

# Urgent Consultations Underway About Conflict Prevention: Ghani



KABUL - President Ashraf Ghani on Saturday said that he was in high level consultations for prevention of further violence in the country, but his priority was remobilization of Afghan security forces.

He made the statements in a televised address about the ongoing situation of the country today.

""As your President, my focus is on preventing further instability, violence, and displacement of my people, so further killings, destruction of public facilities and achievements of the last two decades would be stopped in the imposed war no people" he said. He said that his consultations with political leaders, various classes of people, representatives of international allies were underway and their results would be shared soon

with the people. Ghani said that mobilization of Afghan security and defense forces was also his priority and serious measures were underway on the regard.

Afghanistan is under serious threat of instability due to the imposed war, but efforts are on for assisting people who are displaced due to the conflict, he said.

This comes as Taliban captured 18 provinces in less than two weeks and conflicts in Maidan Wardak and Paktia provinces are currently underway. (Pajhwok)

Marine Vanguard Lands in Kabul as **US Speeds Up Evacuations** 



WASHINGTON - The first forces of a Marine battalion arrived in Kabul at week's end to stand guard as the U.S. speeds up evacuation flights for some American diplomats and thousands of Afghans, spurred by a lightning Taliban offensive that increasingly is isolating Afghanistan's capital.

Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said "elements" of a battalion were now in Kabul, the vanguard of three Marine and Army battalions that the U.S. was sending to the city by the end of the weekend to help more Americans and their Afghan colleagues get out quickly.

The Taliban, emboldened by the imminent end of the U.S. combat mission in the country, took four more provincial capitals Friday, heightening fears they would move soon on the capital, which is home to millions of Afghans. "Clearly from their actions, it appears as if ...

# **Taliban Approach Capital's** Outskirts, Attack **Northern City**



KABUL, Afghanistan - The Taliban seized two more provinces on Saturday and approached the outskirts of Afghanistan's capital while also launching a multipronged assault on a major northern city defended by former warlords, Afghan officials said.

The insurgents have captured much of northern, western and southern Afghanistan in a breakneck offensive less than three weeks before the United States is set to withdraw its last troops, raising fears of a full militant takeover or another Afghan civil war.

The Taliban captured all of Logar province, just south of the capital, Kabul, and detained local officials, said Hoda Ahmadi, a lawmaker from the province. She said the Taliban have reached the Char Asyab district, just 11 kilometers (7 miles) south of Kabul.

The insurgents also captured the capital of Paktika, bordering Pakistan, according to Khalid Asad, a lawmaker from the province. He said fighting broke out in Sharana early Saturday but ended after local elders intervened to negotiate a pullout. He said the ...

**UN Chief Calls on** 

**US Lawmaker Seeks Immediate Air** Support to Afghanistan

WASHINGTON -

Canada Vows to Resettle 20,000 Afghans, Including Embassy Staff & Aid Workers, Amid Fears of Taliban Reprisals

ies across Afghanistan.

forces would help to relocate



US Congressman Mike Waltz in a letter to President Joe Biden on Friday urged the Administration to take immediate steps to provide assistance to the Afghan people in their fight

against the Taliban and make significant changes to their regional strategy.

He requested Biden to provide military resources to assist the Afghan National Security Forces including air support to blunt the Taliban offensive, immediately cut off aid to Pakistan and consider sanctions, and ask for Special Representative Zalmay Khalilzad's resignation "due to his catastrophic diplomatic strategy."

"The Afghan Government and its people desperately need our help and I urge you to reverse course and provide military resources to assist the Afghan National Security Forces," he wrote. First, President Biden can crush the Taliban offensive by committing American air power to support the Afghan Army, Waltz wrote. The Taliban are in the open and exposed as they maneuver to surround Afghan cities. Just as we did in 2001, small groups of special forces partnered with the Air Force will make a dramatic impact and reverse the Taliban's psychological narrative that victory is inevitable.

Second, he wrote, Biden should send a very clear message to the Taliban's backers in Pakistan that enough is enough. The Pakistani military is integral in the Taliban's resurgence. At best, the Pakistanis are turning their backs and complicit in what's happening. At worst, they're actively aiding and equipping the Taliban. The US must suspend all aid and consider sanctions on key military and intelligence officials. "Finally, Biden must shelve our feckless efforts to negotiate with brutal ...



OTTAWA - The Canadian government has pledged to evacuate and resettle 20,000 Afghans, including women, aid workers and diplomatic staff, citing concerns about Taliban reprisals as the militant group overruns cit-

Immigration Minister Marco Mendicino announced the move on Friday, telling reporters that Ottawa would do its best to bring thousands of vulnerable Afghans to safety in Canada, though he gave no timetable for how long that could take.

"As the Taliban continues to take over more of Afghanistan, many more Afghans' lives are under increasing threat," he said, later sharing a photo of a plane carrying refugees that landed in Canada.

Defense Minister Harjit Sajjan also noted that Canadian special Afghans, saying the "challenges on the ground are quite immense," but offered few other details. His comments followed a series of reports on Thursday night that the government would send a small contingent of special operators to the Canadian Embassy to assist with the evacuation of staff, though the officials cited did not provide exact numbers for the deployment.

Canada is far from the only Western state to remove personnel from the wartorn country, ...

Antonio Guterres on Friday called on the Taliban to immediately halt their offensive in Afghanistan, and warned that "Afghanistan is spinning out of con-

trol."

"This is the moment to halt the offensive. This is the moment to start serious negotiation. This is the moment to avoid a prolonged civil war, or the isolation of Afghanistan," Guterres told reporters in New York.

Guterres called on all parties to do more to protect civilians, Reuters ...

# **Mitch Mcconnell Calls for US Airstrikes to Stop Taliban Advance**



WASHINGTON - US Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) on Friday said the United States should start conducting airstrikes against the Taliban and provide support to Afghan forces to stop the group from taking over the Af-

ghan capital amid the withdrawal of American troops from the country. "It is not too late to prevent the Taliban from overrunning Kabul. The Administration should move quickly to hammer Taliban advances with air strikes, provide critical support to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) defending the capital, and prevent the seemingly imminent fall of the city," Mc-

Connell said in a statement. "If they fail to do so, the security threat to the United States will assuredly grow and the humanitarian cost to innocent Afghans will be catastrophic," he warned. McConnell added that ..

# **EU Border Agency Trials** High Tech Controls as **Afghan Fighting Spreads**



The EU's border agency is trialing new high-tech surveillance equipment to detect migrant boats, just as rapid gains by Taliban fighters in Afghanistan have raised the prospect of a surge in people fleeing to Europe. A balloon system equipped with cameras is being tested at Alexandroupolis airport near the Greek-Turkish land border in northeastern Greece, and on the island of Limnos, with the aim of giving border officials a clearer view of approaching boats. Planned before recent Taleban advances in Afghanistan, it is part of a wider effort that includes analysis of emerging pressures from the region.

"We are observing and following the developments specifically in Afghanistan ...

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# Afghanistan: At-Risk Civilians Need Evacuation, Protection

ened risk of persecution from advancing Taliban forces are in urgent need of evacuation and international protection abroad, Human Rights Watch said today. Foreign governments should prioritize providing visas and helping ensure safe passage for civilians whom the Taliban may target for abuse because of their past work or status, along with their immediate family members.

Civilians feared to be at particular risk include those who have worked to promote human rights, democracy, and education; academics, writers, journalists, and other media workers; and people who have done work for foreign countries; among other at-risk categories. Members of ethnic minorities and Shia Muslims, in particular Hazaras, are also at greater risk.

"The Taliban have a long record of abusing or killing civilians they deem 'enemies," said Patricia Gossman, associate Asia director

KABUL - Afghans at height- at Human Rights Watch. "Whether from inside or outside of Afghanistan, governments and UN offices should provide protection and assistance to at-risk Afghans and make processing travel documents and transportation a priority."

Governments should immediately suspend all deportations and forced returns to Afghanistan, Human Rights Watch said. All countries should publicly recognize that Afghans fleeing Afghanistan should be given meaningful opportunities to seek asylum. The United Nations and UN member states should increase humanitarian assistance to neighboring countries to which Afghans are fleeing and support those countries admitting them. Governments should also increase support for emergency evacuation, relocation, and resettlement operations for Afghans, and urgently meet to adopt coordinated protocols for resettlement to third countries for people particularly at risk.



