

Quote of the Day

National Unity

It is important for people to be able to read all sides of every question; for a feeling of national unity does not come from one-sided or inadequate information, but from a sense of freedom impartially secured and of opportunity equalized by a just government.

Jeannette Rankin

Third Wave 'Detected' as 166 New COVID Cases Reported



KABUL - The Ministry of Public Health on Sunday reported 166 new cases of COVID-19 out of 1,922 samples tested in the last 24 hours. The ministry also reported five deaths and 119 recoveries from COVID-19 in the same period. The new cases were reported in Kabul (44), Nangarhar (33), Kandahar (22), Herat (11), Balkh (1), Takhar (5), Baghlan (1), Kunduz (1), Parwan (1), Bamiyan (4), Maidan Wardak (6), Badakhshan (4), Kunar (3), Laghman (16), Panjshir (3), Uruzgan (3) and Farah (8) provinces. The ministry reported that the cumulative total of known COVID-19 cases is 60,288, the total number of ...

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Mohib Govt Does Not See Any Justification for Taliban Violence

KABUL - Hamdullah Mohib, National Security Adviser, during a press conference on Saturday, whined and questioned the ongoing violence and atrocities contemporary undertaken by the Taliban over which the US has kept its silence, he declared that government does not see any justification for the Taliban war as NATO and US troops are preparing to withdraw. Taliban is an ISI-backed force that keeps seeking power, Mohib added, that the group uses different tactics to justify the violence. He said if they justify the murdering civilians, indeed Taliban justifies their slavery for an intelligence agency. According to Mohib, the Taliban gets their military equipment and explosive materials from Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). Mohib Said the Taliban are ISI puppets and are instructed from Pakistan for "killing Afghans", destruction of Afghanistan and the entire world knows about it, Taliban needs to explain this. The NSA further elaborated that al-Qaeda plays a key role in keeping the Taliban's war active in Afghanistan, but the group has continuously rejected having ties with al-Qaeda. Taliban militants claim that no other group can operate, except them, and based on their orders the violence stops and no one else launches attacks. In this matter Taliban are responsible and al-Qaeda, Daesh are operating in coop-



eration with the militant group, Mohib added. According to Mohib there are also those in the ranks of the Taliban who consider the ongoing Taliban violence illegitimate. On the other hand, the acting defense minister Gen. Yasin Zia confirmed that US and NATO troops are leaving Afghanistan and that the withdrawal has

practically been initiated. Zia briefly told reporters that foreign troops will hand over areas where their logistics issues were addressed and soon will be handed to the Afghan defense forces. US and NATO forces will leave other bases and will gather at Bagram airbase from there they will leave Afghanistan, Zia ...

More on (Page 4) Num (1)

Survivors of Car Bomb in Logar Province Share Ordeal



LOGAR - The survivors of the deadly bombing in the eastern province of Logar on Sunday said the blast was huge and that it damaged many houses nearby. They said it happened when everyone was busy having their dinner. The blast that targeted a guest house killed at least 26 people and wounded over 110 others. The government confirmed 21 dead and 91 wounded in the explosion. Dozens of people were trapped under the rubble as a building collapsed due to the blast. The rescue mission continued throughout the night. A toddler and some women are among those wounded in the bombing. "The casualty is too high. Many shops and houses have been damaged, people were wounded due to broken glasses following the blast," said Abdul Rahman, an eyewitness. "Many of those martyred were the students who had gathered for the university entrance exam," said Ehsanullah, an eyewitness. Dozens of the wounded ...

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Cautionary Notice

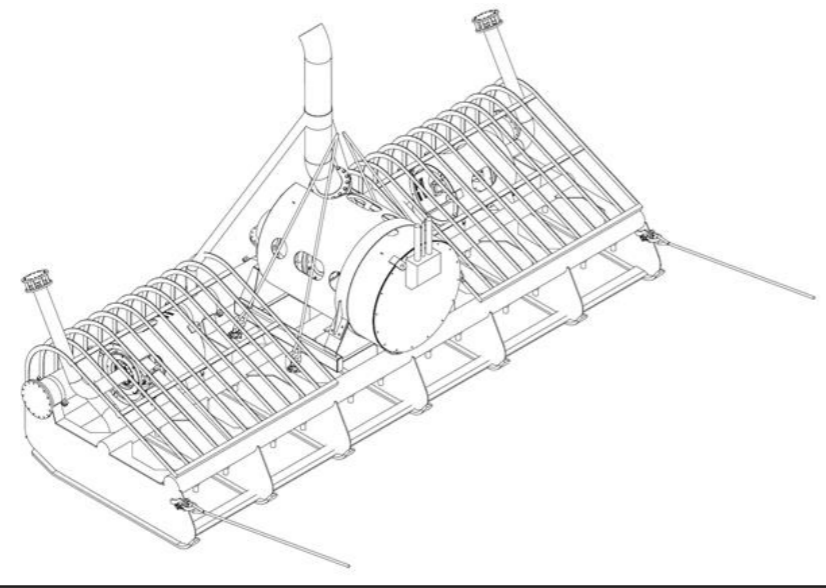
DREDGING METHOD AND APPARATUS

The invention of a dredger and method of dredging and is owned by Harwich Haven Authority of Navigation House, Angel Gate, Harwich CO12 3EJ, Essex, United Kingdom, incorporated in England and Wales, and was invented by Jeremy David Warner, a British citizen.

The invention is directed to a method of dredging a waterbed, such as a harbour floor, by suspending a dredging apparatus from a vehicle such that it is above, but not in contact, with the waterbed. Sediment is agitated and then extracted as the dredging apparatus is moved, and the extracted sediment is deposited to a higher water column such that it is transported by natural water movement. The dredging apparatus comprises a chassis which has sediment agitating apparatus comprising a fluid injector and pump mounted on the chassis, an extractor comprising a conduit and pump mounted on the chassis and a vehicle connector. The invention is also directed to the dredging apparatus itself.

The invention is subject to various patent applications worldwide including International patent application PCT/EP2020/080155 which has a filing date of 27 October 2020 and United Kingdom patent application no. GB2017208.8 filed 30 October 2020 with an earliest filing date of 18 November 2019 and published on 24 February 2021 as GB2586550. Both of these applications claim the priority of UK patent applications GB1916776.6 filed on 18 November 2019 and GB2007660.0 Filed on 22 May 2020.

Notice is given to whom it may concern that the applicant alone is entitled to manufacture and sell dredgers and operate the same in accordance with the method disclosed. Unauthorised production of the dredgers and use of the said method will make the unauthorised manufacturer and user liable for a civil action as well as damages. End users are warned to ensure that they buy and operate dredgers in accordance with this method only from the applicant, failing which they may also be liable for civil action.



Major Airfield Comes Under Attack as US Formally Begins Withdrawing from Afghanistan

TEHRAN - A major international airfield in Afghanistan has come under attack as the United States officially begins pulling out its troops from the country in what President Joe Biden has called ending "the forever war." The final phase of ending America's 20-year war in Afghanistan was formally launched Saturday, presstv reported. The remaining US and NATO



forces -- about 2,500-3,500 US troops and about 7,000 NATO soldiers, will leave Afghanistan by the end of summer.

