overnight rains and snowfall brought smiles to the faces of millions of people, including farmers. Many people, especially children, had been suffering from seasonal diseases.

Most people took to social media, sharing pictures of snow and rainfall and thanking Allah for breaking the dry spell.

Lack of rain and snowfall had worried farmers, who feared a drought and falling water levels in dams. *(Pajhwok)*

Public Support Guarantees Govt's Survival: Azizi

KANDAHAR - The governor of southern Kandahar province on Monday said getting rid of the ongoing misfortunes was possible if the masses and the government joined hands.

Addressing a gathering of tribal elders here, Mohammad Humayun Aziz said a government was not credible if it lacked people's support which he said provided credibility to the government and guaranteed the regime's survival.



The elders said they had always supported the current system but the government should focus on services deliv-

ery in districts.

The gathering took place at the governor's house, where tribal elders from

various districts were in attendance. Besides the governor, other provincial officials were also present on the occasion.

"Like the government, people have their own responsibilities which they should discharge," the governor said, believing the 37-year-old conflict in Afghanistan could not be brought to a halt until the masses and the government joined forces. Aziz said Afghanistan ...*(More on P4)...(10)*

Afghan Female Air Force Pilot Awaits Response to US Asylum Request



KABUL - Afghanistan's first female fixed wing pilot in the country's air force awaits a response to her asylum request to the United States, which she filed last month after receiving threats from Taliban insurgents, according to her lawyer.

"Her reason for seeking asylum in the United States is she's in fear that if she were to go back to Afghanistan that she would be persecuted," Kimberley Motley told VOA's Afghan Service. "She has a tremendous amount of worry about the Taliban insurgents who have put out death threats against her and, frankly, now she's concerned with the government who has also issued a statement through the ministry of defense that if she is to return, she will be prosecuted for desertion."

Niloofar Rahmani, 25, says she has received threats telling her to leave the military from the same insurgent faction that attempted to assassinate Malala Yousefzai in Pakistan.

Since she has filed for asylum in the United States — a move criticized by many Afghans — the Afghan ministry of defense has released a statement saying that there are no threats against Rahmani.

"I'm very disappointed," Motley said. "I know Niloofar is, as well, at the very visceral, negative response that she has received from many people within Afghanistan about her decision to protect her life and to protect herself. She's been ridiculed in Afghanistan; she's been threatened by Afghan governmental officials, and many people are just frankly attacking her character and saying she straight-out lied."

Motley said the accusations are criminal, because defamation ...*(More on P4)...(13)*

'Russia Sees HIA Deal against its Interests'

KABUL - Political analysts say Russia believes the removal of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's name from the UN blacklist is not in its interest, thus trying to block the move.

Hekmatyar-led Hezb-i-Islami Afghanistan (HIA) and the Afghan government, after months of peace negotiations finally reached a peace accord in September.

Under the agreement, the government would try to get lifted international sanctions on HIA and removed names of HIA members on UN and US blacklists.

However, some Afghan and western media outlets recently said Russia was trying to create problems for implementation of the agree-



ment between HIA and the government besides blocking Hekmatyar's removal from blacklists.

According to a Wall Street Journal (WSJ) report, during the 10-day period for member states to respond, Russia said it needed more time to consider the request. According to UN rules, it has up to

six months to provide reasoning for its opposition.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on Monday that Moscow had put the delisting on hold but hadn't blocked it. She didn't explain why Russia needed more time to consider the move.

Some ...*(More on P4)...(12)*

Mangal Steps Down from International Cricket

KABUL - Captain of the Afghan national cricket team Nawroz Mangal on Tuesday announced his retirement from international cricket.

"Today I decided to announce my resignation from international cricket, I want to thank my friends and family who always supported me," said Mangal.

On Tuesday, Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) announced the selection committee of the national team players and discipline committee.

Newly retired Nawroz Mangal will head the committee while Hasti Gul Abid will serve as chairman of the disciplinary committee of the ACB.



"We want Nawroz Mangal to continue (playing) domestic cricket as he has got a lot of fans in the country," said ACB chief Shukrullah Atif.

"Our responsibility will not be limited only to the national team players, we are also working on how to forge a mechanism for domestic crick-

et," said Abid.

The selection committee is set to pick new national players from the B team who will take part in an ICC cricket league tournament to be held in the United Arab Emirates.

Eight teams are expected to play in the upcoming tournament. *(Tolonews)*

Nuristan Women Remain Deprived of Elemental Facilities

JALALABAD - Women in eastern Nuristan province, toiling their way to survival, remain deprived of education, healthcare and other elemental facilities, an official said on Tuesday.

Women Affairs Director Dr. Zahida Faizan, in an exclusive interview with Pajhwok Afghan News, said women in Nuristan collected fire-



wood, worked on farms and did hard jobs.

There were no job opportunities for women, which affected their economic situation. They have no access to healthcare services as there is not even a single lady doctor in the entire province.

Only nurses and midwives are working in Nuristan. The official said the number of clinics in the province was not enough, with pregnant women facing a lot of problems.

Faizan added Nuristan girls recently started getting education in neighbouring Nangarhar province. There are no educational institutes for girls in Nuristan.

About violence against women, she said 55 cases had been registered with the department. Of them, 25 have been resolved through tribal Jirgas. Beating, denial of a share in inheritance and elopement are among the cases.

The department had failed to resolve women's problems because it did not have enough resources, the director said. Relevant organizations were not active in the province to support women, she lamented.

Dr. Faizan said her department, which did not have a building yet, was located in an inappropriate area. Additionally, no budget has been allocated for the department.

The Women Affairs Department has launched campaigns to encourage families to send girls to ...*(More on P4)...(14)*