Governments should also increase support for nongovernmental groups inside and outside of Afghanistan that promote human rights, women's rights, children's rights, education, health care, and other vital needs. Governments should ensure the participation of Afghan civil society groups in discussions of assistance and resettlement. The UN Human Rights Council in

Geneva should urgently pass a resolution creating a special body to collect and preserve evidence of abuses by all parties to the conflict in Afghanistan and prepare files to facilitate fair and independent criminal proceedings, .

# **Friendship Gate Reopens after** Week-Long Closure

PESHAWAR - The Durand Line crossing at Chaman, closed by the Taliban last week, has been reopened, says a Pakistan official.

The Friendship Gate was reopened on Friday as a result of successful negotiation between Taliban and Pakistani officials. In fact, the decision had been taken three days back, but the cross could not be reopened due to a Taliban demand that Pakistan did not accept.

The Taliban, Dawn reported, demanded the Afghans be allowed to enter Chaman from Wesh without visas and other documents.

said, the two sides met again into Wesh and Chaman.



As a result, Afghan transit trade and import and export of goods resumed after more than a week.

"After negotiations with the Taliban, the crossing has been reopened," a senior Chaman administration official said. Transit trade trucks and other Subsequently, the newspaper vehicles were allowed to cross

# Islamabad Urges Kabul to **Expedite Peace Process**

PESHAWAR - Pakistan has urged Afghan leaders to try to quickly achieve a negotiated settlement with the Taliban to stop the further escalation in violence. At a news conference in Islamabad on Friday, National Security Adviser Moeed Yusuf said the Taliban's swift territorial gains underlined the need for expediting the peace process.

The NSA said: "Trust me, if they sit down, they will be able to come out with some sort of settlement and we will respect whatever Afghans decide." He warned history would judge them poorly if they did put all



more than a dozen provincial capitals fell to the Taliban in the past two months.

Pakistan could only facilitate the peace process in Afghanistan, but could not be a guarantor, the official explained. "Everybody needs to respect what

# Closing in on Kabul, **Taliban Seize Logar**



KABUL - Zeroing in on Kabul, Taliban fighters have seized central Logar province and detained a number of officials, a lawmaker confirmed on Saturday.

Hoda Ahmadi told the Associated Press the insurgents had reached the Char Asyab district, 11 kilometers south of Kabul. Following the overnight fall of the provincial capital Pul-i-Alam, the insurgents overran many parts of the province.

On Friday, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid tweeted the rebels had overrun the police headquarters and the main prison in Pul-i-Alam.

Mujahid claimed several Afghan National Army soldiers had surrendered. He said the Taliban also seized weapons, including two tanks.

He also released video clips of Taliban advances in Logar, President Ashraf Ghani's home. (Pajhwok)

# **Taliban Takeover Not in US Interest: Graham**

KABUL - An influential US senator has commended the Americans who served in Afghanistan and their family members.

"You provided protection to our nation for 20 years against another 9/11," Lindsey Graham tweeted on Friday. The lawmaker wrote: "I know it is difficult to see Afghanistan deteriorate so quickly, but you and your comrades in arms some who made the ...



# More Forces to be Sent to **Chahar Asiab: Mirzakwal**

KABUL - Acting Interior Minister Gen. Abdul Sattar Mirzakwal has visited check-posts and security personnel in the Chahar Asiab district of Kabul.

In a statement, the Ministry of Interior said Mirzakwal met security personnel to assess the situation and better understand the problems facing the district.



Capricorn (Dec.21-Jan19)

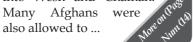
Aug 15, 2021 - Maintain your integrity,

Capricorn. Other people may suspect

your motives, so make sure you give

them no reason to doubt you. Be confi-

on Friday and the Durand Line Many Afghans was reopened.



efforts behind a political set- Afghans decide politically." tlement in Afghanistan, where (Pajhwok)

The acting minister, who issued necessary instructions...

### Aries (Mar. 22-Apr.20)



Aug 15, 2021 - Get the rest you need, Aries. Prevent sickness and maintain full control of your mind and body by making sure you get the proper amount of sleep. Your actions today should be me-

thodical. Don't try to experiment with something you know nothing about. Make sure you understand the situation completely before you jump in with both feet.

### Taurus (Apr.21-May 20)



Aug 15, 2021 - Don't poke your nose into other people's business today, Taurus. Give others their space and let them work things out for themselves. Don't feel like you have to gain the attention of everyone. Do what you need to do and

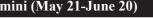
your rewards will come in due time. Your actions might be thrown off course by the unexpected. Be on the lookout for something wild and bizarre that could be coming your way.

### Gemini (May 21-June 20)



Aug 15, 2021 - Ask for what you need, Gemini, and you will get it. Don't wait around for the rewards to come to you. This is one of those days in which actions speak louder than words. Don't expect others to read your mind. If you want something, go after

it. There may be an element of the unexpected working its way into your day so be on guard.





### Cancer (June 21-July 20)

Aug 15, 2021 - Watch the sunrise today, Cancer. Open your eyes to the beauty around you and let it inspire you to take action. Someone may be trying to throw you a curve ball, so be ready. You have a

generous heart that you should share freely. Your helpful nature will draw others to you and help you skate effortlessly through your day. Teach someone a lesson that you know they need to learn.

### Leo (July 21-Aug. 21)

Aug 15, 2021 - Get in touch with a friend you haven't heard from in a while, Leo. Someone is waiting to hear from you. Surprise him or her with an unexpected expression of love. Rely on your inner map

and don't let others throw you off course. Don't waste time. Keep an eye on your goals at all times. Other people play key parts in making this day go smoothly, but don't let them manipulate you.

### Virgo (Aug. 22-Sep 22)

Aug 15, 2021 - Mind your manners, Virgo and open doors that you've never opened before. Maintain your principles and in-

tegrity as you venture forth into worlds unknown. Don't write people off without giving them a fair chance. Don't judge others. Give them an equal amount of respect. It may be hard to maintain a solid footing today, but you should try.





is exactly the one you need to take. This isn't a day to

Aug 15, 2021 - You're able to get quite a bit accomplished today, Sagittarius, as long as you're the one taking action. Don't let other

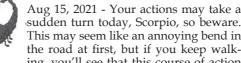
people be in charge. Your power may come in energetic, erratic bursts, so use this to your advantage. Maintain a level head and you will be able to cut through your day's work like a warm knife through butter. Whatever you do, don't give up.



Aug 15, 2021 - You may go in many difherent directions today, Libra, so try to stay focused. Spend some time by water, even if it's just your bathtub, and reconnect with your true self. The more you

integrate your inner nature with your outer demeanor, the more you will attract the people and situations that can help you in your journey.

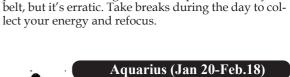
### Scorpio (Oct.23-Nov.22)



This may seem like an annoying bend in the road at first, but if you keep walking, you'll see that this course of action

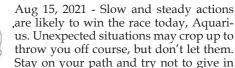
sit back and watch. Get your act together and do some thing before you're the one who gets acted upon.

### Sagittarius (Nov.23-Dec.20)



dent in your actions and follow through with your

promises. There's a great deal of power under your



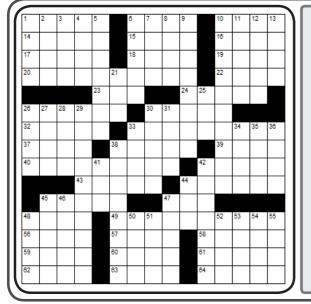
to the wild, erratic energy around you. Stick to traditional methods and beware of peddlers trying to sell you wooden nickels. You're smarter than that.

### Pisces (Feb.19-Mar.20)



Aug 15, 2021 - If you don't agree with what the group is doing today, Pisces, don't feel like you have to join in. Earn

their respect in your own way, not by orcing yourself into a mold you don't fit into. Mainain your integrity and act with confidence. If you're confident about your actions, others will put their confidence in you. Don't compromise your beliefs.



