No Letup in Violence Even after Pakistan-Backed Talks: Faisal

KABUL - Javed Faisal, spokesman for the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah Abdullah, on Tuesday said Afghanistan expected sharp decline after first round of dialogue with Taliban but insincerely continued to haunt the nation. He lamented groups behind insurgency in Afghanistan still enjoyed active Pakistan’s support and they were not released from their activities despite Pakistan’s assurance to hold first round of talks with Taliban. Afghanistan government delegation and Taliban representatives hold face-to-face talks last month in Mazar, a northern town close to Pakistan’s capital Islamabad. The government was sincere about talks with Taliban, he said, suspecting Pakistan did not stop supporting insurgent groups in Afghanistan. Afghan government expected dramatic decline in militants activities in the country after the first round of talks ended in Mazar. According to Faisal, the government was committed to peace talks with Taliban and would explore every opportunity that could guarantee peace and prosperity in the country. He said the second round of talks would be held soon, but did not give information about the venue and exact date of talks with Taliban. The second round of talks with Taliban was expected to start from July 20 in China, but government sources reiterated that second round was also expected to take place in Pakistan. Earlier, a Pakistan security official, who wished to go unnamed, said that second round of talks between Afghanistan government and the Taliban would take place in Islamabad as well. He added that Pakistan would be positive about it (talks).

Electoral Reform Suggestions to be Presented Soon: Tawhidi

KABUL - The Electoral Reforms Commission (ERC) on Tuesday considered the suggestions for which election commissioners got nominated and would incorporate changes in the laws in order to ensure neutrality during elections. The electoral reforms commission was formed following a presidential decree and officially started work last week. The panel is headed by Shah Tahmam Atkhi. Siddiq Ulhaq Tawhidi, the commissioner’s deputy chairman, told journalists that in the past few days the commission has developed working documents and started to follow-up suggestions from civil society, local elites, Union councils and other sectors of society in line with electoral reforms. According to Tawhidi, they would complete a set of short-term plans for electoral reforms and submit these to the government after a month. Tawhidi said the government should have the opportunity to incorporate the set of suggestions in the laws on structure. More on Page 3.

Pakistan Gets $336m to Support Forces in Afghanistan

KARACHI - Pakistan on Tuesday received $336m from the United States for its ongoing role in combating a Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan. The US has also committed a further $250m for military procurement, a spokesman said. A memorandum of understanding was signed between the two countries. The military aid was part of a $1.3bn military aid package announced by the US last month.

Russia’s Ambassador to NATO

Russia to Continue Fighting Against Drug Trafficking Without NATO

MOSCOW - Russia will continue fighting against drug trafficking from the Afghan territory without NATO but through interaction with other partners, Russia’s Ambassador to NATO Alexander Grushko said in an interview with the Lithuanian Radio and Television on Tuesday. “We have trained more than 4,000 officers for the anti-drug services of Russia, Afghanistan and Central Asian states,” Grushko said. According to him, the expansion of the Transdzhungarian militarized corridor and the completion of the anti-drug cooperation between NATO and Russia in Afghanistan is necessary because Russian troops withdraw from the country, he said.

Kohistan District Falls as ALP Commander Defects

SARAS, Pakistan - The nominated Kohistan district of northern Sar-Pal province has fallen to the Taliban, an official acknowledged. The district is believed to have been captured by the Taliban after a commander of the Afghan Local Police (ALP) joined them. At least (More on Page 4).

MoD to Take Up Border Security Issue with Pakistan

KARL - A delegation of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) plans a visit to neighboring Pakistan on Tuesday to discuss border security issues, an official said. Deputy MoD spokesman Gen. Davood Nazari told the Afghanistan News Agency that the officials would discuss recent problems happened near the border, Pakistani forces attacks inside Afghanistan territory and other issues. (More on Page 4).

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Indian Embassy Announces Masters Degree Programme in Foreign Affairs

KABUL - The Embassy of India, Kabul announced the unique Masters Degree Programme in foreign affairs. A.M. Diplomacy, Law and Business (M.A.DLBS) of the Indian Institute of Foreign Affairs (IIFA), IIFA is a not-for-profit global university. The vision of IIFA is to promote global curricula, global programmes, global research, global collaboration.

Rural Development Ministry Exceeds 100-Day Target

KABUL - Rural Urban Development Ministry has exceeded its 100-day target. Duration of 100 days for the ministry was announced by Prime Minister Ahmad Shah Rawash in the now dissolved National Unity Government in July.

Taliban Militants Launch Major Attack in Kunar Province

ASADABAD - Heavy fighters continue between the Taliban militants and the Afghan security forces in eastern Kunar province after the Taliban militants launched a major attack in Kunar district. According to local security officials, the Taliban fighters have carried out coordinated attack on security posts in central and remote areas of Wairak district and the Wawaka area mining. Provincial police chief Abu- dullah Hadiyo Khalil said that the attack was carried out to disrupt the security forces’ activities in the area.

Pakistan provides use of its air bases and other facilities to exchange the enemy fire. (More on Page 4.)