

Local Tribes Find a Solution for Costly Weddings

KHOST CITY - With popularity of group weddings increasing in parts of the country amid growing wedding costs, the tribal elders in Tanai district of eastern Khost province have found a new solution to pricey weddings. The new agreement finalized by 400 tribal elders and religious scholars set a ceiling of \$5,000 on the bride-price, which includes gold jewelry not to weigh more than 64 gram. Anyone breaching the agreement could face penalties including being ostracized as per the new tradition, Khaama Press reported. A tribal elder Haji Hakim Wali told Institute for War & Peace Reporting (IWPR) "No one will agree to dig a grave for them



when they die." Wali further added "No one will attend their weddings. No one will ask after their health. They will be expelled from village and tribe. Those who violate the rule will also have to pay a fine of 2,000 dollars to the tribe." With clerics playing a major role in codifying the agreement that took several years to finalize, ...*(More on P4)...(12)*

Afghan Special Forces in Firing Line as Fighting Spreads

KABUL - As Afghan soldiers and police struggle to contain an escalating insurgency that has targeted several cities in recent weeks, the country's special forces are being tested as never before. Trained in counter-insurgency tactics at the elite School of Excellence near Kabul, these soldiers led the battle to retake Kunduz, after regular forces fled their posts last month to cede the northern city to militants they easily outnumbered.

"The credit for the Kunduz victory goes to the Afghan special forces of the police and Afghan National Army," said interior ministry spokesman SediqSediqqi, referring to the government's recapture of most of Kunduz a few days after it fell to the Taliban in late September. "They are tough fighters." Events surrounding the first capitulation of a provincial capital to the Taliban since they were ousted from power in 2001 underlined the weakness of Afghanistan's regular army and police and the relative strength of its special forces.

Worryingly for Kabul and the United States, which has spent around \$65 billion training local forces to allow the rest of its troops to withdraw, Afghan special forces are feeling the strain. Numbering about 18,000 of a total Afghan National Security Force of up to 350,000 and divided between the army, police and Interior Ministry, Afghan special forces units and commandos undertook 2,800 independent operations in the year to May 2015, according to a report from the U.S. Department of Defense. "Our forces shoulder a lot of responsibility and sometimes they have to respond to attacks as often as twice a day," said Abdullah Guard, head of police special forces in Kunduz. "WE WILL LOSE EVERYTHING" With better equipment, training and pay, as well as more prestige than regular troops, special forces are the first units turned to in a crisis. That burden was bothering Afghan special forces commanders even before the dramatic events in Kunduz. Since then, heavy fighting has flared near Ghazni, a city 130 km southwest of Kabul, and in the last few days, around LashkarGah in the south, Herat in the west and in the northern Faryab province bordering Turkmenistan. Some commanders are concerned that too much reliance is being placed on units originally intended to provide specialized back-up to regular security forces. "Commandos are not being used in the way they were supposed to be," one Afghan commander complained to a team of U.S. special forces at a remote outpost in Paktia province, close to ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

NDS Foils Taliban Plan to Carry out Coordinated Attacks



JALALABAD - The National Directorate of Security (NDS) has foiled a Taliban plan to carry out coordinated attacks on security posts in GhaniKheil District of eastern Nangarhar province. A statement released by NDS on Sunday states that six members of Taliban's QariSaleem group who had planned the attacks were arrested during special operations in Nangarhar. Fazal Karim alias Talha and Larlai, Sanaulah, Amiruddin, Nabiul

lah, Abdul Basit and Stor are the names of the arrested terrorists, the statement adds. The group was also involved in several cases of terrorism to include planting landmines. An RPG 7, 6 Kalashnikovs, six anti-vehicle landmines, a transmission set and several magazines of ammos were recovered from their possession. NDS statements usually do not contain the exact date of the achievements but they come after recent activities. (KP)

