Mohaqq Stresses Dostum’s Return to Afghanistan

Addressing a ceremony on 23rd death anniversary of Abdul Ali Mazari, the slain leader of the Islamic Unity Party of Afghanistan, Mohaqq said the tension between government and Atta Mohammad Noor, the ousted governor of Balkh and CEO of Jamaat-e-Islami Party, should be resolved through talks.

Pakistan Reopens Key Afghan Trade Route for Trial Run: Official

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan on Friday reopened an important border crossing with Afghanistan after nearly three years in a bid to boost trade between the two countries, officials said. The Chaman Khan border, the third major crossing point between Pakistan and Afghanistan in North Waziristan tribal region, was closed in June 2014 after the security forces launched a major operation against the Pakistani Taliban and foreign militants in North Waziristan. An official in the region told Xinhua by the phone that the border was reopened for trial run of the new system equipped with biometric identification system. Local traders welcomed reopening of the border and hoped that the move will increase cross-border activities in the region and also across the country. The reopening was earlier planned on March 7, but was postponed to ensure more facilities for the traders and cross-border movement of the people. Pakistan had introduced passport and visa system for those entering Pakistan in 2016 via Torkham, the biggest crossing between the two countries. Officials say same system will be introduced at Chaman, the second largest point, and other notional crossings.

16 Security Force Member Killed in Takhar

KABUL - At least 16 security force members were killed after Taliban militants attacked their check points in Khwaja Qar district in Takhar province, officials said. Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah at a ceremony in Kabul pointed to sacrifices of Afghan forces in defending the country and said: “10 army soldiers and six police force members were martyred in Takhar.” Taliban claimed in a statement that the group had attacked security check points in Khwaja Qar district and inflicted heavy losses to government forces. (Tolo news)

Govt Finalizes Plan for New Year’s Military Operation

President Ashraf Ghani says no one will be allowed to interfere in Afghan forces’ affairs.

AHRC Chair Blasts Govt over Gender Inequality

KABUL - Simar Simar criticized government for not appointing women to senior positions, including in the national security council. Chairperson of Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission Simar said on Thursday strongly criticized the Afghan government for its failure to increase the number of women in what she described as major programs at a national level. She pointed out that there was not a single woman appointed to the National Security Council (NSC). She said the lack of women. (More on P4)

Disabled American, Afghan Soldiers Face Different Realities

ATLANTA - It was a sunny day. As U.S. Staff Sergeant Joey Jones was on patrol in Afghanistan’s Helmand province—suddenly—a land mine exploded, changing the life of the U.S. Marine forever.

“I was disabled in battle. I wish one day somebody could walk again,” he said.

“I was disabled in battle. I wish one day somebody could walk again.”

“I am a disabled veteran living in different countries including the United States, Afghanistan, Greece and Italy. I lost my right leg and my vision. I was born in Kabul, Afghanistan. When VOA visited Jones and his family at his home near Atlanta, he said you’re healthy and you’ll be able to live. Joey” as his friends call him, lost both of his legs in the blast. “When I woke up in Germany my immediate thought was, “do I have a knee?” because a lot of guys that lose their legs below the knee recover faster and can do more,” he recalls. “If you have one knee that can make a huge difference. And unfortunately the nurse was very honest and said you don’t have a knee but you’re healthy and you’ll be able to walk again and you’re going to live.”

Joey Jones had served eight years with the Marines, with tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan— including seven months as a bunker manager.

After his injury, Jones received medical help from the U.S. government, including health care, education and housing. It is a different story for Afghan soldiers who fought alongside Americans.

When VOA visited Jones and his family at his home near Atlanta, Georgia, we showed him photos of an Afghan soldier officer who was disabled in battle. Rabbah Zarar lost his legs in a military operation in Farah province. A mechanical engineer, he prays someday he will be able to walk again.

“I wish one day somebody could help me.” (More on P4)

Quote of the Day

Discrimination has a lot of learn that make it tough for minorities to get a leg up.

Bill Gates

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