### Across

1. Common beet, 6. Amazes, 10. To tax or access, 14. Hawaiian veranda, 15. Bloodsucking insects, 16. Shade of blue, 17. Nautical for stop, 18. Gumbo, 19. Regrets, 20. Larkspur, 22. Offers, 23. Before, poetically, 24. Range, 26. Spartan, 30. Moon of Saturn, 32. Lacking wit or imagination, 33. Custodian, 37. Module, 38. Hindu mendicant monk, 39. Story, 40. Consecrates, 42. Trades, 43. Burrowing mammals, 44. Not the youngest, 45. Swings, 47. Genus of macaws, 48. Immediately, 49. Become bubbly, 56. High fidelity, 57. Threesome, 58. Convulsion, 59. Margarine, 60. Ripped, 61. They make wool, 62. Small slender gull, 63. Is endebted to, 64. Informal greeting

### Down

1. Attired, 2. Possess, 3. Rectal, 4. Coarse file, 5. Indecisive, 6. Sole, 7. A collaborative website, 8. Beige, 9. Tailor, 10. Fizzy, 11. Provide, 12. Soft leather, 13. Back talk, 21. Anger, 25. Feline, 26. Potato, 27. Sea eagle, 28. Cancel, 29. Appraisal, 30. Seizes, 31. Colored part of an eye, 33. Provisions, 34. Cabbagelike vegetable, 35. L L L L, 36. A musical pause, 38. High-pitched male voice, 41. Demure, 42. Submissive, 44. Mistake, 45. Attendance counter, 46. Thin disk of unleavened bread, 47. Eras, 48. Fired a weapon, 50. A splitting tool, 51. Blaze, 52. Reflected sound, 53. Goulash, 54. Prompted, 55. Catch a glimpse of



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# The Expectation of People from the Government and Afghan Taliban Leaders

**F** ollowing the recent advances of the Taliban in the countryside, they have also continued advances towards the center of provinces. They have taken the control of several provinces in the northern and western parts of the country. In the latest case, the city of Sar-e Pul has also fallen like other provincial capitals that fully or partially fell under the control of the Taliban. These cities are Zaranj, the capital of western Nimroz province; the city of Shibirghan, the capital of northern Jawzjan province; the city of Kunduz, the capital of northern province in the country. In addition, several progovernment local militia commanders surrendered to the Taliban without a fight while others are daily hunted by assassination targets in Kabul and other provinces. These unilateral advances show the firm will of the Taliban for victory, but the firm will of the government for retreating and just ravings.

The first expectation of people from the government is to bravely resist or leave. If the government cannot defend the people, it must not deepen the pains of the people. The people expect the government to provide them with clear responses that why some of the bases, districts, and provinces are left to the Taliban without any serious resistance. Before the government spokesmen justified the falls of districts as a tactical retreat so as to prevent the civilian causalities in the war field, but how do they justify the falls of provinces? A few days ago, the president informed of a clear plan for re-capturing of the districts, but in practice, the center of provinces has successively collapsed. Therefore, the people are extremely tired of prodoxical promises, justifications, and ravings. In addition, the morale of the security forces has so lowered as in some cases the areas are surrendered to the Taliban without any resistance. If the government and international community do not want to support the security forces, they should practically take action, and stop raving and promising. The next expectation of people from the government is to equally and impartially use from the national facilities, power oneness against Taliban. Otherwise, the show of fall and silence will have bad consequences for the government, and the people. In a situation where the war has reached the homes of the people, imposing countless fiscal and human losses with displacing thousands of people, there is a rapid need for national convergence in the fight against the Taliban, but the Afghan government became more indifferent and centralized in a small circle marginalizing other groups in the country. Thus, the people's concerns about the fall of the districts and provinces to the Taliban are as serious as the significant silence of senior government officials showing that Afghanistan seems to have bad days ahead.

As a whole, if the government shows practical commitment to republic values and rule of law, the people are still committed to the protection of the republic system, but the weaknesses of the government have really tired everyone. According to experts, the weaknesses of the government are rooted in different issues such as the strategic leadership of the peace and war, lack of meritocratic standards in government institutions, the defensive position of security forces, lack of modern weapons and warring equipment, administrative corruption, lack of good coordination amongst the leadership of security forces, and infiltration of foreign intelligence in the government bodies are of the other chronic factors behind the rapid advances of the Taliban. If the government does not show the practical will to republic values, and if the government does not review its war plan and strategy, the security forces will entirely lose their morale and confidence, and then the Taliban will practically announce the victory of the emirate over the republic in the country. It must be re-emphasized that the weaknesses of the government and the rapid advances of the Taliban with doubtful silence of the government have created serious skepticism and questions throughout the country. If the government wants to hand it over to the Taliban, why does it victimize thousands of people? If the government and international community do not wish to fight against the Taliban, why do they deepen the pain and afflictions of Afghan people? In some cases, such as fighting against corruption, rule of law, and seriousness against criminals, some people might, even, prefer the Taliban. Therefore, the Taliban is also expected to reform their deeds and behavior under the framework of national and international law. The Taliban are blamed for having no capacity and no motives to serve people and so they need to prove their meritocratic approach and capacity to provide public and administrative services. The Taliban are blamed for the destruction of the infrastructures and so they should control their commanders and fighters, especially their foreign fighters not destroy the public and private properties. Nearly a month ago, the government officials announced that the Taliban had imposed millions of losses on the country by the destruction of public facilities such as public roads, schools, clinics, and bridges. If the Taliban are really Afghan and want to govern on the people, they should overtly punish those who commit such crimes in the area under their control. And finally, the Taliban is also blamed for not being incompatible with the requirement of times and modern values. Therefore, they are expected to adjust themselves to modern values such as equity, equality, justice, freedom, women's right, freedom of speech, and so on. Instead of showing the power of their weapons, the Taliban show the power of their logic, program, and rationality. They should know that the contemporary generation and multi-ethnic society of Afghanistan are entirely in paradox to the monopolistic and obsolete version of the Emirate system and so the people expect the Taliban to chnage their minds and system.

# **Message of Historical Revolution**

### By: Hujjatullah Zia

The Holy Month of Muharram is celebrated annually among Muslims to commemorate the martyrdom of Imam Husain (A.S) and his companions whose blood was spilt in the scorching desert of Karbala, a city in Iraq. Denying to pledge allegiance to the dictatorial regime of his time, he sought to revive moral values and religious tenets at the cost of his life. Husain (A.S), the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), showed no sense of fear and played his constructive role heroically to reform the society.

The philosophy behind his historic revolution, based on his statement, was to revive religious principles, moral standard, and human values. Husain (A.S) refused to be coerced into pledging loyalty to Yazid's regime and aimed to free the society from violence, tyranny, oppression, moral turpitude, etc. Being recommended to yield to the dictatorial regime of his time, Husain (A.S) replied, "I will never surrender to them like a humiliated person and never pledge allegiance to them like slaves." He preferred martyrdom to a wicked life and deemed it a moral responsibility to release those who were subdued to coercion and brutality.

His main objective was to stop the spirit of religion from moribund and teach a lesson of humanity to the world through his practices. He urged people to listen to the call of their conscience and beckoned them to join him in his revolution against despotism. He voiced his concerns over the flagrant violation of religious tenets and moral standards. To put it succinctly, he cherished humanity, spiritual purpose, and divine message.

To view the revolution of Karbala from the perspective of the current era, Husain (A.S) deemed it his right whether or not to pledge loyalty to a regime. After all, his spiritual status as "Imam" would not allow him to yield to a cruel system.

However, the philosophy of the revolution in Karbala was not either realized truly or was turned a blind eye. For instance, the tragic aspect of this revolution is highly prominent across Islamic societies that has outshined other angles. An overwhelming number of people shed tears without regarding the objective of Husain (A.S) or following his footsteps – i.e., valuing divine messages, humanity, and moral standards. That is to say, scores of people who live under cruelty or breathe no words for protecting their rights and freedoms mourn for an individual that lived a free life and safeguarded his soul against evils. It is the tragedy of our time to see that people focus on the wounds inflicted on his body rather than his soul that spread the message of freedom and humanity. Although his blood was spilt mercilessly, each drop of his blood was a stain on the face of Yazid's regime and stigmatized it forever. It is an unmistakable fact that the death of a freedom-fighter, religious reformer, or simply a well-intentioned individual will be tragic for a society, but this tragedy is not supposed to overshadow other aspects.

The followers of Imam Husain (A.S) ought to practice upon religious tenets in its true way; respect the rights, freedoms, and dignity of others; uphold moral standards and humanity; show religious tolerance; and defend the right versus the wrong in their daily life. Those who show interest towards the revolution of Karbala, need to figure out its philosophy. Moreover, religious preachers will have to enlighten all aspects of this historical revolution rather than simply speaking about the tragedies and merciless killings occurred in Karbala.