Iraq, Afghanistan Conflict Heroes Honored by Namesake Ships

BATH, Maine - Heroes forged in Afghanistan and Iraq are having their names bestowed on a new generation of warships, joining those whose exploits in World Wars and battles domestic and abroad earned them the distinction of having U.S. Navy vessels christened in their honor. More than a decade after U.S. boots hit the ground in the Middle East, two new destroyers bearing the names of Americans who died there are already in service. A third, the future USS Rafael Peralta, named for a Marine killed nearly 11 years ago in Iraq, will be christened Saturday at Bath Iron Works. Peralta was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross for heroism after he covered an insurgent's grenade with his body to protect his fellow Marines. "His legacy will carry on," said Ricardo Peralta, who was inspired by his older brother to join the Marines and served in Afghanistan. "I feel like the USS Peralta holds the spirit of what my brother stood for, and that was for God, for his country, the United States, and for the Marine Corps." The Peralta is one of four destroyers named for a serviceman who died in Iraq or Afghanistan. The USS Jason Dunham, named for a Marine killed in 2004 in Iraq, and the USS Michael Murphy, named for a Navy SEAL killed in 2005 in Afghanistan, are already on duty. The future USS Michael Monsoor, named for a Navy SEAL killed in 2006 in Iraq, is also being built at Bath Iron Works. Born in Mexico City, Rafael Peralta came to the United States with his family, attended high school in San Diego and enlisted ...*(More on P4)...(13)*

Poor Coordination Caused Fresh Fruits Get Rotten: Experts

KABUL - A number of Afghan economic experts have believed that poor coordination between Governmental business departments this year has caused that huge amount of the fresh fruits couldn't be exported to abroad and got either rotten or dried in the country. Officials in Ministry of commerce and industry have reported the 26% of decreasing of exporting fresh fruits to abroad for the year 2015, declaring the major reasons dual policy of neighboring countries specially Pakistan towards Afghanistan. Spokesman of Ministry of commerce



and industry MusafirQoqandi said, "exporting of fresh fruits from Afghanistan has decreased 26% comparing last year, the main reason for such big issue is the dual policy of Pakistan towards Afghanistan." Meanwhile economic experts have

blamed both business departments for having poor coordination, saying that has caused that Afghan Government could export fresh fruits as it was expected. Afghan economic expert QiasSaiedi said, "poor coordination in ...*(More on P4)...(14)*

Unidentified Gunmen Kidnap Five Health Workers

MAIMANA - Unidentified gunmen have kidnapped five health workers in northern Faryab province, officials said Sunday. Reports suggest that the health workers were on their way from the provincial capital, Maimana city, to Kohistan District when gunmen stopped their vehicle and took them to an undisclosed location. The abducted health workers were serving at the civil hospital of Kohistan District. Imam YarTaqwa, the



district governor says that community elders have arrived in an area under the control of Taliban and trying to secure the release of the hostages. Although, local officials suspect Taliban behind the abduction but the group's spokesman has not yet commented on the report. Faryab is among the northern provinces of Afghanistan that is witnessing severe insecurity from the last few months. (KP)

Outlook Horoscope

Aries (Mar. 22-Apr.20)

Cosmic light bulbs flash, illuminating your mind today, and you are eager to share your brilliant new ideas with anyone who will listen. You're wired for action and may be quite pleased with your own ingenuity. Unfortunately, you have an attention span of a kitten; you will likely lose interest in what you're doing before you gain traction.

Taurus (Apr.21-May 20)

A spontaneous shift in your thinking could be precipitated by someone who decides to change shared plans without necessarily telling you first. This unilateral decision can be problematic because it impacts the rest of your day, too. You might be resistant to adjusting your schedule for the sake of anyone else, but it's not wise to be fixed in your ways today.

Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You would like to be known as a responsible person who your friends, family and community can rely on. However, you may not be fully committed to walking your talk today. Although others could have high expectations, you might not be interested in paying the price to earn the appreciation you want. Instead of wasting your time spinning idle fantasies now, show up and play your part to the best of your ability.

Cancer (June 21-July 20)

You can hear the future calling your name today, and you yearn to get things rolling in that direction. But you aren't sure whether or not to take this cosmic message seriously. Rest assured this career opportunity is worth pursuing, so don't bother wondering if it's real or not. Just answer the pull of your heartstrings and explore all the possibilities.

Leo (July 21-Aug. 21)

You feel connected to someone special today, only to suddenly experience an awkward distance between you for no apparent reason. Your partner's unexpected behavior could be upsetting to your heart and perplexing to your mind. Fortunately, it won't take you long to recover your balance, but you may keep your defenses up for a while to be on the safe side.

Virgo (Aug. 22-Sep 22)

You see every event as another potential escape route, but searching for a way to break out of a rut isn't enough today. Unfortunately, you might let a chance to try something new slip by without giving it a fair shot. Taking a risk sounds better than it actually is, because you believe that you will be happier if you stick to what's already familiar. Although avoiding change seems like the safer choice now.

Libra (Sep 23-Oct. 22)

A sudden break in your routine catches you off guard today. At first, it may seem as if someone else's refusal to cooperate with you further complicates your day. But this twist of fate can work to your advantage by triggering your sense of independence. If nothing out of the ordinary occurs, go ahead and stir up some mischief on your own. Ultimately, something must change now and if you don't make it happen.

