



Page 2 | NATIONAL
Leaving Afghanistan by May 1?

Bandit Bias Campaign
In a recent interview with Greek media, Boris Johnson, Prime Minister of the British Empire, said he refused to return the Parthenon ...

Page 3 | ECONOMY
Women's Economic Empowerment 'National Priority': Govt



Kabul
17 / 5



Herat
21 / 7



Nangarhar
26 / 14



Balkh
14 / 7



Heart of Asia

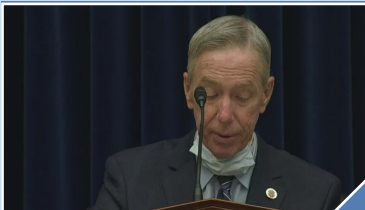
Your Gateway to Afghanistan & the Region

Tuesday, March 16, 2021

Issue No. 937

www.heartofasia.af

10 afs



US Chairman Lynch to Hold Subcommittee Hearing with SIGAR Today

US Rep. Stephen F. Lynch, the Chairman of the Subcommittee on National Security, will hold a hearing with Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) John F. Sopko today on Tuesday. The US House Committee on Oversight and Reform in a statement said that The hearing will examine the eight areas of U.S. reconstruction activity in Afghanistan that SIGAR has identified in its "2021 High-Risk List" as especially vulnerable to waste, fraud, and abuse. According to the SIGAR report, stalled intra-Afghan peace negotiations, the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, a deteriorating security environment, and the recent withdrawal of U.S. and Coalition forces put reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan ... **P2**



NDS Kills Key 'Daesh Commander' in Nangarhar

According to the local officials, NDS' special operatives clashed with Islamic State militants (Daesh) in the Mohmand district of eastern Nangarhar on Sunday night. National Directorate of Security (NDS) special forces clashed with Islamic State militants in Mohmand district of eastern Nangarhar province on Sunday night, killing the district chief, Mahmood Jan, officials said. "Mahmood Jan", the ISI-K district chief was killed during the operation. Sources indicated that the killed individual was a well-known Daesh fighter and the group's commander, who time to time plotted violent attacks on security forces. A provincial official reported that the Afghan security forces arrested three other Daesh members. Meanwhile, Mohammad Saber Tokhi an area representative in the Qalat district was targeted by an IED explosion. Hekmatullah Kochi, commander of Zabul police told the media, that the incident happened at around ... **P3**

15 Civilians Wounded in Kabul Blast: Police



Photo: Social media

At least 15 civilians were wounded in an explosion that targeted a bus in Kabul city on Monday afternoon, Kabul police said in a statement. The blast occurred around 3:50

pm local time in the Dahan-e-Bagh area after a bus struck a mine, the statement said. "The victims have been transferred to the hospital," it said. The statement did not provide

further details about the blast. Sources said that the bus was carrying the employees of the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology. No group including the

Taliban immediately claimed responsibility for the blast. On Sunday, five people were killed, and 16 more people were wounded, in two separate blasts occurring in less than one hour of each other in PD3 and PD6 of Kabul city, Kabul police said. Both explosions targeted vehicles and "all the victims were civilians," according to security sources. However, At least 25 Taliban members were killed in avalanches at Tangi Zaghni area of Jaji Aryoub district of Paktia province, officials said. Hayatullah Nezami, the provincial Police spokesman told Reporterly that the Taliban militants were killed under avalanches when they entered Afghanistan from Pakistan. According to him, the identities of the killed Taliban insurgents have not been recognized and Police efforts are underway to specify their identities. The Taliban group has not commented on the incident so far.

Ukraine Officials Met President's Advisor, Discussed Issues on Bilateral Agenda

Deputy Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine Ihor Zhovkva has met with Advisor to the President of Afghanistan Kabir Khan Isakhel. The government of Ukraine in a statement on Sunday said that interlocutors discussed a wide range of issues on the bilateral agenda, including the strengthening of trade, economic and military-technical cooperation. According to the statement, the successful holding of the second meeting of the Ukrainian-Afghan Joint Intergovernmental Commission ... **P3**



Taliban Meets Khalilzad, Qatari Official in Doha

The US Special Representative for Afghanistan's Reconciliation, Zalmay Khalilzad, and Qatar Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani met with Taliban negotiators and their deputy leader Abdul Ghani Baradar in Doha on Monday evening. This meeting follows Khalilzad's recent visits to Kabul and Pakistan. In Kabul, the US envoy shared a proposed draft for Afghan peace with Afghanistan's political leaders. A Taliban spokesman in Doha, Mohammad Naeem, said: "The implementation of the Doha agreement, the current situation of Afghanistan and the ongoing process of the Intra-Afghan negotiations" were discussed at the meeting. In Kabul, key Afghan political leaders held talks on Sunday to discuss two upcoming conferences on Afghanistan peace. Some negotiators of the Afghan



republic and the Taliban are still in Doha and are continuing their meetings, according to one negotiator. However, according to analysts, there has been no progress in these meetings. "The attitude in favor of negotiations is much better than in the past," a republic negotiator Ghulam Farooq Majroh said on Sunday. "We will continue our efforts to achieve good

results." Concerns are growing over the country's future--both on the political and security front-- as the May 1st deadline to withdraw all US and foreign troops--called for in the US-Taliban agreement--draws closer. The commander of US Central Command, Gen. Kenneth McKenzie, has said that fighting in ... **P3**

Antony Blinken:...

the Yemeni people, the state department said.