Religious extremism is one of the issues that preachers need to point out its ugliness more than ever before. Husain (A.S) revolted against cruelty and coercion and intended to protect the true spirit of religion against the false interpretations or practices. Extremism has stemmed from radical interpretation of religious tenets exercised by the ideologues who regard religion from bird's eye view. Indeed, religious extremism, which has changed into a global threat, is against the objectives of Karbala's revolution and in direct conflict with religious mainstream. Husain (A.S) did not violate the rights or freedoms of others but resisted cruelty and violation of his rights. Since religious extremists know no moral or religious boundaries, they even target mourning proceedings and mosques. Hence, their anti-religious practices are against humans and humanity.

To sum up, Islamic societies had better pay heed to the holy objectives of this revolution more than its tragic aspect. The heroic movement of Husain (A.S) and his selfless act for reviving religious values and ethical code are a unique lesson for all human societies that the history has ever recorded. But reducing the sacred goal of this revolution to mourning ceremonies will be a blow to Islamic societies. His valuable slogan "death with humanity is better than a life of humiliation" reveals his virtue and lofty soul. It, indeed, was the revolution of virtue versus vice.

Hujjatullah Zia is the permanent writer of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan and freelance writer based in Kabul. He can be reached at zia\_hujjat@yahoo.com

# **The Tusk Effect**

### By: Sławomir Sierakowski

In July, Donald Tusk, the former European Council president who previously served as Poland's prime minister from 2007 to 2014, returned to Polish politics. Many voters remember him as the politician who raised the country's retirement age – a policy that was reversed in 2017 by the Law and Justice Party

(PiS). In fact, the PiS has blamed Tusk for pretty much everything that is wrong in Poland.

Other paranoid accusations leveled against Tusk include that he collaborated with Russian President Vladimir Putin in 2010 to arrange the plane crash that killed President Lech Kaczyński, the identical twin brother of PiS leader Jarosław Kaczyński, and that



company to CNN), PiS has introduced a law that would bar entities from outside the European Economic Area from controlling television entities operating on the basis of a license issued in Poland.

PiS pretends that it wants to protect Poland's media market from takeovers by other countries, such as Russia, China, or an Arab state. But, giving lie to this claim, the PiS-controlled National Broadcasting Council has been delaying the extension of TVN24's broadcasting license for 18 months, simply out of spite. The station now has fewer than 50 days left to secure a renewal. Poland is thus spurning the country on which it most depends to maintain its own national security. The United States has repeatedly signaled its opposition to PiS's actions, with a bipartisan group of US senators warning in a recent joint letter that: "These and other steps, which Poland - a NATO ally and close friend and partner of the United States - has recently taken, do not reflect the shared values that underpin our bilateral relationship. Any decision to implement these laws could have negative implications for defense, business, and trade relations. We urge the Polish government to pause before acting on any measure that would impact our longstanding relationship." The message here is clear. If the law is enacted, Poland can forget about any large weapons contracts, an increased American military presence (beyond the 5,000 US soldiers who currently rotate through the country), or any state visits. Of course, that last point may well suit Kaczyński, who bet everything on Donald Trump remaining in power and now sees no reason to cooperate with US President Joe Biden's administration. Still, there is opposition to the so-called "Lex TVN" even within the ruling camp, where a small group of deputies led by the conservative member of parliament Jarosław Gowin has pulled out of the PiS coalition government, opening the possibility of it falling soon. Kaczyński appears willing to sacrifice the Polish-American alliance in an attempt to obliterate the opposition's electoral chances. He is even more desperate now that the country's COVID-19 vaccination campaign has stalled, setting the stage for a fourth pandemic wave and possibly another lockdown. Worse, anti-vaccination sentiment is rising within the right-wing electorate, including among PiS voters. That means the government cannot risk using coercion or discrimination against the unvaccinated to head off more infections. On top of everything else, Poland is still in a dispute with the European Union over the independence of the judiciary, leaving it vulnerable to having its EU funding cut off. Lacking a stable parliamentary majority and facing the possibility of a fourth wave, PiS thus finds itself on a collision course with not only its own electorate, but also with the EU and the US. Still, Tusk must pierce the ceiling of 25-30% support to overtake PiS in the polls. The coming months will show us how strong he is, and how weak Kaczyński may have become.



he is, in fact, a German backed by Chancellor Angela Merkel.

But Tusk is a consummate pragmatist. He admits that he made some serious mistakes during his tenure as prime minister. He now believes that people should be able to choose whether they want to retire earlier or get a larger pension for retiring later. He is less economically liberal than he was before, conceding that the state should be more active in redistribution. Like the rest of the Polish political class, he acknowledges that the PiS government's many generous social programs are popular. There will be no returning to the neoliberalism that dominated Poland after 1989, in the era of then-Finance Minister Leszek Balcerowicz's "shock therapy."

Tusk's return has had an electrifying effect. His party, Civic Platform, immediately regained the lead among the opposition, with its support rising from 16.9 to 27.3 in the space of a month. Moreover, an analysis of the polls shows that he has won over as many as one million new voters for the opposition. As one commentator put it, Tusk has rolled in like a tank to challenge the infantrymen of PiS and the other opposition parties.

The atmosphere within Civic Platform has also changed. The party's previously comatose politicians have woken up. Tusk is traveling the country and meeting activists, local government officials, and ordinary people. At press conferences, he answers even hostile questions, including from PiS-aligned media outlets. Not allowing himself to be provoked, he both admits to past mistakes and offers sharp ripostes – a style that contrasts starkly with Kaczyński, who never takes questions at press conferences.

Tusk's strategy is to serve as a kind of father of the opposition. He not only avoids disputes, but also praises other opposition leaders effusively. He is not the kind of politician who wants to share power; but, for now, he is focused on defeating PiS. That goal comes with significant career risks. Although Kaczyński has a significant resource advantage (presiding over the state budget, public media, state-owned companies, and European funds), losing to him nonetheless would be a grave embarrassment for Tusk.

Tusk's return has also intensified Kaczynski's war on Poland's independent media. To limit the opposition's electoral prospects, PiS has tried to pull the plug on the country's largest private television station, TVN, and its news channel, TVN24. Because the station is owned by the US company Discovery (which is in the process of merging with another American firm, WarnerMedia, the parent

Sławomir Sierakowski, founder of the Krytyka Polityczna movement, is Director of the Institute for Advanced Study in Warsaw and Senior Fellow at the German Council on Foreign Relations.



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### (1) Marine Vanguard...

they are trying to get Kabul isolated," Kirby noted at a Pentagon briefing.

The Pentagon also was moving an additional 4,500 to 5,000 troops to bases in the Gulf countries of Qatar and Kuwait, including 1,000 to Qatar to speed up visa processing for Afghan translators and others who fear retribution from the Taliban for their past work with Americans, and their family members.

The remainder - 3,500 to 4,000 troops from a combat brigade of the 82nd Airborne Division - were bound for Kuwait. Kirby said the combat troops would be a reserve force on standby "in case we need even more" than the 3,000 going to Kabul. The temporary buildup of troops for U.S. evacuations highlights the stunning pace of the Taliban takeover of much of the country, less than three weeks before the U.S. is set to officially end nearly 20 years of combat in Afghanistan.

Britain also was sending 600 troops to Afghanistan on a short-term basis to help its nationals leave the country.

Canada was sending special forces to help Canadian staff leave Kabul, a source familiar with the plan told The Associated Press. That official, who was not authorized to talk publicly about the matter and spoke on condition of anonymity, did not say how many special forces would be sent. (AP)

### (2) Taliban Approach...

governor and other officials surrendered and were on their way to Kabul.

The Taliban meanwhile attacked the northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif from several directions, setting off heavy fighting on its outskirts, according to Munir Ahmad Farhad, a spokesman for the provincial governor. There was no immediate word on casualties.

The Taliban have made major advances in recent days, including capturing Herat and Kandahar, the country's second- and third-largest cities. They now control 19 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces, leaving the Western-backed government in control of a smattering of provinces in the center and east, as well as Kabul and Mazar-e-Sharif (AP)

### (3) US Lawmaker ...

terrorists until the situation is stabilized militarily. The President should fire US Special Representative Zalmay Khalilzad whose diplomatic strategy has failed spectacularly. Khalilzad convinced the last two administrations that the Taliban had changed, were interested in governing, and cared about diplomacy and peace,' the US congressman said in his letter. He said that it is not too late to reverse

course to prevent complete Taliban control, Al-Qaeda resurgence, and an unraveling of all our investments from the last twenty years

"It is particularly horrifying and heartbreaking to see reports of the hard-won rights of Afghan girls and women being ripped away from them," he said.