Scorpio (Oct.23-Nov.22)

A burst of enthusiasm sets you into motion today, even if you feel stuck in a familiar pattern. You might attempt to initiate overdue improvements, but little will come of your efforts if you act prematurely. Waiting until you can sense that the time is right is key to your transformation. Your dedication to creating change will be rewarded with a high level of accomplishment.

Sagittarius (Nov.23-Dec.20)

Although you may wish you could let your commitments slide today, your conscience gnaws at you, reminding you that you must do what you promised. But you might not be feeling your usual zest for life now; instead you could attempt a half-hearted effort just to get by. Unfortunately, your current detachment can create additional problems if you pretend that everything is okay when it's not.

Capricorn (Dec.21-Jan19)

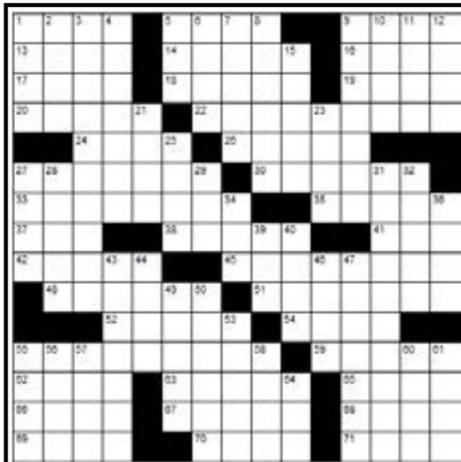
Maintaining control over your own schedule now is unlikely if family members don't cooperate as you had hoped. Even if you're upset about your plans falling apart today, don't shift the blame to anyone else. No matter how it appears to you, no one is trying to sabotage your efforts. It might come as a surprise, but the cause of your current instability is you.

Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb.18)

You might not be able to turn your plans into reality because you encounter some interesting twists and turns that completely change the direction of your day. An unforeseen event could send you into an emotional tailspin if you try to cling to the past. However, this may prove to be a pivotal moment if you're ready to launch into the unknown. Rigid thinking turns small problems into larger ones.

Pisces (Feb.19-Mar.20)

Hiding your feelings is impossible while the Moon lingers in your sign. Your recent disclosure pays off today as people rally to your side. Nevertheless, your sudden emotional outburst may shock others once the Moon marches into hotheaded Aries. Don't hold back; expressing your thoughts spontaneously might be just what's needed to encourage someone else to say what's on his or her mind, too.



Across

1. Plateau, 5. Questions, 9. Greeting at sea, 13. Chooses, 14. Precipitous, 16. Olympic sled, 17. Dribble, 18. A fencing sword, 19. Parasitic insect, 20. Basic belief, 22. American Indian medicine man, 24. Snip, 26. Deli item, 27. Adult male chicken, 30. Sponge gourd, 33. Emerged, 35. Thin disk of unleavened bread, 37. Former boxing champ, 38. British biscuit, 41. Letter after sigma, 42. Backsides, 45. Not southern, 48. Short sleep, 51. In the direction of, 52. Beside, 54. Classify, 55. Changes into a liquid, 59. Serpentine, 62. Throat-clearing sound, 63. European currency, 65. Feudal worker, 66. Former Italian currency, 67. Trades, 68. Goulash, 69. Coil, 70. Sneaker or pump, 71. Views.

Down

1. The bulk, 2. Type of sword, 3. Loud, 4. Bad-mouth, 5. Donkey, 6. Celebrity, 7. Souvlaki, 8. Periodical, 9. Forage plant, 10. A very large person, 11. Curved molding, 12. 365 days, 15. Former Hungarian monetary unit, 21. Chickadees, 23. Cat sound, 25. Untidiness, 27. Back, 28. Leers, 29. Record (abbrev.), 31. A delayed flavor sensation, 32. Listened to, 34. Put clothing on, 36. Flows, 39. Excluding, 40. God of love, 43. Chart showing routes and streets, 44. Only, 46. 2 2 2 2, 47. Control and direct, 49. Districted, 50. Results, 53. Hebrew unit of weight, 55. Phone, 56. Buckeye State, 57. Roman emperor, 58. Alone, 60. Leg joint, 61. Evergreens, 64. South southeast.

Yesterday's Solution



amuse, bruise, cabin, child, dais, deliver, diner, donation, driver, event, exit, field, foes, galaxy, ghosts, grip, impress, invests, local, paddle, party, penny, pitch, ready, school, single, spark, start, suppression, tent, test, theory, vacate, wafer, weapon, worst.