Meanwhile, Sonny Leggett, the US military Spokesman in Afghanistan, confirmed in a tweet on Sunday that "Kandahar Airfield received ineffective indirect fire this afternoon," adding the attack had caused no human or material losses. "US Forces conducted a precision strike this evening, destroying additional rockets aimed at ...

More on (Page 4) Num (4)

Foreign Troops Targeted in Rocket Attack in Kandahar

KANDAHAR - US Forces Afghanistan hit back at insurgents on Saturday night after foreign forces were targeted in a rocket attack at the Kandahar Airfield. According to Colonel Sonny Leggett, USFOR-A spokesman: "US Forces conducted a precision strike this evening, destroying additional rockets aimed at the airfield." He said Kandahar Airfield re-



ceived "ineffective indirect fire this afternoon" but added no injuries to personnel had been

reported nor had there been any damage caused to equipment. He also said US commander General Scot Miller has been clear about the Coalition's intent to protect the force. "A return to violence would be one senseless & tragic. But make no mistake, we have the military means to respond forcefully to any type of attacks against ...

More on (Page 4) Num (5)

SIGAR Reports Spike in Insider Attacks Against ANDSF Members

KABUL - A new quarterly report by Washington's Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) has documented a staggering 82 percent increase in insider attacks on Afghan government security forces in the first quarter of this year, resulting in 115 personnel killed and 39 wounded. SIGAR reported this week that



the overall Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) casualties were also

substantially higher than during the same period last year. SIGAR is not allowed to include full ANDSF casualty data because U.S. forces in Afghanistan keep it classified at the request of the Afghan government. The report stated that the ANDSF suffered a total of 31 insider attacks between January 1 ...

More on (Page 4) Num (6)

Advertisement for Azizi Bank Women's Current Account, featuring a woman in a green headscarf and the bank's logo.

Azizi Bank is pleased to introduce you Women's Current Account which is a dedicated product for the esteemed and honorable female community of Afghanistan. It is a current account product in AFN and USD with discounted fees in Master Debit Cards along with other exciting features like no SMS alert fees, no Monthly Maintenance Charges. We have kept minimum balance requirement very less: only 500 AFN and USD 50 to make the banking easy and cheap for ladies.

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful,
the Most Kind

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There are Many Concerns Besides Women's Rights

It appears that women's rights and liberties are the main concerns for the United States and European Union. Women have been underrepresented during peace talks despite promises that they would have a place at the negotiating table. So far the Taliban have not promised that they would respect the rights and liberties of women as endorsed in the Constitution but vaguely asserted that women would exercise their rights in the framework of "Islamic Sharia".

Women fear being viewed from the lens of Sharia, a highly controversial terminology with multiple interpretations and a loophole for Afghan politicians and political leaders from the past up to now. The Taliban still seek to capitalize on Sharia law. On the contrary, Afghan people, after paying heavy sacrifices for protecting their rights and freedoms on the basis of democratic principles, refuse to accept the strict rule of Sharia, mainly with the Taliban interpretation, and embraced the post-Taliban Constitution, which was also endorsed by heavyweight clerics and is not considered contradictory to Islamic tenets.

US politicians show concerns in this regard. Last week, US lawmakers grilled US Special Representative for Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad about how women will be protected if the Taliban take control after US troop pull-out, and threatened to withhold funding if rights gains are reversed. Democratic Senator Jeanne Shaheen, the only woman on the committee, said there was too much uncertainty about the plans for Afghanistan after September 11 to know whether women's rights would be protected. She said women in Afghanistan remain targets of violence, something that must be stopped.

She referred to seven women who had been killed by the Taliban for advocating for human rights, saying that those women were courageous but being journalist and activist should not need courage. It is believed that Khalilzad paid lip service to women's rights and liberties as he could not get any concessions for women at the peace talks. Worst, women are underrepresented during the talks. In the US-Taliban peace agreement signed between Khalilzad and Mullah Baradar, there is not a single article about women's rights and freedoms. It indicates that the issue of women and their rights are highly controversial and Khalilzad did not want to engage in it. That is, the Doha agreement shows that troop withdrawal was given the highest priority.

Meanwhile, Afghan women also fear being marginalized from political issues and their rights and liberties were curtailed in the framework of Sharia Law. The return of the Islamic Emirate, unleashes memory of violence and cruelty for Afghan women, who suffered severely under the Taliban. If the issues of women's rights and liberties are not stipulated clearly and categorically in the peace agreement, if signed between the Afghan government and the Taliban, the Taliban are likely to capitalize on the issue and treat women based on their fundamental ideology. With this in mind, the Taliban have to promise that they would respect women and their rights on the basis of the Constitution.

Meanwhile, the United Nations, European Union and the United States and its international allies have to put their weight behind protection of women's rights and freedoms. In other words, the international community has to push the Taliban to accept women's rights based on national law and international instruments instead of treating them on the basis of their ideology.

It is important to note that the issues of women are one of the controversies. There are many ifs and buts about power-sharing, political structure, disbandment of the Taliban group and its integration into the political system, permanent ceasefire, etc. These are all controversial and have to be resolved at the negotiating table and in international conferences. So far, none of the challenges have been resolved. The Taliban still refuse to declare a nationwide ceasefire, but the US has started the withdrawal process regardless of all the formidable challenges, unmitigated violence, civilian casualties, and stalemate in the peace talks. It seems to be a political blunder if the Biden administration wants to say that it will resolve the issues once the soldiers were out of the country.

If the US administration is seeking to ensure protection of women's rights and liberties, it has to pressure the Taliban to guarantee this. Although women have raised their voice, saying that they would not backtrack, there is no guarantee. Afghanistan's international allies need to be concerned over all the aforementioned challenges besides to the issue of women's rights and freedoms. If the international community and regional and global actors do not pressure the Taliban to bring down their expectations and act on the public demands, women will be particularly vulnerable to the Taliban's fundamental ideology and acts of violence. The concerns are justifiable.



International Day of Labor and Unemployment Factors in Afghanistan

By: Mohammad Zahir Akbari

Yesterday, the first of May, coincided with International Labor Day. The origin of this day turns back to the labor union movement in the United States in the 19th Century. The day is widely marked around the world to honor the contributions and achievements of workers and also encourage laborers to be aware of their rights. This day is also symbolically commemorated in Afghanistan, but there seems no big achievement related to laborers to be honored and nor there are enough employments to aware laborers of their rights. Because of joblessness Afghan laborers are ready to work seven days a week and more than ten hours per day on condition that they are provided jobs. Therefore, the usual idealistic discussions about laborers' rights such as talking about article 23 of the international human right declaration which emphasizes on free and fair rights to work and also talking about article 48 of the national constitution of Afghanistan which emphasize on the similar points, would be essentially meaningless. In the context of Afghanistan, we should mark international Labor Day by highlighting the depth of unemployment and poverty and its root factors which totally annihilated work and workers in the country.

The first destructive factor which has not only impacted work and workers but also everything is war and violence. Unfortunately, every day, there is a terrorist event in Afghanistan. Even, every moment, there is fresh news about target killings and killing of children, women, and innocent civilians across the country. In this condition, no one seems motivated to invest or create jobs in the country. As a result, the level of unemployment and poverty has highly intensified with the intensification of violence in recent years. In 2016, Afghanistan ranked 169th out of 188 countries with 54.5% of the population below the poverty line, but the level of poverty in 2020 and or early 2021 as reported by the US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) has increased to 72%.