Under Taliban rule between 1996 and 2001, women could not work, girls were not allowed to attend school and women had to cover their face and be accompanied by a male relative if they wanted to venture out of their homes.

The United States is sending in about 3,000 extra troops to help evacuate U.S. Embassy staff and Britain is deploying about 600 troops to help its citizens leave. Other embassies, including those of the Netherlands, Germany and Norway, and aid groups said they were also getting their people out, Reuters reported.

Since the start of the year nearly 400,000 people have been newly displaced by conflict across Afghanistan, and 10,350 internally displaced people arrived in Kabul between July 1 and Aug. 12, the United Nations has said. (ATN)

### (6) Mitch Mcconnell...

he had spoken with the Afghanistan ambassador to the US, saying they had "an urgent conversation" regarding "the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan and the unfolding humanitarian crisis."

Republicans have in recent days ramped up their criticism of US President Joe Biden's decision to withdraw US troops as conditions in Afghanistan have been rapidly deteriorating amid the Taliban's recent gains.

Taliban has taken over at least 17 provincial capitals in the last eight days, including Kandahar and Herat.

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres on Friday asked the Taliban to immediately end its offensive and said seizing power through military forces is a losing proposition.

He said that it is particularly horrifying and heartbreaking to see reports of the hard-won rights of Afghan girls and women being ripped away from them.

"I am also deeply disturbed by early indications that the Taliban are imposing severe restrictions on human rights in the areas under their control, particularly targeting women and journalists," Guterres said. (TOLO NEWS)

### (7) EU Border Agency...

and Tunisia which might have an effect on migratory flows towards the European Union," said Frontex spokesperson Piotr Switalski.

The integrated mix of cameras and thermovision sensors with links to ship transponders and satellite communications gives officials a real-time view of a 60 km (40 miles) circle of sea, covering 40,000 square km (15,000 square miles).

"Border surveillance in the maritime area should be greatly improved because of this innovative system," he said.

envoy for Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad also traveled to Qatar to make that point to Taliban officials directly.

"We demand an immediate end to attacks against cities, urge a political settlement, and warn that a government imposed by force will be a pariah state," Khalilzad said after the meeting.

Regardless of whether the Taliban heeds that warning, President Joe Biden is showing no sign of slowing or reversing a decision to withdraw from the war.

The United States is ending its nearly 20-year combat mission in Afghanistan on Aug. 31 under a deal that President Donald Trump signed with the Taliban in 2020

Only three countries - Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates recognized the Taliban regime back in late 1990s. (TOLO NEWS)

### (10) US to Destroy...

information, the US embassy in Kabul is ordered to destroy sensitive papers, phones, computers, flags, and other materials which could be misused.

The latest decision is being taken amid the deployment of 3,000 US army and marine personnel who are due to arrive in Kabul to secure the evacuation of staff from the embassy. (Khaama Press)

### (11) Saleh Says...

under any deal that is dictated and imposed by Taliban," Saleh added.

But Taliban who overran at least 17 provincial capitals in the last week in a statement asked government officials to surrender to them and that they will be forgiven.

Some politicians and lawmakers said that the current situation is due to the government's "wrong policies."

"The Presidential Palace or presidential advisers and minister should explain the situation," said Sayed Jawad Mohseni, a religious scholar.

"Nowhere in the world, it is in a way that those who are responsible do not feel their responsibility towards the people and the government... and apply policies that do not favor national interests," former vice president Ahmad Zia Massoud said.

'They were busy in taking seats and land grabbing and were seeking ways to fill their pockets," said Asif Sediqqi, a senator. But an analyst blamed the US and other countries' policies towards Afghanistan. "The main reason behind the current crisis and bloodshed in Afghanistan is the US and its close allies," said Shakib Muntazeri, a university lecturer. (TOLO NEWS)

### (12) As Taliban...

friends urged.

He spent last Tuesday night with his friends and then realised he had to get home to Kabul, in case the airport closed. Before its fall, the airport in the Western | fire throughout the year, and in 2019, 6.4 city of Herat was closed for several days as fighting reached the road leading to it. By the following morning, thousands of others had the same idea. Not only did one-way ticket prices double to \$150, but there were no tickets for several days. Luckily, Wahab had friends at a travel agency and was able to secure himself a ticket. Before he could head to the airport though, he ran into another hurdle, finding cash to pay for the flight. "The ATMs were all out of money, the banks were full of hundreds of people lining up trying to take out as much money as they could," Wahab said after returning to Kabul. Again, he had to turn to friends to borrow the money for the ticket until he could reach the capital. When he arrived at Maulana Jalaluddin Balkhi International Airport, though, it became evident that having a ticket was not a guarantee one could board a plane. He, and others who were trying to fly out at the height of the panic, described an overcrowded airport, teeming with clusters of hundreds of people at each step from the entrance to the security checks to the check-in desks and the departures terminal. (Aljazeera)

### The Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan was

not in America's national security interest, said the senator from South Carolina He added the Taliban's true sympathies were with Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS). "It will only be a matter of time before our

homeland is again threatened from Afghanistan," Graham said. (Pajhwok)

### (16) More Forces ...

to the officials concerned, discussed the deployment of more forces to the district. The MoI statement added Mirzakwal commended police performance in the current sensitive situation.

District officials presented to the minister a report on the security situation and promised combating the Taliban until their last breath.

Mirzakwal's visit comes at a time when the Taliban captured the Mohammad Agha district of Logar province, neighbouring Chahar Asiab. (Pajhwok)

### (17) Secretive...

Accords," have since signed over \$830 million in trade deals and inked numerous trade and cooperation agreements. But the deal between the Europe-Asia Pipeline Company, an Israeli governmentowned corporation, and MED-RED Land Bridge, a joint Israel-Emirati venture, remains a secret.

Senior officials in former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government - including his former energy, foreign and environment ministers - said they didn't know about the deal until it was announced last September, after the accords

were signed at the White House. The pipeline company, known as EAPC, was founded in the 1960s to bring Iranian oil to Israel when the countries had friendly relations. Its operations are shrouded in secrecy, ostensibly for security reasons. Israeli environmental groups have asked the country's Supreme Court to halt oil shipments, citing EAPC's questionable safety record and the risk posed by parking supertankers alongside Eilat's fragile coral ecosystems. (AP)

### (18) Bolivian Wildfires...

heat sources", citing "climatic conditions" as a driving factor behind the spread of ongoing fires in the area.

Earlier, Bolivia's vice-minister of civil defense, Juan Carlos Calvimontes, blamed a significant portion of this year's fires in the country on humans, claiming that about 90% of them "are being set," rather than "starting by themselves." Authorities have pledged to hold those responsible accountable, stating that they will push to recoup the cost of extinguishing them.

The concerns raised by FAN follow similar findings from the organization saying that in 2020, an estimated 2.3 million hectares of forests and prairies were ruined by

of reactions.

Some dubbed it "disgusting" and "offensive" to Holocaust survivors, while others called on Christou to delete it. In contrast, there were those who apparently supported him.

A number of commenters called for the mayor to step down, among them the NSW Minister for Police and Emergency Services, David Elliott, who said the comment was "the most abhorrent thing."

Under the latest changes to the lockdown rules, residents of several areas of Greater Sydney, including Cumberland, have had their permitted travel radius reduced by half. Those wishing to go beyond that would have to apply for a permit. Only one person from each household, except in special circumstances, is allowed to leave home at any one time to undertake essential errands. Hundreds of defense force personnel, including heavily armed riot squad officers, have been deployed to ensure compliance with the rules. An additional 500 troops will patrol Sydney's residential areas from Monday, as NSW's law enforcement agencies launch their stay-at-home operation. Roadblocks have been installed, with police stopping drivers to check their identification documents in a major compliance exercise. (RT)

### (22) Japan Issues...

turned roads into rivers, with footage shared by Japan's NHK broadcaster showing a truck washed away in a torrent of water.

Another photo from the city of Kurume in Fukuoka prefecture, one of the hardest-hit by the disaster, shows a submerged vehicle in the flooded street, with only its roof visible, as rescue workers pass in a boat.

