

Jalalabad Clear 19°C 7°C	Ghazni Clear 6°C -6°C	Kandahar Clear 17°C 2°C	Mazar Chance of Rain 14°C 7°C	Herat Clear 15°C 2°C	Bamayan Clear -1°C -11°C	Kabul Clear 9°C -4°C
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Pakistani PM Calls for Regional Connectivity at ECO Summit

Sayyaf Hospitalized in Kabul Due to Heart Attack

KABUL - A prominent former Afghan jihadi leader Abdul Rab Rasool Sayyaf has been hospitalized in Kabul with preliminary reports suggesting he has suffered a heart attack. Sources close to Sayyaf have said he is in a better condition and is currently undergoing treatment. Sayyaf is an influential political and jihadi leader and is one of the prominent critics of the Taliban group and other insurgents fighting in the country. Reports regarding his submission to the hospital due to heart attack come as he survived numerous attacks in the past. His residence came under rocket in mid-May 2016 but no casualties were incurred to him while numerous oth-



er rockets landed close to his residence few earlier than that. The attack on residence followed weeks after he criticized the Taliban militants group and dismissed their so called jihad as a move against the principles of Islam. He has been continuously reaffirming his hard stance against the insurgent groups and ...*(More on P4)...(11)*



ISLAMABAD - Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Wednesday opened a key regional conference that will focus on intra-region connectivity in energy, infra-

structure, transport and trade sectors. The theme of the 13th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) is "Connectivity for Regional

Prosperity," which, officials insist, has assumed special significance in the backdrop of monumental project of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor.

All the ten member states including Pakistan, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Iran, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, besides a special

representative from China, are participating in the summit. Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was elected as chairman of ECO at the opening ...*(More on P4)...(10)*

Afghanistan to be Off Banking Gray List in a Month



KABUL - The Central Bank of Afghanistan, the country's state-owned bank, has said Afghanistan has addressed all the requirements of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and it will be taken off the gray list of the organization within a month. By been taken off the list, Afghanistan's financial system will gain credibility in the world and all banks in the country would be able to deal with international banks in other parts of the world, of-

officials at the bank said. Countries on the gray list of the organization are faced with limitations in money dealings. The Head of the money dealing reporting office of the bank, Nisar Ahmad Yusufzai, said it took five years to comply with the requirements and the bank is now waiting for the FATF assessments of the measures taken. "Our banks have invested a lot on reforms. They continue their ...*(More on P4)...(13)*

Rula Ghani Distressed over Trump's Afghan Policy Chaos

KABUL - First Lady of Afghanistan Rula Ghani on Wednesday expressed her deep concerns over a possible aid cut to Afghanistan by the United States, urging President Donald Trump's administration to continue in partnership with Afghanistan. She made the remarks during the National Conference on Women's Sustainable Development for peace in Kabul. Commenting on Trump's speech to the U.S congress on Tuesday, Rula Ghani



said Trump did not outline his policy on Afghanistan, Iraq or Syria. She reiterated her hope that Trump will maintain the US's cooperation with Af-

ghanistan. She called on Afghan women not rely on foreign aid and instead concentrate their attention on their own ...*(More on P4)...(12)*

Border Mechanism Needs Improvement: ISPR

PESHAWAR - A senior Pakistani military official has underlined the need for political engagement between Kabul and Islamabad to counter the terrorism threat. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) chief said: "Even if one claims terror attacks are being planned in Afghanistan, it doesn't mean all of Afghanistan wants to engage in such activities." Major General Asif Ghafoor, in an interview with a private TV channel on Tuesday, acknowledged the Afghan themselves were victims of terrorism and had made huge sacrifices. Ghafoor said Afghanistan -- a battleground for various powers -- must view its security situation and ties with Pakistan

through its own lens, not an 'anti-Pakistan' lens. Military-level engagement between the neighbours was ongoing, as suggested by Army Chief Gen Qamar Bajwa, the spokesman said. "The Pak-Afghan border mechanism needs improvement and we are hopeful it will happen in coming days." Border closure was not an indefinite measure, Ghafoor remarked, explaining there were certain things that Afghanistan must do before the frontier was reopened. The steps Kabul needed to take could be decided, he said. When the border reopened, no one from either country should be able to cross it for committing terrorist acts. *(Pajhwok)*

Turkey Hands Over Sufi Book to Afghanistan

KABUL - An 18th century Pashto language book on Sufism was handed over to Afghanistan on Tuesday after being discovered in a Dublin book store by a Turkish diplomat. Al-Tohfat Al-Qadrya was presented to Afghan officials by the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) in a ceremony in Kabul. Written between 1722 and 1723 by Afghan writer Ibn Munner, the book on Islamic mysticism was discovered two years ago by Sinan Ayhan, who was looking for Kurdish language books on Islam during a break from his diplomatic post in Kabul. "The owners of the book store had kept this historic Pashto book in the Kurdish language

section since they were not familiar with this language," he said in a note accompanying the book as it was handed over. Pashto is a language spoken in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, India and other countries by about 40 million people. After the discovery, TIKA arranged for it to be republished and presented in Kabul. TIKA's Afghanistan Director Sulaiman Shaheen promised continued support for Afghan culture and society while Lal Pacha, advisor to President Ashraf Ghani, read a statement in which Ghani praised friendly ties between the two nations and thanked Turkey for its continued support. *(AA)*