The second factor which sharply increased unemployment in the country is the outbreak of covid-19. Many local companies have dismissed or decreased their workers after covid-19 spread in the country. Therefore, after the outbreak of covid-19 in the country many people have lost their jobs while they had no savings to continue their normal lives. After the advent of this factor combined with the increase of violence in the country, at the end of 2020 Afghanistan's unemployment rate was projected to rise to 37.9%, up from 23.9% in 2019, based on the previous source assessment. There also another international source which shows the level of poverty has extremely intensified with the intensification of violence and virus in 2020 and outwardly 2021. However, the official reports about poverty and unemployment are unmatchable with the abovementioned reports.

The third important factor linked with unemployment in Afghani-

stan is the lack of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship culture in Afghanistan. The concept of entrepreneurship is associated with creativity and creating new values, but in Afghanistan neither there is a culture of creativity, and nor the government and universities are enthusiastic to cultivate such culture in the country. In addition, many of the entrepreneurs are imitators or opportunists, not innovators as their talents have not been nurtured in the educational centers. Unfortunately, the higher education system in Afghanistan is only organized for educational activities, not creative programs and so they produce only job seekers, not job creators. As long as everything is based on merely traditional educational courses, we should not expect unemployment reduction in the country.

The fourth factor which has led to unemployment is the lack of serious support from private sectors and local products. Unfortunately, neither the government has a comprehensive program to support national businesses and nor the people are motivated to prefer local products over foreign products. The government can promote the private sector through supporting national or international small and medium companies by easing various types of taxes and duties, providing loans, security, and critical infrastructural services. If the international firms are encouraged enough to invest in Afghanistan, and if they are ensured on low risk and good profits, the government would have achieved a huge leap in boosting employment in the country.

The government can also reduce unemployment by looking for foreign labor markets that are thirsty for the energetic labor force. There are many nations in the region that earn billions by sending their workers to other countries through mutual state protocol. Based on a report released in recent years, India annually makes 86 billion dollars, Indonesia 46 million dollars, and Philippines 12 milliard dollars through sending laborers to foreign countries. But due to the lack of such agreement, millions of Afghan workers are suffering from working in illegal labor markets. Sometimes they are not paid, but they cannot raise their voice due to lack of that formal contract. As Afghans are hardworking and reliable, they can be easily attracted if our government seriously looks for such a market.

In general, lack of security, lack of systematic supports, lack of entrepreneurship culture, the issue of covid-19, issue of administrative corruption, and more importantly the damping policies of regional countries are some of the main factors of unemployment in the country. The excessive imports of goods at lower prices than domestic goods have led to falling of most local companies in recent years. Therefore, the government, especially the accountable institutions should not allow these destructive and monopolistic factors to *Mohammad Zahir Akbari is the permanent writer of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan. He can be reached at mohammadzahirakbari@gmail.com*

Revival of Quad: Possibilities and Prospect

By: Rajkumar Singh

In a changed global and regional milieu, once again, Japan came forward and invited all members of the Quad in August 2017 to hold a joint meeting of foreign ministers during the ASEAN summit scheduled in November where American President-elect Donald Trump met Abe of Japan and agreed to pursue a 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific' strategy to especially counter the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative scheme. Chinese anxiety was multiplied due to the US interest in the matter as the group met five times between 2017-2019. It followed their reforming meeting in New York City in 2019 and then in Bangkok and on the instigation of US its members held first meeting of Quad Plus countries which include New Zealand, South Korea and Vietnam and as a result a grand naval exercise was organized at Malabar in the year 2020 which followed a first ever meeting on 12 March 2021 under the leadership of Joe Biden, the new President of the United States. However, keeping in mind the back history of the organisation it's not an easy to be united against China as all of them have close bilateral relations with Beijing despite all odds. In the context all should keep in consideration that; a. revival is only a signal but visibility is not objective but working together, b. will have to maintain a balance between internal and external transparency, c. in the set-up function is more important than form, d. each meeting should be result oriented, e. also be conscious about the Chinese effort to divide the Quad as earlier.

Background of revival

In fact, not formation of the Quad in 2007 but its revival in August 2017 on the initiation of Abe, the Prime Minister of Japan, appeared more challenging for member countries viewing the developments of last one decade in the Indian Ocean and their bilateral relations with Beijing because today it has become more difficult to encircle China both- regionally as well as globally. At present, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) scheme launched by China in the year 2013, has been recognised by most countries of the region and proliferated at world level, increasing the earlier status of the People's Republic of China (PRC). On ideological fronts too, the liberal democratic order of the world is facing an unstoppable challenge from the State-run Capitalism and the universal benchmark set by the regime of China. Beijing, in particular with Xi Jinping and earlier have registered an unprecedented economic growth and lifted a large number of people from the below poverty line. Especially, the coming of Xi Jinping, his success in overall development of China and expanding its power and influence at global level and smartly using the geopolitical vacuum created by the relative decline of the west to reorder governance and the rule-based order have posed a challenge for the democratic system of the world at large. In last one decade the authoritarian and hegemonic behaviour of China have prompted many leading scholars and thought leaders to demand urgent action from the United States of America and the European Union to check and, if possible, stop China' soft and hard dealing at regional and global levels. In addition, the decade

2007-2017 also witnessed intense defence preparations on the part of China and the US in the Indian Ocean and naval exercises on short intervals jointly by the Quad members on different places. These all gave a supportive hand for paving the revival of the Quad in 2017.

Forward movements

After a long gap the historic virtual summit of Quad member countries- India, Japan, Australia and the United States of America held in New York on 12 March 2021 and a joint statement issued marked the significant milestone in the evolution of Quad which also gave a positive signal across the Indo-Pacific. In the context sufficient background for the summit was prepared by elevating quad talks to the ministerial level in 2019 when foreign ministers of all member countries met on the sidelines of UN General Assembly meeting in New York in the month of September, followed by their twice met in-person in Tokyo in October 2020 and in February 2021. A positive sign witnessed with the assumption of Joe Biden as the new President of USA who form the first day expressed his willingness in containing China like his predecessor Donald Trump and sought to promote the Quad as a key component in the US-Indo-Pacific strategy and he gave special focus on group's softer capabilities in place of singular counter China orientation. As the summit was conducted in between the period of Pandemic Covid-19 they also decided to supply vaccines for the needy ASEAN countries. The spirit of the Quad summit as noted in the preamble 'we strive for a region that is free, open, inclusive, healthy, anchored by democratic values, and unconstrained by coercion. It also expressed concerns for economic and health impacts of COVID-19, climate change, and shared challenges in cyber space, critical technologies, counterterrorism and many such issues haunting the whole humanity in general. They also decided to establish new working groups on vaccines, emerging tech, and climate and hold an in-person summit of member leaders by the end of 2021.

The real Chinese challenges

In 1990s the United States of America was twenty times bigger than the People's Republic of China and today the difference between the two is only 1.5 which shows the immense development China has made over the years. The country has proved itself in each and every sector, and therefore, the old or traditional perception about the nation demand it to be changed with values, power and privileged attached at regional and global levels. Its economy is today of US\$12 trillion, the second largest in the world and most integrated globally, likely to overtake the US in less than a decade. The present volume of China's economy is even much bigger than the USSR which was also a giant in military power, and hence, any threat of economic or trade sanction would certainly not work and may invite instability in world economy.