Some locals were seen braving the bad weather, walking through knee-deep water with umbrellas, while rescuers worked to evacuate stranded residents.

So far, only one fatality was reported from the flooding and at least two people are missing following a mudslide. (RT)

### (23) At Least ...

weather events as the world warms because of the burning of coal, oil and natural gas.Such calamities are expected to happen more frequently as the planet warms.

Experts in Turkey, however, say interference with rivers and improper construction also were contributors to the massive damage in Turkey's floods.Geologists have said that construction narrowed the river bed and the surrounding alluvial flood plain of the Ezine stream in Kastamonu's Bozkurt district, where the damage was most severe, from 400 meters (1,312 feet) to 15 meters (49 feet).

Residential buildings were built along the waterfront. (Euro News)

### (24) Killer of ...

The watchdog said it was not yet known whether the shotgun returned to Davison was the same one he used in Thursday's shootings.Police took away the gun and the certificate in December 2020 following an allegation of assault three months earlier, the watchdog office said. They were returned to Davison last month."We will examine what police actions were taken and when, the rationale behind police decision-making and whether relevant law, policy and procedures were followed concerning Mr Davison's possession of a shotgun," the office's regional director, David Ford, said in a statement."The investigation will also consider whether the force had any information concerning Mr Davison's mental health and if so, if this information was appropriately considered," Ford said.Hundreds attended a candlelit vigil in Plymouth Friday, close to where the killings took place.Police said the motive for the shootings was unclear but there were no immediate signs they were an act of terrorism or that Davison had connections to extremist groups. (Euro News)

## August 15, 2021

"If you do not course correct now, Afghanistan could implode by the twentieth anniversary of September 11th. That will be a tragedy that will not only devastate the families and those who have sacrificed so much but the collective conscience of our country. America's national security and credibility are at stake. The world is watching," he concluded.

This comes as the Taliban seized at least four provincial capitals in less than 24 hours on Thursday and Friday, including the city of Herat in western Afghanistan and Kandahar in the south. (TOLO NEWS)

### (4) Canada Vows...

with the US, UK, Germany, Denmark, Norway and others also announcing withdrawals of embassy workers and other civilians. The future of many Afghans who worked alongside those governments remains unclear, however, as some countries have not yet extended offers to help relocate them.

The rapid evacuations come as the Taliban continue a devastating blitz across Afghanistan, seizing more than a dozen provincial capitals in the last week or so with the major cities of Kandahar, Herat and Lashkar Gah among the latest to fall. With the capture on Friday of Pol-e Alam the capital of Logar province, the militant group is now just 30 miles (50km) from the national capital of Kabul, raising fears that fighters could soon advance on the city.

An intelligence assessment provided to Reuters by an unnamed US official earlier this week suggested the Taliban could "isolate" Kabul within 30 days, and overrun the city in the space of three months. Though the White House was dismissive of that report, saying it would not rely on "anonymous assessments" and that no outcome was "inevitable," the Taliban's recent gains could force officials to recalculate. (RT)

### (5) UN Chief Calls...

### reported.

He also said he was "deeply disturbed by early indications that the Taliban are imposing severe restrictions on human rights in the areas under their control, particularly targeting women and journalists."

More than 400 Frontex official several dozen vehicles, including some equipped with thermovision technology, as well as eight patrol vessels, are stationed in Greece, which has been on the front line of the migrant crisis.

Both the agency and the Greek coast guard have been hit by accusations that Greece has pushed back migrants from Turkey while the border agency stood by, but both have denied acting improperly. Several EU countries have stopped forced returns of Afghans refused asylum while the fighting intensifies. But Greek Migration Minister Notis Mitarachi said this week the EU could not handle another major migration crisis.

Greece, which has built high walls along its land border to deter migrants, says its tough stance has paid off, with incoming flows and camp populations decreasing this year. Mitarachi said camps did have the capacity however to take in more migrants if the country was faced by another influx.

After a slowdown last year when coronavirus lockdowns limited movement, irregular migrant arrivals into the EU through the western Balkans have almost doubled this year, Frontex said.

Switalski said arrivals in Greece spiked in July, with some 1,000 detections. (ATN)

### (8) NATO Allies ...

centers of at least 17 provinces, including Nimroz, Farah, Ghor, Badghis, Herat, and Ghazni. (TOLO NEWS)

### (9) Sweeping Conquests...

masse and demanding that communities provide them with females above age 15 to marry. A Taliban spokesman has denied the allegations.

Still, Biden administration officials have kept up the hopeful claim that a desire for international approval might influence Taliban actions. They reject criticism by Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell R-Ky, who opposes the withdrawal and dismisses what he calls "diplomatic carrots," the Associated Press reports.

"If the Taliban claim to want international legitimacy these actions are not going to get them the legitimacy they seek," White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Monday as quoted by the Associated Press.

This comes after a meeting on Afghanistan's peace in Doha last week. US special

### (13) Afghanistan: At-Risk...

with the assistance of the UN high commissioner for human rights.

The UN Security Council should immediately adopt a resolution demanding that all parties to the Afghan conflict abide by international human rights standards and international humanitarian law, notably the humane treatment of civilians and combatants in custody. It should reiterate that the International Criminal Court, to which Afghanistan is a party, can prosecute war crimes and other atrocities. The resolution should call on all parties to ensure that all civilians, including internally displaced people, have full and free access to humanitarian assistance from UN agencies and humanitarian groups. (PR)

### (14) Friendship Gate ...

cross into Pakistan.

Pakistan is allowing the Afghan nationals with their national identity cards (tazkera) entry into Chaman. (Pajhwok)

### (15) Taliban Takeover ...

ultimate sacrifice - did your job to protect America."

million hectares were lost. (RT)

### (19) Serbian...

reporting, claimed Petrovic "got jabbed as soon as Covid-19 vaccines became available."

But the story is rather more complicated and arguably less inspiring.

In May, the "hermit" told Serbian media that a nearby hotel had arranged for him to get the vaccine, and also provided transportation to the clinic. By the end of the month, he had received his first dose, with local media covering the event. An AFP video report about Petrovic used the same footage of his first jab from May. More than two months later - and after being interviewed by the agency - it appears that Petrovic has still not received his second dose. In a video posted to You-Tube on August 12, the elderly man explained that he was given a shot that had expired over a month earlier. He said he felt let down because, when the time came to receive his second dose, the organizers behind his medical treatment had "vanished" and there was no one to drive him and several other villagers to the clinic. (RT)

### (20) Philippine ...

Indonesia and the Philippines, among others, were abducted and forced to work in Japanese wartime military brothels during World War II.

In the Philippines, there are more than 200 who came out in the open in the 1990s to tell their harrowing experience with the Japanese military.

Silva said many of the wartime victims in the Philippines have died without seeing justice and there are only 12 of them alive now, mostly in their 80s and 90s and in worrying health condition.

Like other Asian "comfort women," a euphemism for those who were forced into sexual slavery for the Japanese military brothels during World War II, the Filipino "comfort women" also demand an official apology from the Japanese government, as well as compensation and inclusion of the comfort women issue in Japan's historical accounts and textbooks. (Xinhua)

### (21) 'Welcome to ...

His latest provocative tweet was publicly available for long enough to elicit an array

### (25) US Calls ...

constitutional and electoral reforms," it added.

The statement said Finer also met with civil society leaders and conveyed US support for their active participation in building a democratic future.

In a series of shock moves, Saied late last month announced the sacking of the prime minister, the suspension of parliament and the lifting of parliamentary immunity for the 217 lawmakers that make up Tunisia's lower house. (Aljazeera)

### (26) Zambia: ...

cast their ballots amid restrictions on internet access and violence in three regions. In Chawama township in Lusaka, Lungu's parliamentary constituency before he became president, residents said supporters of both Lungu and Hichilema both claimed victory and celebrated throughout the night.Lungu's ruling Patriotic Front (PF) party said its vote tally showed a huge turnout in its strongholds and it was confident of victory. Hichilema is running for the United Party for National Development.Social media access was largely restored in Zambia on Saturday. (Aljazeera)



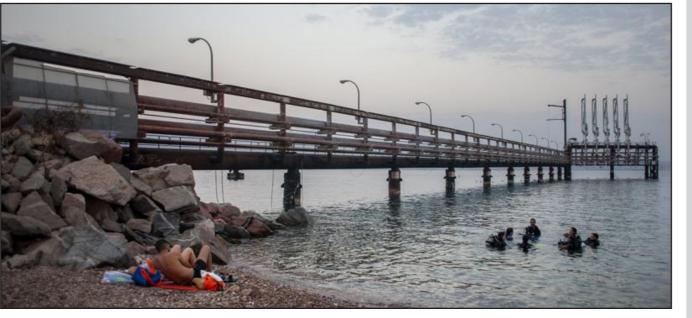
# **Secretive Israel-UAE Oil Deal Endangers Prized Eilat Corals**

EILAT- The Red Sea reefs off the Israeli resort of Eilat host some of the greatest coral diversity on the planet. A symphony in splendid technicolor, the reefs are among the world's most resilient coral colonies against warming seas. They have also become an unlikely battleground, caught between Israeli diplomatic and business interests, and ecological groups that fear this natural treasure could be in danger.

