Factories aunched in Balkh.

Agriculture Minister Nasir Ahmad Norouz said Monday.

Northern Balkh province, officials investment have been opened in cooking oil costing $8 million in two factories.

Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock Affairs at his residence in London, according to a statement on Monday. They discussed how the UK government could play a constructive role in the Afghan peace process in terms of unifying all the voices who want a political solution for the Afghan conflict. President Ghani also requested Secretary Hunt on behalf of the UK government to play a role in monitoring the upcoming elections for ensuring integrity of the process. Secretary Hunt said that as a long term partner of Afghanistan, the UK government will do anything it could for the peace process to succeed. While pointing at the Afghan democratic institutions, especially electoral institutions, he said the UK government will continue to work with Afghanistan for fostering and strengthening democracy.

President Ghani is on official trip to the UK.

KABUL - The Wolesi Jirga is expect- ed to decide the fate of controver- sial speaker election today(Tuesday) provided that the house agrees to the method of voting --- open or secret, a lawmaker said on Monday. Naiemtullah Karray, a lawmaker from eastern Kunar province, told reporters here that most of the lower house members including supporters of speaker candidates Rahmani and Usuli had agreed that the fate of the controversial vote would be decided tomorrow to end the lengthy delay into the election. The lawmakers would first decide whether the voting for the speaker slot would be secret or open. “Not only the two sides but most of the MPs have agreed to put to an end the ongoing crisis and tomor- row they would conduct voting for this purpose,” he said. Earlier, there was disagreement over the conduct of the voting process, but now the house would decide the future of voting and a two-thirds majority was vital for this, Karray said. On May 16, lawmakers Mir Rahman Rahmani, Mirezas Younis, Kamal Naser Osuli and Omar Nasir contested for the speaker post. However, none could bag enough votes to become speaker of the house and the ballot went to a sec- ond round, which was deferred. Mir Rahmani and Osuli, who received the highest numbers of votes, were in the run for the slot in the second round of voting.

Afra Mohammad Delgospehr, provi- sional speaker, had said there were 247 lawmakers present in the house and a candidate was required to col- lect 124 votes to win the seat. However, none of the candidates collected even 55 votes. However, Dehqanpur de- tested for the speaker post.

Naser Osuli and Omar Nasir con- tested for the speaker slot.

KABUL - Afghanistan’s cen- tral bank chief Khalid Siddiq has stepped down at a time when the na- tional currency has fallen against the dollar by 35 percent, an offi- cial said on Monday.

Atif Hashib, the central bank’s spokesman, told Pajhwok Af- ghan News that Khalid Siddiq had resigned due to the illness he was suffering from and his resig- nation had been approved by Presidential Palace.

However, under the law, Siddiq should work till next month to complete a one month notice pe- riod. His resignation comes at a time when one US dollar accounts for 80.40 afghanis. A few years back, a dollar was valued at 61 afghani.

Poultry Feed, Cooking Oil Factories aunched in Balkh.

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KABUL - Almost a week after the Afghan government released at least 400 Taliban prisoners out of 405 inmates to be released in the near future, Chief Executive of Afghanistan, Abdullah Abdul- lah, said he hopes the moves will be a gesture of goodwill, not an election campaign.

Earlier this month, President Ghani announced to release 805 Taliban prisoners as part of the demand of the grand Taliban delegation. (Pajhwok)

UK Announces $215 Million Food, Water and Medical Help for Afghanistan

London - Britain on Monday announced a new $215 million-pound ($283 million) five-year aid package of urgent food, water and medicine as- sistance for people in Afghanistan.

“The humanitarian need in Afghanistan is se- vere,” International Development Secretary Rory Stewart said after meeting Afghan President Ashraf Ghani in London. (Pajhwok)