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(1) Mohib Govt Does ...

hinted. Camp Shorab in Helmand will be fully deserted by Sunday.

The withdrawal process has raised concerns about the future of Afghanistan, NSA adviser in his turn said, that the government expects the Taliban will continue their violence and every single Afghan will become a target to them.

Meanwhile, the Afghan National Defense and Security forces have vowed to protect and defend Afghanistan and its borders against any hostile activity.

This comes as Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction reported that their findings indicate insider attacks and enemy infiltration in the ANDSF has increased by a staggering 82 percent.

Only in the first quarter of 2021 insider attacks resulted in 115 ANDSF deaths and further 39 others were injured.

According to SIGAR report overall ANDSF casualties were substantially higher in the same period previous year.

SIGAR is not allowed to include full ANDSF casualty data because U.S. forces in Afghanistan keep it classified at the request of the Afghan government.

Based on the Afghan government's request U.S. forces have kept the full ANDSF casualty data confidential, only between January 1st and April 1st there were 31 insider attack incidents recorded in the data, and the number of casualties caused was more than double during the same period last year.

SIGAR report also stressed doubt on whether anyone would replace contractor personnel or perform their Task after the withdrawal.

"Without continued contractor support, none of the Afghan Air Force's (AFF) airframes can be sustained as combat effective for more than a few months, depending on the stock of equipment parts in-country, the maintenance capability on each airframe, and when contractor support is withdrawn," SIGAR stated referring to the results of assessments. (Khaama Press)

(2) Third Wave ...

reported deaths is 2,642, and the total number of recoveries is 53,391.

So far, 406,816 samples have been tested in government centers and there are 4,255 known active COVID-19 cases in the country, data by the ministry indicates.

Meanwhile, the Minister of Public Health said at a consultative meeting held at the Presidential Palace on the management of the virus that the third wave of COVID-19 has been detected in Afghanistan.

The acting minister Wahid Majrooh added that the virus was moving from east to west and most cases were recorded in Nangarhar, Laghman, Kandahar, Kabul, Herat, Nimroz and a few in Khost province.

Majrooh says the coronavirus testing center now has 24 laboratories in 18 provinces, and this will be extended to all provinces by the end of June.

President Ashraf Ghani told the meeting that vaccines and oxygen supplies should be prioritized and vulnerable areas should be focused on. (ATN)

(3) Survivors of Car ...

were brought to Kabul for treatment.

"What they will respond to God on the day of judgment. Those who are sitting in Qatar and those in the peace council. Do you know about the miseries of the people," said Dr. Malang, a relative of a victim.

"Have mercy on the people for the sake of God. 21 dead bodies were lying here," said Ainuddin, a relative of a victim.

"Here (Logar) is the Kabul gate. The Taliban's pressure here is very high as it is close to the Durand Line," Logar governor Abdul Qayyum Rahimi said.

Joining Afghans across the nation, a number of foreign envoys have also strongly condemned Friday's truck bombing in Logar province that killed over 26 people, most of whom were students.

US special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad, NATO's civilian ambassador, as well as UK, France and Turkey embassies, condemned the attack as senseless acts of violence.

"I condemn in the strongest terms the senseless attack in Logar yesterday. Innocent Afghan civilians are continuing to pay the price for these appalling acts of violence. The cycle of violence has to be broken. All parties must work to achieve peace at the negotiating table," said Stefano Pontecorvo, NATO's envoy to Afghanistan.

"A car bomb there took the lives of families sitting for iftar and students preparing for university exams. We condemn in the strongest terms this terrible tragedy and its terrorist perpetrators," US envoy Khalilzad said.

"This senseless violence against civilians must stop," the UK embassy in Kabul said. This comes at a time that foreign forces on Saturday officially started withdrawing from Afghanistan.

But violence continues to take lives from the Afghans. Acting Minister of Interior Hayatullah Hayat said that 25 civilians were killed and 56 more wounded in other security incidents across the country in the last 24 hours. (TOLO NEWS)

(4) Major Airfield Comes ...

the airfield," he added.

Leggett also warned that the Taliban's "return to violence would be one senseless & tragic".

Police Chief of Kandahar Sharifullah Sar-tayib confirmed the attack on the airfield, formerly called Kandahar International Airport, saying two rockets were fired but there was no damage to the airfield.

Four other rockets, he said, had been founded and defused in the city of Arg-histan, which were also ready to launch at targets at the airport.

The attack came after the Pentagon formally began the process of withdrawing the last American and NATO troops from Afghan soil on Saturday.

Officials have said the withdrawal, which is the final phase of ending the US presence in Afghanistan after 20 years, will be completed by September 11. (Fars News Agency)

(5) Foreign Troops ...

the coalition and the military means to support the Afghan security forces. That would be a mistake to move in that direction."

On Saturday, security was ramped up in cities across Afghanistan, including Kabul, ahead of possible attacks by the Taliban due to the presence of foreign troops in the country after the May 1 withdrawal deadline.

On Saturday morning, Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid tweeted that the US troops presence was in violation of the agreement and that the group reserved the right to take action against the "occupying forces".

"As withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan by agreed upon May 1st deadline has passed, this violation in principle has opened the way for IEA Mujahidin to take every counteraction it deems appropriate against the occupying forces," Mujahid tweeted.

"The Mujahidin of IEA (Taliban) will now await what decision the leadership of Islamic Emirate takes in light of the sovereignty, values and higher interests of the country, and will then take action accordingly, Allah willing," he said. (ATN)

(6) SIGAR Reports Spike ...

and April 1, and the number of casualties they caused were more than double compared to the same period in 2020.

SIGAR's report comes as the US and NATO forces started to withdraw from Afghanistan as decided by US President Joe Biden last month.

In addition to the estimated 2,500 U.S. troops and the 7,000 NATO and allied forces, over 12,500 US Defense Department contractors will also withdraw. The are U.S. citizens and third-country nationals.

SIGAR stated it is unclear who, if anyone, will replace contractor personnel or perform their work after their withdrawal.

"Without continued contractor support, none of the Afghan Air Force's (AFF) airframes can be sustained as combat effective for more than a few months, depending on the stock of equipment parts in-country, the maintenance capability on each airframe, and when contractor support is withdrawn," SIGAR said, citing U.S. military assessments.

According to SIGAR, DOD contractors provide for and maintain ANDSF ground vehicles and train local technicians. Although the ANDSF has "dramatically improved its share of the work, it is still falling well below benchmarks for its share of the maintenance work orders they - rather than contractors - are supposed to perform," SIGAR reported.

Special Inspector General John F Sopko meanwhile stated that under the new posture that will follow the troops' withdrawal, SIGAR and its oversight mission will "assume even more important for the United States".

He said as the largest oversight presence in Afghanistan and the only one with statutory whole-of-government authority, SIGAR will be the only government agency capable of overseeing the billions of U.S. taxpayer dollars already appropriated that will continue to flow into the country despite the absence of U.S. military - including U.S. defense contractor - boots on the ground.

Sopko said SIGAR is well-prepared for this enhanced role and stands ready to assume any new responsibilities assigned to it by Congress and the Administration.

He pointed out that while the Biden Administration conducted its review of U.S. policy in Afghanistan, the Office of Management and Budget requested the data that underpins the reporting in SIGAR's quarterly reports concerning U.S. funds appropriated for Afghanistan since 2002.

