Peace Talks Possibly in Afghanistan: HPC

KABUL - Speaking on an agreement on a general framework for the peace talks, the High Peace Council (HPC) members have declared that the proposed peace talks with the Taliban, if totally fulfilled, should be the final step in Afghanistan.

The HPC, in the meantime, has requested the Afghan government to take immediate steps toward realizing the peace talks in a non-violent manner. The government should also encourage all factions to participate in the talks, according to the officials.

The talks with the Taliban were to start in early days of March, but the process was delayed due to various reasons, including the Taliban's demands for a cease-fire and the release of prisoners.

220,000 People Killed in “War on Terror” in Afghanistan

KABUL - Following the 9/11 attacks in the United States, 220,000 people have been killed during 12 years of war in Afghanistan. The local human rights groups have reported that 90% of the war deaths have been caused by the US-led coalition.

A conservative group recently published a report that estimated the number of war deaths in Afghanistan at approximately 1.2 million people. The report was based on the data provided by the United Nations and other international organizations.

Ministries Flouting Rules in Awarding Scholarships

KABUL - The acting minister of higher education on Sunday accused authorities of awarding scholarships to persons and relatives of influential people on the basis of personal relations and not according to established rules and regulations.

Muhammad Usman Rabei, who was summoned by the Ministry of Higher Education, accused the secretaries of the ministry of awarding scholarships to persons without following the established rules.

Call to Ensure Swift Justice in Women’s Murder Case

KABUL - Fatima McKinley, the spouse of the US ambassador to Afghanistan, on Sunday asked the Afghan government to take immediate steps to prevent further cases of violence against women.

The minister of women’s affairs said that the government needed to take immediate steps to protect women from violence, especially in rural areas.

Kabul Electricity to be Restored within Five Days: Breshna

KABUL - With about a month to go before Breshna Company, the city’s primary power provider, cut off supplies to businesses in Salang that have caused the power shortage, the company officials have said that the problem should be fixed within a week.

“We need 15 business days - with good weather it can be done in three business days, and in no more than 15 days we can fix the problem,” the minister of Salang, said during the meeting.

Meanwhile, officials at the Afghan Chamber of Commerce and Industries said that Breshna had promised to recontract the electricity lines.

Rising Human Trafficking Fuels Concerns

TALOQAN - Human trafficking of youth and children in Afghanistan has escalated because of poverty and government’s inability to control the trafficking practices.

The charity’s representative in northern Balkh province, explained on Sunday that the ministry needed to take immediate steps to prevent human trafficking.

The smugglers promise to send the hunches, cars and palatial houses in return for trafficking, in their cities in Iran.

According to the 90-year-old, who said scores of their relatives had been trafficked, they need to stop the practice to save the country from becoming a “human cargo ship.”

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