Japan looking to maintain Asian presence

Japan will be the only Asian side to qualify for the last 16 of the World Cup finals if they take a point from Poland in the Volgograd Arena on Thursday afternoon. If they succeed they will be the first Asian team to reach the second stage of the tournament since they did so in 2002 in South Korea. Japan are the only Asian side to reach the knockout stages of the World Cup finals since they and South Korea did so when they hosted the tournament in 2002.

For the third consecutive men's World Cup, the defending champs have been eliminated from the competition. In 2010 Italy was Italy, and four years ago Spain. On Wednesday, it was Germany, in shocking fashion. The reigning kings crashed out with a 2-0 loss to South Korea, on two goals in stoppage time as the Germans pushed for a necessary win. The late Korean goals sent beer-ages flying in celebration at the simultaneous match between Mexico and Sweden. Germany's loss sent Mexico through. As the big news of the 2018 World Cup's first colossal shock, the team that simply didn't lose last twice. Germany is out. For the first time in its World Cup history, it failed to get out of its group.

Highways Linking Kundahar with Kabul, Herat Reopen

KANDAHAR CITY - The highways linking from Kundahar to Kabul and Herat were reopened for traffic after one-day closure by Taliban militants in central Maidan Wardak province on Wednesday. Earlier, the insurgents had turned traffic along the roads till further orders from the rebel movement. They threatened violation of the treaties with harsh punishments. Muhammad Idris, a Mirwais and Nokia transport firm an official, told Pajhwok Afghan News the highway was reopened last night. Dozens of vehicles had since left for Kabul and Herat, he said.

KABUL - Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah says government will continue in efforts to maintain achievements in women's empowerment. Senior government officials and foreign diplomats attended the second ‘Promote Musharraf 2018 National Summit’ on women’s political, social and economic role in Kabul on Wednesday.

Addressing the event, Chief Executive Abdullah expressed appreciation improvements in women’s role in economic, social and political sectors. He said government would leave no stone unturned to secure those achievements. He claimed, “We announced ceasefire following a fatwa from Afghan Ulema, who are respectable for us. We welcome their calls and enforce their directives,” he said, adding the fatwa represented the nation’s will.

The ceasefire was announced on the 27th of Ramadan continued (More on P4)...

Securing checkpoint in Nangarhar Falls to Taliban

JALALABAD - An Afghan Local Police (ALP) man was killed as a check-post fell to Taliban insurgents in eastern Nangarhar province on late Tuesday night. The attack was repulsed and nine attackers were killed and four others wounded in the clashes that left three security personnel wounded, said Malhal. The wounded security men were in stable condition.

Separately on Wednesday morning, seven Taliban insurgents were killed and two others wounded in an ambush that targeted a Taliban Humvee tank in Nawa district, the police chief added.

On the other hand, six Taliban were killed when in the meantime they were planting the Kabul-Kandahar highway went off in Shurab locality. Currently, a resident of the area, confirmed the blast but had no information about casualties. The Taliban have not yet commented about these incidents. (Pajhwok)