"This recognition of the quarterly report's function as the most authoritative source for information about U.S. spending in Afghanistan came as the report continues to expand its coverage of U.S. appropriations," he said.

He also stated that U.S. officials have indicated that they intend to condition U.S. assistance to Afghanistan on the actions of the Afghan government and possibly the

Taliban.

"As U.S. policy on Afghanistan continues to evolve, my colleagues and I will work with Congress, the Administration, and other stakeholders to guard against the waste, fraud, and abuse of U.S. funds devoted to that country's reconstruction," he said. (ATN)

(7) Will Promote Sports ...

his dreams so no other youth get disabled. "If I was not disabled, I would have become a better athlete, I would have made my country's name known nationally and internationally and hoisted the national flag in world's competitions," he added.

He called on the warring parties to make peace and shun conflict in order to steer the country out of crises.

Noor Mohammad said there was a great opportunity for peace more than ever before, so the Afghan government and the Taliban in particular, should take advantage of it. He asked: "Should the number of widows, orphans and the disabled in the country increase and they should live a miserable life?"

He promised he would open sports clubs in other parts of Uruzgan province to save the youth from drugs and other bad activities if lasting peace was established in the country. Noor Mohammad is married and has four children (two sons and two daughters). (Pajhwok)

(8) Troop Exit Plan ...

the [withdrawal] plan has already been prepared." (Pajhwok)

(9) Kunar, Herat ...

Ulema council head, called on the Taliban to initially declare permanent ceasefire and help succeed the intra-Afghan peace parleys.

He hailed US troops' withdrawal from Afghanistan and urged the masses to cooperate with Afghan National defense force in defending the country.

Separately, hundreds of Herat residents took to the streets, urging the Taliban to come to peaceful terms with the Afghan government.

The demonstration was attended by youth, civil rights activists and other people. (Pajhwok)

(10) Sari Pul Police ...

northern provinces to Turkmenistan. (Pajhwok)

(11) Eight Soldiers Killed ...

Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) documented an 82 percent increase in insider attacks on Afghan government security forces in the first quarter of this year, resulting in 115 personnel killed and 39 wounded.

SIGAR reported last week that the overall Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) casualties were also substantially higher than during the same period last year.

SIGAR is not allowed to include full ANDSF casualty data because U.S. forces in Afghanistan keep it classified at the request of the Afghan government. (ATN)

(12) Taliban Battered 81 ...

battle ended after several hours, local media reported.

Taliban so far did not comment on the incident.

Sources in Badakhshan province said Taliban fighters attacked a security outpost in the Warduj district of the province on Saturday night.

According to reports the incident took place in the city of Warduj district when the Taliban charged on a security checkpoint. Reports indicate eight Afghan security forces were killed and six others are injured.

On the other hand, Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid claimed that following the incident eight government forces were killed and 15 others were injured.

In another security incident, a child was killed in the outskirts of Lashkargah on Saturday night, after Taliban attacked a military base.

The child was killed after a discharged bullet landed on him in the neighborhood close to the base. So far there are no reports of Taliban and Afghan forces casualties after the clashes. Taliban have not commented on the incident.

Moreover, security sources in Gardez said Unidentified armed men gunned down a Tribal elder in Gardez, center of Paktia province. Akbar's family blamed the Taliban for murdering the tribal elder.

Taliban have not yet commented on the incident. This comes as efforts are underway for establishing a prolonged peace and prosperity in Afghanistan, however, violence has raged in many parts of the region. (Khaama Press)

(13) Powerful Takhar ...

between government forces and the Taliban began at 8 am on Sunday in the area. Sporadic fighting is still ongoing, Asir added. The Taliban have not commented yet. (ATN)

(14) Last Night Fire ...

teams for investigation of the incidents, but

the results were yet to be shared with the people.

He asked for solution to problems of traders and stressed incidents of fires which recently happened should be investigated. Ahmadyar warned that traders would stop their trucks and shut borders if the president did not listen to their voice.

Khan Jan Alkozai, deputy chairman of Board Directors of Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries, said that Afghanistan was passing through a critical juncture as foreign troops were leaving the country.

He warned the country would return to the 1980s if the government failed to resolve the problems of traders.

He asked the president to invite traders to an emergency meeting and listen to their problems and resolve them.

Mohammad Asif, one of the traders, talking to the gathering, said, "Thieves are deployed in the gates of Kabul and customs." "When our trucks loaded with goods start moving from borders, each truck is forced to pay 60,000 afghanis, the tax papers of Kabul, Herat, Farah and Nimroz provinces are counted as invalid in these provinces (and traders are forced to pay in each of them) but the Taliban's tax paper is valid everywhere," he said.

He said that truck drivers slept safe while staying in areas under the Taliban control but they were "In fear when arriving to the areas under the government's control, they fear they would be kidnapped, their money looted and extorted."

Government officials have repeatedly promised that they would control illegal extortions from truck drivers, but failed. (Pajhwok)

(15) India Hits New ...

solidarity with India.

"The epidemic is still going on in one country. The world won't be safe until we are all safe. So it's a matter of urgency," he said early Sunday following the delivery of eight oxygen-generation plants and dozens of ventilators from France.

There are growing fears about the surge of infections in rural regions where health infrastructure is already patchy and limited. Hospitals in Delhi have continued to issue SOS calls for oxygen on social media, with the latest appeal posted by a children's hospital on Twitter on Sunday.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a meeting on Sunday to review the measures being taken to tackle the unprecedented surge.

India opened a new round of its vaccination drive on Saturday, extending coverage for all those above 18 years of age, but only a handful of states were able to deliver the jabs because of a shortage of vaccines. Only 86,000 newly eligible people took the shot, the government said.

International aid is also arriving from the United States and other countries that have promised support to India as its healthcare system is pushed to the brink of collapse. (Aljazeera)

(16) Travelling the ...

Asia can apply for a visa online for 440 Saudi riyals (\$120) or get one on arrival. Saudi state TV reported the country welcomed 24,000 visitors in the first 10 days after the launch of the tourist visa, and it aims to bring in 100 million tourists every year by 2030.

Saudi Arabia constitutes 80 percent of the Arabian Peninsula by landmass and borders seven countries, making a cross-region overland trip, say between the Nabataean sites of Hegra and Petra, possible for the first time.

UAE and Bahrain agree to normalisation with Israel

In September 2020, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain signed the Abraham Accords with Israel, marking the first public normalisation of relations between Israel and an Arab country since the 1990s.

The move has allowed travellers to board direct flights between the countries, which was previously not possible. Sharon Bershady, director of the Israel Tourist Office in the United Kingdom, said 67,000 Israeli tourists visited Dubai after direct flights were introduced at the end of November, though rising coronavirus case numbers have put them on hold for now.

"Today more than ever, the Middle East is a safe zone for international tourists," Bershady said. "The agreements signed with the United Arab Emirates and Israel will provide unique combinations between both destinations at affordable prices."

Airlines already flying or expected to fly these routes include Etihad Airways, the UAE's national airline; El Al, the Israeli flag carrier; and Emirates, all of which have extensive global networks. Budget airlines are also getting in the game, with flydubai, Israir and the just-launched Wizz Air Abu Dhabi operating flights.

