WASHINGTON - U.S. Defense Secretary Ashton Carter met Tuesday with Afghan leaders to discuss the security environment in Afghanistan during a meeting at the World Economic Forum (WEF). Carter met with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and Afghan Finance Minister Hafeezullah Hashemi. In a statement, the Pentagon spokesman said the two leaders discussed the current security situation and the important role Afghanistan's security forces would play in the future. Carter congratulated Ghani’s appreciation of the continuing sacrifice of American forces and President Barack Obama’s decision to maintain a significant U.S. military presence in the country, an aim the president laid out in 2014. They also discussed the need to assuage Afghan and international outreach efforts in advance of the July 2016 NATO Warsaw Summit Carter underscored. (More on P4). 

**President Ashraf Ghani**

**ANSF Effectively Suppressing ISIS**

**KABUL** - President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani has said the counterterrorism operations to suppress the activities of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist group are successfully and effectively being conducted in Nangarhar province.

The Chief of the Province in a statement said President Ghani shared the issue during meeting with the US Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter at the US لديlöpetate visit state in Switzerland.

President Ghani urged the US defense chief to further equip the Afghan Air Force and Afghan National Army (ANA) forces, especially the 20th Airlift Corps in a bid to eliminate the threat of the ISIS in the area.

The remarks by President Ghani come as there has been growing concerns regarding the growing activities of the ISIS in the area. He said the menace of terrorism is not only threatening Afghanistan but is a threat to the region and the world and to light terror will require short term, mid term and long term cooperation.

The statement further added according to the statement by DoD said. (Agencies)

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**Baghlan Residents Forced into Digging Trenches for Taliban**

**PUL-E-KHUMRI** - Some residents of northern Baghlan province on Saturday accused the Taliban of forcing them to dig ditches for the fighters.

Over the past 10 days, the militants have been digging trenches and barricading local leaders to help them, a resident of the Dangal village of Dandi-Ghori district told Pajhwok Afghan News on condition of anonymity.

“The insurgents bring an armed force with them to dig ditches. They take dozens of youth for work daily,” he added, saying the resident could not get permission to comply with rebel orders.

Meanwhile, the deputy police chief, Col. Abdul Rashid Bostan, verified the Taliban forces had forced the residents to dig trenches, but he had not shot the security personnel.

“Plans for a Strait-up operation in the area have been drawn up. The security forces will destroy all trenches of Taliban,” the police officer pledged.

A statement by Dangal village, Mohammad Gul, said the Taliban had warned telecommunication companies to stop (More on P4).

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**Kerry Meets Gulf Arabs on Syria, Iran Nuclear Deal**

**RIYADH** - U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry met Tuesday with Arab countries in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Bahrain, and they eased their concerns about the international agreement over Iran’s nuclear program. Kerry began a trip in Riyadh by meeting with representa- tives of the six nations of the Gulf Cooperation Council- Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates. He is also due to have talks with Riad Hijab, chair of the Syrian opposition’s High Negotiations Committee, which was formed in Saudi Arabia last month, amid uncer- tainty about whether Syrian talks will start next week in Geneva will take place.

The Saudi-backed Syrian opposition ruled out any indirect negotiations with Damascus before preced- ences are met, including, a halt to Russian air strikes, contradicting Kerry’s hopes for talks to start next week. The peace efforts are compli- cated by the overwhelming rela- tionships between Syrian Arab states have about how Taliban-run will benefit from imple- mentation of a nuclear deal agreed with Western powers last year (Reuters)

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**Ghani, Carter Discuss Afghanistan Security Situation**

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**Shinwari Elders Ask Govt. to Support Uprising**

**VALI-ALAOAD** - Tribal elders of Shinwari district of eastern Nangarhar province on Saturday accused the government to support the public uprising which was formed in Shinwari and its zones.

According to Kamin, schools and clinics remained closed in some districts (More on P4).

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**Kandahar Hospital Donated Chairs, Tables, Bed**

**KANDAHAR** - A charity group has provided tables, chairs and wheelchairs to a hospital belonging to the Kandahar University’s faculty students.

Qalim Lar group head Murtalab Waziri from Afghan News that the as- sociation had supplied 100 wheelchairs by Afghan living in Europe thanks to efforts by the group founder Rana Bashir.

He said their organisation had paid costs on printing and the equipment on the support from the Peace and Reconciliation Committee.

The Kandahar branch clubbed as “Khersoni province乗Persian Gulf, Kandahar Khurshid is the territorial scope of (More on P4).”

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**US Awards $55.2 Million in New Trainer Program for AAF**

**AFGHANISTAN** - The United States Department of Defense (DoD) has awarded a $55.2 million in new trainer program for the Afghan Air Force (AAF).

Women Aircraft Co., Wichita, Kan., has been awarded a $55.2 million in new trainer program for the Afghan Air Force (AAF). (Agencies)

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**NATO-Funded Printers to Help MOL Process up to 1,000 Passports Daily**

**DUSHANBE** - Tajikistan is reinforcing the most difficult sections of its Afghan border with Afghan and Russian border troops, military sources told Agence France-Presse on Friday. Military sources told Agence France-Presse that more than 1,000 troops were serving in the new unit and the members could grow, amid fears of jihadist violence spreading into Central Asia. Rakhmonali called the situation on the border, with “Taliban fighters controlling a similar area to Ukraine border region.” Last year Tajik border guards took part in 30 armed skirmishes with drug smugg- glers from Afghanistan, killing 18 smugglers. Afghanistan has long been the world’s largest source of opium and heroin, with profits from the drug trade helping fund Taliban insurgents who have been waging a deadly insurgency against the country’s Western-backed government. (Agencies)

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