Baloch Tribesmen Want their Language Added to Syllabus

KABUL - The Afghanistan Baluch Council, stressing the importance of mother tongue, on Wednesday asked the government to include Balochi language in school syllabus. Shir Aqa Baluch, the Afghan Baluch coordination and social council head, told a gathering honoring Baloch culture, said Balochis lived in 23 provinces of the country particularly in Nimroz, Helmand and Farah provinces. He accused the government of negligence in promoting the culture and language of Balochs, saying the lack of attention from the central government had led to migration of Baloch people and their culture and language had been harmed. Shir Aqa said the government considering the current situation should provide health and teaching services, potable water and pay heed to language and culture of Baluch. Otherwise, he said, the minority tribe reaching up to four million people would face further problems. Abdul Satar Pordali, a member at the Academy of Sciences and a Baloch culturist, said the government should function under the Constitution and act based on the principle of equal rights and meritocracy and ensure the rights of Balochs. "The sweet Balochi language of has ancient roots and currently the language is spoken ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

'Harassed' Eshchi Says He is Being Discriminated Against

KABUL - Former deputy head of the Islamic National Movement of Afghanistan, Ahmad Eshchi, who claims to have been sexually harassed by the First Vice President Abdul Rashid Dostum and his guards, says he is concerned over a "discriminatory approach" to his case by judicial organizations. The Attorney General's Office has sent summons letters to Dostum's guards but two of them have not appeared at the office for questioning. "This case has been politicized. He [Dostum] has not been suspended. Attorneys have been pressurized. This is a discriminatory act," Eshchi said. The Attorney General's Office would not comment on Eshchi's claims. However, the Interior Ministry spokesman Najib Danish said the ministry is committed to bringing the two guards to the AGO for questioning. "We are committed to ensuring that the two Dostum guards are brought to the attorney's office. We have worked on getting the guards to the office and we will do so," Danish said. The two guards who have not appeared at the AGO, have been named. "One of them is Ezatullah and ...*(More on P4)...(16)*

US Forces Vow to Work with Afghan Forces to Target Enemies of Peace

KABUL - The US forces in Afghanistan (USFOR-A) has vowed to continue to their work with the Afghan forces to target the enemies of peace and prosperity of Afghanistan. The US forces reaffirmed the support in statement issued on Wednesday to confirm the death of the top Taliban leader Mullah Abdul Salam. "As part of an operation with Afghan National Defense and Security Forces, United States Forces conducted a strike that killed Mullah Salam, the Taliban commander for Kunduz. Salam was killed along with four other enemy combatants in an operation targeting the insurgent group in Kunduz province, Feb. 26. No civilians were hurt or killed in this strike," the statement said. According to USFOR-A, Salam was responsible for immeasurable suffering



among the population of Kunduz. Salam and Taliban forces attacked civilians and other non-combatants and destroyed bridges and key infrastructure despite claims that they would protect civilians and property. "Mullah Salam and the Taliban fighters under him murdered and terrorized the people of Kunduz for too long," said Gen. John Nicholson, commander, U.S. Forces - Afghanistan. "Salam's death is an opportunity for change. The

people of Afghanistan want peace and the Government of Afghanistan is committed to achieving peace through reconciliation. The Taliban know the only path forward is reconciliation." The statement further added that the strike was conducted under U.S. authorities as part of a larger ANDSF operation. "The United States maintains a robust partnership with Afghanistan and we recognize the sacrifices made on behalf of the Afghan ...*(More on P4)...(14)*

Kabul-Bamyan Road Via Hajigak Tunnel Reopens



BAMYAN CITY - The Kabul-Bamyan road through Hajigak tunnel has been reopened for traffic after three weeks of closure due to heavy snowfall, an official said on Wednesday. Abdul Khaleq, a government official in Shibar district, told Pajhwok Afghan News the road to Bamyan through Hajigak was reopened on Wednesday for traffic.

"Currently only small vehicles could travel on the road and in upcoming two days all type of vehicles would be allowed to travel if the weather remained clear." Khalefa Yaqub, a driver who travels on the road, said the road going through Maidan Wardak province to Bamyan was shorter compared to the road via Parwan province. *(Pajhwok)*

Afghan Skiers Eye 2018 Olympics after World Championship

KABUL - Skiers Alishah Farhang and Sajjad Husaini, who represented Afghanistan at the World Championship in St. Moritz, Switzerland, said they hope to become the first Afghan athletes at the 2018 Winter Olympics in South Korea. The two Afghan skiers are currently preparing for a

competition in New Zealand. "I will attend a qualifying competition for world championship in the near future. A year from now, I will attend the 2018 Olympics to represent Afghanistan there. I want to see the Afghan flag among the flags of other nations at the in-

ternational event," Husaini said. Afghanistan Ski Federation said the skiers had to attend three international competitions and achieve good results to qualify for the Olympics games. The federation said one of these important events will be held in August. *(Tolonews)*