Another development is that Israeli planes are permitted to pass through Saudi airspace, shortening the journey time. Blockade of Qatar comes to an end In June 2017, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt severed diplomatic relations with Qatar, closing its only land border and blocking Qatar-registered flights

and ships from using their airspace and sea routes. More than three and a half years later, the countries agreed to restore full diplomatic and trade ties.

"A lot of the stories are there to sell an idea rather than reflect 'there are going to be this many visitors'. When you think about these trends, see how much is actually politics in the background." (Aljazeera)

(17) Fauci Advises India ...

his administration's campaign of "15 days to slow the spread," urging Americans to stay home for just about two weeks to contain the coronavirus outbreak.

The idea was that a brief lockdown would dramatically change the trajectory of Covid-19 infections and help squash the pandemic's spread - much like the advice Fauci is giving to India now. "With several weeks of focused action, we can turn the tide and turn it quickly," Trump said optimistically back then.

At the time, the US had reported just about 4,000 Covid-19 cases. A year later, Trump was out of office, nearly 30 million Americans had contracted Covid-19, and 535,000 people had reportedly died from the virus in the US. (RT)

(18) May Day Protesters ...

In Indonesia, Southeast Asia's largest economy, thousands voiced anger at a new jobs law that critics fear will reduce severance pay, lessen restrictions for foreign workers and increase outsourcing as the nation seeks to attract more investment. Protesters in the capital of Jakarta laid mock graves on the street to symbolize hopelessness, and marches were being held in some 200 cities.

In the Philippine capital of Manila, where a monthlong coronavirus lockdown has been extended by two weeks amid a surge in infections, police prevented hundreds of workers from demonstrating at a public plaza, protest leader Renato Reyes said. But protesters did gather briefly at a busy Manila boulevard, demanding pandemic cash aid, wage subsidies and COVID-19 vaccines amid rising unemployment and hunger.

"Workers were largely left to fend for themselves while being locked down," labor leader Josua Mata said.

In Turkey, a few labor leaders were allowed to lay wreaths in Istanbul's Taksim Square but riot police stopped many others from reaching the plaza. The Istanbul governor's office said 212 people were taken into custody for breaching coronavirus restrictions. Turks are barred from leaving home, except to collect essential food and medicine, under a lockdown until May 17 that aims to halt a surge in infections. Protests were also banned around Taksim Square. In Italy, police faced off against a few hundred demonstrators in the northern city of Turin. In Rome, Italy's head of state paid tribute to workers and health care workers.

"Particularly heavy has been the impact from the crisis on female labor and on the access of young people to jobs," Italian President Sergio Mattarella said. (Fox News)

(19) North Korea ...

diplomacy as well as stern deterrence" to contain North Korea's nuclear ambitions. On Friday, the White House also said that its goal remains "the complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula", but added that the new US president is not seeking any "grand bargain" with the North Korean leader

US policy will see "a calibrated, practical approach that is open to and will explore diplomacy" with North Korea, Biden's press secretary Jen Psaki told reporters.

The Biden administration has simultaneously signalled a hard line on human rights, denuclearisation and sanctions, while making diplomatic overtures that officials say have been rebuffed by Pyongyang, which has long demanded sanctions relief. (Aljazeera)

(20) Mounting Desperation ...

and those arrested and sentenced to draconian prison terms under the law should be immediately released.

"Authorities should instead focus on organising safe vaccinations for at-risk populations, providing a social safety net for those most in need, and ensuring access to food, medicine and other necessities for the nearly 300,000 people locked in red zones across the capital."

Sok Eysan, however, remains unmoved.

He says the government will adopt a zero-tolerance approach to people who violate the COVID-19 law, as it tries to curb the spread of the virus.

"Those who violate the principle of this [COVID] law in any article must be responsible for it before the law," he said. (Aljazeera)

(21) Sailor Spent ...

vessel as the more than a dozen crew members called it quits one by one and went home.

El Alla, the ship's agent, told the Wall Street Journal he never understood why the owner of several multimillion-dollar ships would abandon one over such a relatively small debt.

He said bin Sanad has not returned his call since late 2019.

"He vanished," said El Alla. (Fox News)

India Hits New Grim Record with 3,689 COVID-19 Deaths in one Day

India recorded its deadliest day of the coronavirus pandemic yet with 3,689 deaths in the last 24 hours. Sunday was the fourth straight day India recorded more than 3,000 deaths as the second wave of the pandemic carries on unabated and keeps setting grim new records. Altogether 215,542 people have died from COVID-19 in the country. The number of cases surged to 19.5 million with 392,488 new infections, government data showed. India became the first country to cross 400,000 daily cases on Saturday. Healthcare systems are overwhelmed and a shortage of medical oxygen has emerged as the most serious challenge. Thirty-four patients died because of



oxygen shortages in hospitals in the capital New Delhi and the states of Andhra Pradesh and Haryana on Saturday, the Times of India reported.

Thirty-one more with COVID-19-like symptoms and "breathing difficulties" died in a hospital in Uttar Pradesh state, the report cited author-

ities as saying. 'People dying in front of hospitals' The latest figures came as medical equipment, including oxygen-generation plants, was flown into New Delhi from France and Germany as part of a huge international effort. "We are here because we are bringing help that ... will save lives," Germany's Ambassador to India Walter J Lindner said as 120 ventilators arrived late on Saturday. "Out there, the hospitals are full. People are sometimes dying in front of the hospitals. They have no more oxygen. Sometimes [they are dying] in their cars." French Ambassador Emmanuel Lennain said his country wanted to show ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

Travelling the Middle East Will Be the Easiest It's Ever Been

Although the coronavirus pandemic has forced travel to a halt and slammed shut international borders, unprecedented reforms taking place in the Middle East will make travelling around the region easier than ever before, once the world opens up again. Relaxed visa requirements, shifting politics, and new transport connections promise to draw more visitors to the region, which before the pandemic had the fastest-growing rate of international arrivals and double the global average,



according to the United Nations' World Tourism Organization. Because of the pandem-

ic and the piecemeal, country-by-country developments, this huge shift across the Middle East has gone mostly unnoticed. Saudi Arabia launches first-ever tourist visas Saudi Arabia was long a challenging place to visit for the casual traveller, but in September 2019 the country started issuing tourist visas for the first time. Previously, only Muslim pilgrims, resident workers and business travellers could enter Saudi Arabia, but now tourists from 49 countries in North America, Europe and ...*(More on P4)...(16)*

Fauci Advises India to SHUT DOWN Country 'For A Few Weeks'

Dr. Anthony Fauci is weighing in on India's record-breaking Covid-19 surge, but some of his advice sounds much like the early 2020 prescription that failed to prevent the US from posting the world's highest virus death toll. "You can shut down temporarily to put an end to the cycle of transmission," Washington's coronavirus guru said on Friday in an interview with the Indian Express. "So one of the things to be considered is to temporarily shut down. Literally, lock down so that you wind up having less spread." That advice from Fauci, currently chief medical adviser to President Joe Biden, sounds eerily familiar to the counsel that he offered to then-president Donald Trump, as the White House's Covid-19 czar, in March 2020. That's when Trump announced ...*(More on P4)...(17)*