Page 5

Outlook AFGHANUSTAN

A clandestine oil deal struck last year as part of the historic agreement establishing formal diplomatic ties between Israel and the United Arab Emirates is turning Eilat into a waypoint for Emirati oil headed for Western markets. Initially hailed as a move that could cement fledgling diplomatic ties and further Israel's energy ambitions, the deal is now in question after Israel's new government opened a review.



part of the U.S.-brokered "Abraham The decision has upset investors and Gulf allies. The UAE and Israel, which risks a diplomatic spat with Israel's normalized relations last year as ...(More on P4)...(17)

# **Ukraine to Launch Agency for Defense Technologies** in 2022

KIEV- The full-fledged launch of Ukraine's Agency for Defense Technologies is scheduled for 2022, the country's national news agency Ukrinform reported Friday.

"We plan to take measures this year so that the Agency for Defense Technology will start fully operating next year," said Dmytro Hryshchak, Ukrainian deputy director of the Defense Industry Complex Department of the Ministry of Strategy and Industry, at an international defense investment forum.

The agency will be responsible for creating advanced and breakthrough technologies in the interests of the defense industry, which in turn will improve the existing technological capabilities of enterprises and institutions of the national defense industry, said Hryshchak.

It will also promote the creation of promising armament and military equipment models, he add-



ed. Ukraine has been working on ities since the beginning of the ongoing conflict in the East of Ukraine, strengthening its defense capabil- which claimed some 14,000 lives. (Xinhua)

**Bolivian Wildfires** Destroyed 749,000 Hectares of Land in 2021, NGO Says, as Border **Region Declares 'Red** Alert' over Blazes

has raised alarm about the impact of destructive wildfires, saying they tore through 749,000 hectares of the country's woodland between January and July earlier this year, in a new report released on Thursday. zil. The report by the Friends of Nature Foundation (FAN) examined the extent of the damage caused by wildfires in the region, finding that there had been a 62% increase in the scale of the burned area during June and July compared with 2020 and a 48% rise versus the same period in 2019.

Using satellite imagery collected by the European Space Agency's

A Bolivia-based NGO Sentinel-2 to track the spread of the fires, the NGO highlighted how widespread deforestation to expand farming and pastureland had aggravated the blazes in a similar situation to what's happened in Bra-

> Two regions of Bolivia - Santa Cruz and Beni - have been particularly impacted by the fires, suffering 94% of the burnt woodland. By the end of July, Santa Cruz had lost 137,000 hectares, while Beni lost 564,000 hectares due to the blazes.

On Thursday, Santa Cruz declared a "red alert" over the "progressive increase in ...(More on P4)...(18)

### **Mudslides in Turkey** The death toll from se- hospitalised in Sinop vere floods and mud- and one person was slides in coastal Tur- missing in Bartin provkey has climbed to at ince, according to the

At Least 40 People Killed in Floods and

least 40, the country's agency. ter agency said on Saturday.

Kastamonu and Sinop on Wednesday caused flooding that demolished homes, severed at least five bridges, swept away cars and rendered roads unpassable. Turkish disaster agency AFAD said 34

Sinop.

emergency and disas- But some residents said on social media that there are hundreds Torrential rains that more missing, a statepounded the Black Sea ment also made by an provinces of Bartin, opposition lawmaker. About 2,250 people were evacuated across the region, some lifted from rooftops by helicopters, and many were being temporarily numerous housed in student dormitories, authorities said.

Climate scientists unpeople were killed in equivocally say that cli-Kastamonu and six in mate change is leading to extreme ...(More on

Nine people remained P4)...(23)

### Killer of Five in UK Shooting Was Given Back Gun and Licence in July

Britain's police watch- Police have said Davidog says it has launched son killed his mother people in southwest own life. was given back his con- mass shooting in over a fiscated gun and gun decade. Firearm crimes license last month.

killed five people in England on Thursday was given back his confiscated gun and gun licence last month.

Britain's watchdog says it has and Cornwall police launched an investigation into why 22-year- making in relation to old Jake Davison was able to go on the killing of a shotgun and the lispree with a gun in the

city of Plymouth.

an investigation into and four other people, why a 22-year-old man including a 3-year-old who fatally shot five girl, before taking his England on Thursday It was Britain's first

are rare in Britain, A man who shot and which has strict gun control laws and regulations.

The Independent Office for Police Conduct said on Friday it would police investigate the Devon department's decision-Davison's possession cense. ...(More on P4)... (24)

### **US Calls on Tunisia's Saied** to Appoint PM, Restore Democracy

Philippine Activists Slam Japan's Refusal to

The United States dep- said. uty national security Finer travelled to Tunis adviser has met Tuni- with US Acting Assissia's president and dis- tant Secretary of State cussed the urgent need to appoint a prime minister-designate to form He "discussed with a capable government, President Saied the urthe White House said. The adviser, Jonathan prime minister desig-Finer, delivered a message to President Kais a capable government Saied on Friday from able to address the im-US President Joe Biden, 'reaffirming his personal support, and that nisia". of the Biden-Harris Administration, for the Tunisian people and urging a swift return create space for an into the path of Tunisia's clusive dialogue about parliamentary democ- proposed ...(More on

Serbian 'Hermit' Who Urged **Express** Apologies over Wartime Sex Slavery

### Says He Received Gifts from Fawning Media... And 1 **EXPIRED** Dose

**People to Get Vaccinated** 

A Serbian recluse who ing" lifestyle. made international headlines after he called on people to get vaccinated has claimed he was given just one expired dose - as well as gifts from media outlets who promoted his pro-vaccine story. Panta Petrovic, who

says he lives part of the

year in a cave near the

Serbian town of Pirot,

became an overnight

sensation after media

outlets applauded his

pro-vaccination stance,

despite his allegedly

extreme "social distanc-

According to news agency AFP, the Serbian "hermit" was jabbed soon after Covid-19 vaccines became available in his area. "It [the virus] does not choose. It will come here to my cave too," the 70-yearold told the outlet. He said he urged everyone to do the same and didn't understand the "fuss" caused by global inoculation drives. The Daily Mail, in a piece based in part on AFP's ...(More on P4)... (19)

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### 'Welcome to Nazi Germany': in Now-Deleted Tweet, Sydney **Mayor Compares Strict** New Lockdown Laws to **Hitler-Era Regime**

ficial has compared the latest anti-Covid measures imposed on his area by the New South Wales (NSW) state government to the times of Nazi Germany. His comment, since removed, caused a rumpus on social media. Mayor Steve Christou, of Cumberland City Council, tweeted an official graphic illustrating new lockdown rules on Friday. Having posted the image that warned residents of the mandate that requires them to have a permit to leave the

A Western Sydney of- region and to register their personal details to be allowed to visit a "singles buddy" within a five-kilometer (threemile) reach, he wrote: "Welcome to Nazi Germany." The comment from the councilor, who describes himself as having "a tendency to speak what I think,"

was later deleted. The official has previously expressed his opposition to the tightening of lockdown rules and any mandatory vaccination, describing the situation as "dictatorial madness." ...(More on P4)...(21)

MANILA- Philippine activists slammed Japan on Saturday for its continued refusal to express remorse and apology over wartime sex slavery 76 years after the end of World War II.

