KABUL - About 64 percent of Afghan women lack vitamin D and 40 percent are suffering from anemia, Minister of Public Health, Pashtawar Farooqi, said on Wednesday.

Addressing a gathering on International Women’s Day in Kabul, he said 40 percent of Afghan women suffered from a deficiency of red blood cells and 64 percent lacked vitamin D.

A 2011 survey by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and World Health Organization (WHO) says 317 in 100,000 expecting mothers lose their lives during childbirth. The maternal mortality rate was 600 in each 100,000 births in 2004.

Force recalled, saying 87 percent of women were victims of violence, 27 percent of sexual abuse and 52 percent of beatings. He added information from... (More on P14)

US Special Representative Praises Pakistan’s Role in Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD - Feldman called on army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa at the ISPR, where regional security was discussed during the meeting.

Pakistan had negotiated its willingness to support the process of reconciliation in Afghanistan as reports emerged about the Afghan Taliban negotiations opening files with US officials in the Qassim capital of Doha.

“Pakistan in all sincerity will support the process... [between] reconciliation between the Afghan government and the Afghan Taliban... as peace in Afghanistan will contribute to peace in the region,” Bajwa said in a rare statement on the prospects of peace in the neighboring country.

“Pakistan has always supported such a process, and is re-emphasised to it be absolutely transparent, Afghanistan-led and Afghan-led. We hope that all stakeholders will continue to... (More on P15)

3,000 Passports Being Issued Daily: Official

KARUL - A senior official at the passport department said on Wednesday his office had expedited steps and 3,000 passport copies were being issued on a daily basis.

Bash, Gen Khan Aqa Tal, technical assistant, told Pajhwok Afghan News the passport distribution process had been expedited recently.

Ten month back, he recalled, only 1,500 passports were issued a day. “The main factor behind the surge in passport... (More on P16)