May Day Protesters in Paris Demand More Job Protections Amid Pandemic

Workers and union leaders dusted off bullhorns and flags that had stayed furled during coronavirus lockdowns for slimmed down but still boisterous - and at times violent - May Day marches on Saturday. The protesters demanded more labor protections amid a pandemic that has turned economies and workplaces upside down. In countries that mark May 1 as International Labor Day, the annual celebration of workers' rights produced a rare sight during the pandemic: large, closely packed crowds, with marchers striding shoulder-to-shoulder with clenched fists behind banners. In Turkey and the Philippines, police prevented the May Day protests, enforcing virus lockdowns and making hundreds of arrests. In France, thousands took to the streets with trade union banners and flags, hemmed in by and sometimes scuffling with riot police. The masks worn by many marchers were a reminder of how much life has changed since the last traditional May Day celebrations - in 2019. Riot police grappled with demonstrators in

Paris and the southern city of Lyon. Burning roadblocks threw clouds of smoke into the Paris air. Police charged crowds in apparent efforts to catch suspected troublemakers. Broadcaster BFM-TV reported that police fired small amounts of tear gas. Police in Paris said they made 10 arrests. But the majority of the dozens of marches called nationwide in France were held without incident. Some demonstrations, constricted by coronavirus restrictions, were markedly less well-attended than those before the pandemic. Russia saw just a fraction of its usual May Day activities amid a coronavirus ban on gatherings. The Russian Communist Party drew only a few hundred people to the laying of wreaths in Moscow. For a second straight year in Italy, May Day passed without the usual large marches and rock concerts. But in France, Germany and other places where rallies were allowed, workers vented their concerns over jobs and protections. In Bosnia, coal miner Turni Kadric said he and his colleagues are "barely surviving." ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

North Korea Dismisses 'Spurious' US Diplomacy: State Media



North Korea branded US diplomacy "spurious" on Sunday, dismissing the idea of talks with Washington a day after the Biden administration said it was open to diplomatic negotiations on denuclearisation, state media reported. Diplomacy was a "spurious sign-

board" for the United States to "cover up its hostile acts", the North Korean foreign ministry said in a statement run by the KCNA news agency. It also warned President Joe Biden that he had made a "big blunder" with his "outdated" stance towards the country. In a separate statement also run by KCNA, the foreign ministry accused Biden of insulting Kim Jong Un, and added, "We have warned the US sufficiently enough to understand that it will get hurt if it provokes us." Biden had said in his first address as president to Congress on Wednesday that he would use "...*(More on P4)...(19)*

Mounting Desperation in Cambodia Amid COVID Lockdown

CAMBODIA- Iv Sovann has been in lockdown with her family in the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh since April 5 when the government imposed a raft of stringent measures to curb a sudden surge of coronavirus cases. The 36-year-old's family of six has no income. Her husband, a teacher, lost his job when the school where he worked shut down a year ago. Sovann has been keeping the family afloat by working as an accounts assistant for a local transport company. "We are not rich. We live hand to mouth. If we were rich like others, it would be OK for us to be in quarantine for a year," she said. Desperate for food, this week she was among a group of peo-



ple in the Phnom Penh district of Stung Meanchey who took matters into their own hands. "We saw some people get some food like rice noodles and canned fish, and we did not get anything. So, we went out to ask for our food," she said. Her protest secured Iv Sovann

a 25kg (55 pounds) bag of rice from the local authority but others were not so lucky. "There are still many more families," she said. "I don't know why some get donations, and why some don't." "The COVID-19 law should be repealed, ...*(More on P4)...(20)*

Turkey Extends Ban On Layoffs to End-June

Turkey has extended a ban on layoffs until the end of June, according to a presidential decree published in the Official Gazette, Trend reports citing Hurriyet Daily News. The measure was introduced 13 months ago to limit the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on employment. The country previously extended the layoffs ban for two months from March 17. Turkey's unemployment rate climbed 0.7 points to 13.4 percent in February. Turkey launched a social assistance program in March 2020 to minimize the fallout of the virus on the labor market. The support provided so far by Turkey's So-

cial Protection Shield program to cater to public needs during the pandemic has topped 60 billion Turkish Liras (\$8.1 billion), said the chair of parliament's Health, Family, Labor and Social Affairs Commission on April 30. More than 30 billion Turkish liras (\$4.05 billion) were paid to 3.7 million people under the short-time work allowance, according to Akdag's remarks on May Day holiday, which honors workers nationwide on May 1. Nearly 10 billion liras (\$1.4 billion) were paid by the Unemployment Insurance Fund to workers who were forced to take unpaid leave during the pandemic. (Trend)

Brazil Reports 2,656 More Deaths from COVID-19

Brazil began the month of May reporting 2,656 deaths from COVID-19 as well as 66,964 new cases, raising the national death toll to 406,437 and the total caseload to 14,725,975, the Ministry of Health said on Saturday, Trend reports citing Xinhua. The daily average number of deaths in the last seven days

was 2,421, while the figure for April was higher than 3,000, according to the ministry. Sao Paulo, the most populous and hardest-hit state in the country, has reported 96,941 deaths and 2,918,044 cases, and the occupancy rate in the state's intensive care units has fallen from 91 percent to 78.7 percent. (Trend)

U.S. Administers 243.5 Mln Doses of COVID-19 Vaccines - CDC

The United States has administered 243,463,471 doses of COVID-19 vaccines in the country as of Saturday morning, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said on Saturday, Trend reports citing Reuters. A total of 240,159,677 vaccine doses had been administered by April 30, the CDC said. The agency said 146,239,208 people had

received at least one dose while 103,422,555 people were fully vaccinated as of Saturday. The CDC tally includes two-dose vaccines from Moderna Inc and Pfizer Inc/BioNTech, as well as Johnson & Johnson's one-shot vaccine as of 6:00 a.m. ET on Saturday. A total of 7,799,933 vaccine doses have been administered in long-term care facilities, the agency said. (Trend)

Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan Agree to Ceasefire after 40 Die in Fresh Fighting

Kyrgyzstan and neighbouring Tajikistan have agreed to withdraw troops from their borders after fresh fighting that left about 40 people dead and 175 wounded. The heads of national security for the two former Soviet republics in Central Asia agreed to the pullback during a meeting on Saturday. "Today when we've discussed the issue, we've reached principal agreements to solve the issues in the interests of securing the peace and the stability in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. I'm sure that we can achieve that," said Saimumin Yatimov, head of the State Committee of National Security of Tajikistan. The fighting broke out on Wednesday when Tajik officials attempted to mount surveillance cameras to monitor a water supply facility near the village of Kok-Tash in Kyrgyzstan. "I hope there will be the full silence, the peace, the calamity in our

countries. In particular, in the territories on the border," said Kamchybek Tashiev, head of the State Committee of National Security of Kyrgyz Republic. "We very much hope that the reached decisions - which we wrote in the protocol - will be executed." Both nations have claimed the area around the water supply facility, a dispute dating back decades to when they were both part of the Soviet Union. Residents of Kyrgyzstan opposed the surveillance attempt; said Saimumin Yatimov, head of the State Committee of National Security of Tajikistan. The fighting broke out on Wednesday when Tajik officials attempted to mount surveillance cameras to monitor a water supply facility near the village of Kok-Tash in Kyrgyzstan. "I hope there will be the full silence, the peace, the calamity in our