Lila Pilipina (League of Filipino Women) spokesperson Sharon Cabusao-Silva said hundreds of Filipino women who served as domestic and sex slaves to Japanese soldiers still demand justice. Lila Pilipina is an organization of Filipino comfort women and their sympathizers in the Philippines fighting for recognition, apologies and reparations from the Japanese government for

its unaddressed sexual slavery crimes against Asian women. The Japanese occupation of the



Philippines occurred between en from around Asia, including 1942 and 1945. China, South Korea, ...(More on Hundreds of thousands of wom-P4)...(20)

# Japan Issues Highest Emergency Alert for over 1mn People as Heavy Rain 'Like Never **Before' Triggers Evacuations**



Japan's meteorological service has put three prefectures and the city of Hiroshima on the highest possible emergency alert, which means it's too late to evacuate elsewhere, as torrential rains cause flooding and mudslides. The highest-possible Level 5 "special" weather warning was issued for Saga, Nagasaki and Fukuoka prefectures in the country's southwest on Saturday, as

rains continue to batter parts of Japan. Earlier, the same warning was issued for the city of Hiroshima after several rivers running through the region were deemed at high risk of overflowing.

In its advisory on Saturday, the Japan Meteorological Agency said that "there is a high possibility that some kind of disaster has already occured" in the areas that are especially prone to mudslides

and flooding. "It's been raining heavily like never before," the agency noted.

The agency pointed out that it was "too late to evacuate if the special warning is announced." The Level 5 alert is considered to be a stage "beyond evacuation," when residents are urged to take whatever action is needed to protect their lives, such as moving to a higher floor if they are hunkering down at home.

The highest-level alert now applies to more than one million people, NHK estimated.

Another 4.28 million people have been subject to a Level 4 evacuation warning, which is currently in effect for 17 prefectures. While the Japanese government does not issue formal evacuation orders, the residents in affected areas were encouraged to evacuate as quickly as possible. Unprecedented rainfall ...(More on P4)...(22)

for Near Eastern Affairs Joey Hood, it said. gent need to appoint a nate who would form mediate economic and health crises facing Tu-

"Empowering a new government to stabilise the economy will also racy", the statement P4)...(25)

### Zambia: Hakainde **Hichilema Takes Early Presidential Election Lead**

Lungu, according to tal, Lusaka. the electoral commission on Saturday.

Hichilema tallied 171,604 votes versus the 110,178 garnered by Lungu in the results for 15 of the southern African nation's 156 constituencies.

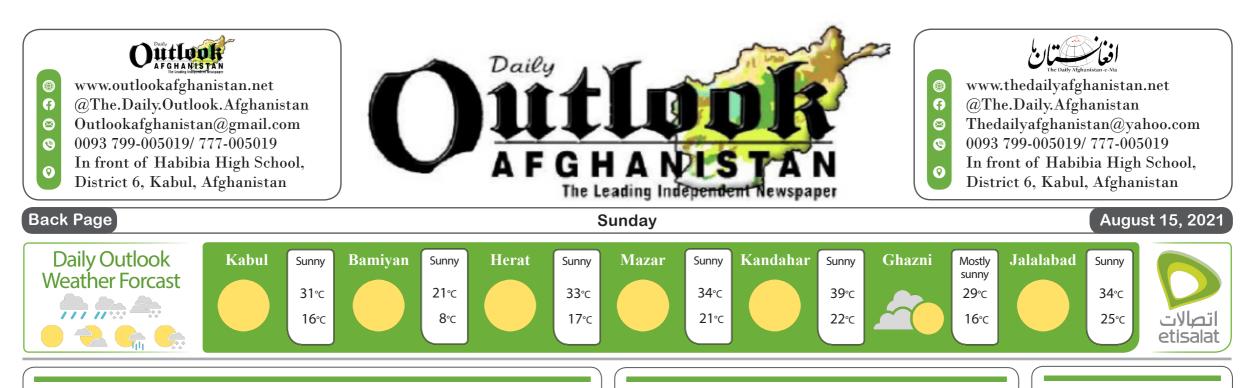
cies include perceived Lungu strongholds, suggesting that Hichilema has gained ground since the last elections in 2016, when he lost by a slim margin in a contested vote marred by allegations of rigging by Lungu.

from monitors on the ground. The Electoral Commission of Zambia allowed the last polling station to remain open until 5am (03:00 GMT) on Friday to give people who queued for hours

A total of 296,210 votes an opportunity to were cast in those con- ...(More on P4)...(26)

Zambia's opposition stituencies, representleader Hakainde Hich- ing a 71.75 percent ilema has taken an ear- turnout rate, chief ly lead in the country's electoral officer Patrick presidential election Nshindano told a meover incumbent Edgar dia briefing in the capithe first results from The first results, initially expected on Fri-

day, were delayed after counting went on overnight because of the huge voter turnout and because political parties objected to the electoral commission's initial figures in one Those 15 constituen- constituency, which differed from those





NATO allies met on Friday in "Our aim remains to support the North Atlantic Council to the Afghan government and seconsult on the situation in Afghanistan, the alliance said in a statement, vowing support to the Afghan government and criticizing Taliban attacks "on Afghan civilians."

"We continue to assess the developments on the ground, and we are in constant contact with the Afghan authorities and the rest of the international community," NATO said.

curity forces," NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg said. "We maintain our diplomatic presence in Kabul and the security of our personnel is paramount."

The statement added that NATO allies are deeply concerned about the high levels of violence caused by the Taliban's offensive, including attacks on civilians, targeted killings, and reports of other

serious human rights abuses. "The Taliban need to understand that they will not be recognized by the international community if they take the country by force. We remain committed to supporting a political solution to the conflict,"

the statement said. This comes as Taliban continues its offensives on Afghani-

stan's major cities. Over the last week, Taliban seized ...

Sweeping Conquests Challenge US Hopes of Better-Behaved Taliban

# **US to Destroy Sensitive** Materials at Embassy in Kabul



KABUL - As the Taliban are gaining provinces especially those which are adjacent to Kabul and the so-called isolation of Kabul is taking shape, CNN and Fox News have found that the US embassy is destroying materials that they consider to be used in propagating.

# Saleh Says Govt Will **Continue Fight Against Taliban**

### dent Ghani.



that he will never surrender to KABUL - First Vice President the group. Amrullah Saleh on Friday said He did not provide details on the

Sources have told CNN that the personnel in the Kabul-based US embassy have been directed to take advantage and reduce the number of sensitive materials in the property.

Earlier, US intelligence personnel were cited that the isolation of the Afghan capital could happen in one month which will finally collapse Kabul in three months. The latest intelligence assessment found by CNN indicates that Kabul could be iso-

As per ...

itself.

the fear first reached a felaunched attacks on the district of Dehdadi late last week. provinces.

Although the armed group's attack failed, it still caused major alarm for residents of one of Afghanistan's economic and cultural hubs.

Abdul Wahab was on a business trip from Kabul when the news broke. He was immediately told to leave his wellguarded \$77 a night hotel and stay in the homes of friends. "The rich and powerful go there, of course, it will be targeted," his ...

lated in 72 hours. US department of state has said that, as per the standard of reducing footprint in any part of the world, they are applying the procedure of destroying sensitive materials.

KABUL, Afghanistan - For weeks the Taliban has been

moving towards the city of Mazar-i-Sharif, the biggest city in the north of Afghanistan. With last week's captures of Herat and Kandahar, Mazar, Jalalabad and Kabul remain the only major cities still under government control as the Tali-

ban heads closer to the capital For people in Mazar, though,

As Taliban

Attacks

Continue,

**People Rush to** 

Kabul

ver pitch when the Taliban Only 11km (seven miles) from Mazar, the district is also home to the 209th Shaheen Corps, a 30,000-strong force meant to protect 114 districts across 10

KABUL - Recent Taliban advances in Afghanistan are chal- While showing interest in a Quoted by the Associated lenging the Biden administration's hopes that a desire for international respect, and for international aid and cash, may moderate the group's worst behaviors when the US ends its

war in the South Asian country. diplomatic settlement, Taliban commanders have accelerated their battlefield advances ahead of the US military's withdrawal at the end of August. The group has at least 17 provinces under

its control.

Press, rights groups have said that others have acted much like the brutal Taliban the US overthrew in 2001. That includes allegedly killing detainees en ...

supporting the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces and the public uprising forces. Saleh said it was a key decision made by the government's security meeting chaired by Presi-

the government will continue its reasons behind the current situfight against the Taliban by fully ation in the country but said he will not bow to any deal named peace with the nature of surrender.

> "I will never accept Taliban domination on the people of Afghanistan ...

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