Sailor Spent Nightmarish 4 Years Trapped Aboard Egyptian Cargo Ship

A Syrian sailor spent a frightening four years trapped aboard a cargo ship off the Egyptian coast - two of them alone - before he was finally allowed to go home earlier this month, according to reports. Mohammad Aisha's nightmarish ordeal on the 330-foot-long MV Aman container ship began over a legal dispute with Egyptian authorities, the Wall Street Journal reported on Friday. "I don't know how this happened to me," he told the newspaper in a recent interview. "The world has been isolating, but I have been abandoned." The vessel was detained at the port of Adabiya, Egypt, near the mouth of the Suez Canal, not long after 29-year-old Aisha had boarded in May 2017. The ship's captain was out running errands on shore and Aisha was working on repairs when an Egypt-

ian court courier boarded with a letter declaring the boat would be held until its owner paid a \$21,500 invoice for a three-ton anchor bought the year before. Aisha, as chief mate, the ship's second-in-command, signed the letter designating himself as the legal guardian of the vessel on the advice of the captain, the report said. "I had no idea it was the biggest mistake of my life," Aisha told the newspaper. In November 2017, Aisha called the ship's agent, Baha Fadel El Alla, to leave - but a port official told him that, as the ship's legal guardian, he was required to stay on board, the report said. Aisha got word in September 2018 that his mother had died - and by August 2019, he had been left entirely alone aboard the ...*(More on P4)...(21)*

Egypt to Send India Medical Supplies for Fighting COVID-19 Pandemic

Egyptian Minister of Health Hala Zayed announced that 30 tons of medical supplies will be sent to India to help contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, Trend reports citing Xinhua. In a statement, the minister said a shipment of 300 oxygen cylinders, 20 ventilators, 100 medical beds, 20 electrocardiography



machines, 30 defibrillators and 50 electric syringe pumps will be sent to India. The supplies will be delivered to India in cooperation with the Egyptian armed forces, the statement added. (Trend)

Daily Outlook Weather Forecast

Kabul Partly cloudy 26°C 14°C	Bamiyan Scattered Rain 17°C 8°C	Herat Thunderstorm 23°C 14°C	Mazar Partly cloudy 34°C 23°C	Kandahar Scattered Rain 30°C 18°C	Ghazni Scattered Rain 22°C 12°C	Jalalabad Mostly sunny 37°C 24°C
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Gen. Miller Warns Against Attacks on Foreign Forces

KABUL - The top US military commander in Afghanistan has warned the Taliban against attacks on international troops still stationed in the country. Earlier, the Taliban said they would attack foreign troops following the expiry of the May 1 deadline for their pullout in line with the 2020 peace deal between the US and the rebel movement. Soon after an attack on an airfield in southern Kandahar province, Gen. Scott Miller issued the warning to the insurgents. As the May 1 date for the exit of international troops passed on Saturday, security was ramped up across Kabul

to deal with a possible reaction from the militant movement. A spokesman for US Forces in Afghanistan posted a Twitter video, in which Gen. Miller said it would be a mistake (on Taliban's part) to attack foreign forces. He added: "Make no mistake, we have the military means to respond forcefully to any type of attacks against the coalition and the military means to support the (Afghan) security forces." Meanwhile, hectic efforts are underway to convince the Taliban to return to talks with the Afghan government and accept the extended stay of foreign troop. (Pajhwok)



Afghan Civilian Casualties on Rise Over Past Few Weeks



KABUL - Casualties on a single day last week out numbered the total casualties of the previous week as foreign forces began leaving Afghanistan. Last week major happenings

- US, China, Russia, Pakistan meet Afghan negotiating team
- Beginning of troops withdrawal from Afghanistan
- US transfers high mobility artillery rocket system to Afghanistan
- US will continue counter-terrorism campaign post troops withdrawal
- Afghan official vows to meet every challenge
- Over 200 civilians killed and wounded last week
- Public: stop fighting

Stop war: People

A rally in Paktia province said that the ongoing war in Afghanistan had no justification and the Taliban should declare a ceasefire. Hundreds of people in a gathering in Balkh province also supported peace and ceasefire. Women's rights activists in Balkh said that withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan before a peace agreement would trigger dangerous consequences. People's Peace Movement also launched a campaign against war in 24 provinces of the country and said that there was no need for war when foreign troops leave. (Pajhwok)

Will Promote Sports if Peace Is Achieved: Disabled Athlete



TIRINKOT - Noor Mohammad Ustad, who lost one of his legs in a bomb blast, owns a sports club and intends to open such facilities in districts of central Uruzgan province if peace is achieved in the country. Ustad, 31, a resident of Dehrawud district of Uruzgan province, became disabled in a bomb blast in Arghandab district of Kandahar province eight years ago. He was a driver on the Kandahar-Uruzgan highway before the blast hit him. The victim of the ongoing conflict says after losing his leg he became hopeless and alone. In an inclusive interview with Pajhwok Afghan News, Ustad said he faced financial problems after the incident which deteriorated his life. "After I becoming disabled, my friends advised me to start exercise. I did the same and began exercising in Kandahar." Noor Mohammad Ustand said he started exercising at a body-building club in Kandahar and became a trainer there a few years later. Ustad explained he returned to Uruzgan a few years later and opened a bodybuilding club in Tirinkot, where he had trained hundreds of athletes so far. He said currently he lived with a high morale and did not feel disability. "I lost one of my legs to the barbaric war, if there was peace and security in the country I would have been a health person now and a good athlete," he said. However, he lost one part of his body parts but he did not lose hope and lived like other healthy people of society. Noor Mohammad Ustad said lasting peace in the country was one of ...

Troop Exit Plan Prepared, Says Top Polish General



KABUL - Polish troops are leaving Afghanistan in accordance with guidelines from NATO's Resolute Support mission. Armed Forces Branches Operational Commander General Tomasz Piotrowski made the statement in an interview with Polish radio. The Polish commander's statement comes as NATO and US

troops formally began the withdrawal operation on May 1. The process will be completed by September 11. The planned withdrawal of the Polish troops was being continuously adjusted to plans of the chief commander of Resolute Support in terms of transportation, safety and logistics, Piotrowski said. With the West scaling down its military presence in Afghanistan, the general said: "A draft of ..."

Kunar, Herat Residents Stage Rallies to Demand Truce



ASADABAD/HERAT - Hundreds of residents of western Herat and eastern Kunar provinces held demonstrations to demand permanent ceasefire and peace in Afghanistan. Dozens of tribal elders, religious scholars, civil society activists and disabled people in Asadabad, the capital of Kunar, urged the government

and Taliban to declare peace and permanent ceasefire. The protesters asked the Taliban to refrain from Afghans' killing and make peace and permanent ceasefire in the country. A religious scholar, Maulvi Ajmal, said the Afghan war as unlawful and called on the government opponents as puppets and spies of foreigners. Maulvi Ziaul Rahman-Ullah, Kunar ...

Sari Pul Police Seize 185km of Narcotics



SARI-PUL - Police in northern Sari Pul province on Sunday claimed seizing 185 kilograms of various drugs and arresting five people in connection with the seizure. Brigadier General Faqir Mohammad Jawzjani, provincial police chief, told Pajhwok Afghan News that anti-narcotics police seized 132 kilograms

of heroin and 53 kilograms of methylamphetamine (ice). He said the detained persons were responsible for storage and transfer of these materials. He noted that two of these smugglers were residents of Badghis province and the other three were residents of Sari Pul. The police chief said the smugglers most likely intended to smuggle the drugs through the ...

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