“The Secretary underscored that the United States’ efforts under Special Envoy Lenderking intend to reinvigorate diplomatic efforts, alongside the UN and others, to end the war in Yemen.”

Houthi official Mohammed Ali al-Houthi said on Monday that Blinken’s comments about supporting a Yemen free from foreign influence are “positive”.

He said the US should back up its intentions by ending its involvement in military operations carried out by the Saudi-led coalition against his group.

The Houthis, who have been battling the Saudi-led coalition since it intervened in Yemen, recently stepped up cross-border missile and drone attacks on Saudi Arabia. Houthis said on Monday it had fired armed drones at an airport and airbase in southern Saudi Arabia. Riyadh said it had intercepted an explosive drone.

This appears to be the first news of Houthi drones being fired into Saudi Arabia in almost a week.

US Chairman...

“at greater risk than ever before.”

The hearing will also consider how the scheduled withdrawal of U.S military forces from Afghanistan in May 2021 might affect ongoing reconstruction efforts and prospects for a peace agreement that protects the rights of all Afghans, including women and girls.

By Eve Ottenberg

Leaving Afghanistan by May 1?

WILL the US. military ever leave Afghanistan? The answer appears to be no. When the US military comes it stays. It’s been in Germany since the 1940s, and now has expanded, with its attack dog, NATO, from there throughout Eastern Europe to menace Russia. The Afghan adventure has so far lasted 20 years and cost two trillion dollars. Afghanistan provides a convenient, imperial base from which to threaten China. The US military, realistically, will never want to give that up. Trump left office with plans in place for the remaining 2500 US troops to depart Afghanistan by May 1. Not a word about the 18,000 contractors, aka mercenaries, who have long outnumbered US soldiers in Afghanistan. Like those soldiers, these mercenaries’ lives are at risk. They are also a geopolitical liability. If one gets killed, as happened not too long ago in Iraq, the US retaliates. That could ignite war at any time.

Trump’s attempt to remove US commandos from Afghanistan was a grudging concession to reality: the Taliban control most of the country and, if things continue on their current trajectory, will sooner rather than later rule all of it. They are a battle-hardened force, regard Americans as invaders and certainly do not need the much ballyhooed and likely phony bounties from Russia as an incentive to attack US troops. (Western media also accused the Chinese, those copycats, of putting bounties on US soldiers, but somehow that frenzied fabrication never caused the hullabaloo that the Russian one did.) The Trump team therefore negotiated with the Taliban, who did not cease harassing US-backed and financed Afghan government forces throughout this process. Biden quickly applied the brakes to the Trump disengagement vehicle.

Biden must know that by staying longer or adding troops, he ensures

US casualties. The military knows it. But that’s a price our generals appear willing to pay. After all, the Taliban and the US military have been killing each other for 20 years. What is another 20? US generals have referred to this war as a ‘generational’ conflict. Apparently, they don’t mean just one generation. ‘The consequences of unilaterally ignoring the May withdrawal deadline will be the dissolution of the US-Taliban agreement, placing US soldiers back in the crosshairs of the Taliban’, wrote Adam Weinstein recently in Responsible Statecraft, ‘and an end to intra-Afghan negotiations.’ Weinstein argues that those intra-Afghan talks may fail to produce a peace agreement, ‘but it is dead on arrival if Washington chooses to ignore the deadline altogether. An endless US war effort will be the only remaining option.’

Altogether 35 governments currently have soldiers in Afghanistan. According to World Beyond War, these troop numbers range ‘from Slovenia’s six to the US’s 2500. Most countries have fewer than 100.’ Meanwhile, Ireland, Canada, Jordan, Croatia, New Zealand and France have removed their soldiers altogether. It’s a safe bet that were the US to honour its deal with the Taliban and leave, those other 34 countries would follow suit.

That is the wise course. ‘Militarily the war against the Taliban has long been lost’, according to Moon of Alabama on February 23. ‘Even with the 100,000 western troops the Obama administration had sent, there was no way to win it.’ But of course, if the US finally departs, the current Afghan government may very well fall. Talks resumed on February 23, but the Taliban still resist a ceasefire; they still kill Afghan government troops, and plenty of other Afghans.

In late February, Secretary of State Antony Blinken ‘proposed a United Nations-led peace conference’, in



a letter, MSN reported, to form ‘an inclusive Afghan government with the Taliban and establishing a three-month reduction in violence leading to a ceasefire.’ Blinken suggests convoking the foreign ministers of Russia, the United States, China, India, Pakistan and Iran to put together a peace proposal. This longshot actually seems like a good idea; it worked with the Iran nuclear deal, until Trump came along. Let’s just hope the US never has another such loony leader, determined to rip up every treaty that doesn’t have his very own signature on it.

Meanwhile a ceasefire. Such a truce is what’s needed, argues Dexter Filkins in the New Yorker — a promise from the Taliban to stop its attacks. But there’s no clear path to getting that before May 1, even with Blinken’s offer — and it may not exist any time after that, either. Still, Washington appears to want to delay the withdrawal deadline, which the Taliban will not agree to.

In an aside exposing the cruelty, dysfunction and absolute power of empire, Filkins describes how the US transferred Taliban leaders from Guantanamo, where many had been tortured and all had been isolated for nearly 20 years, to luxury apartments with their families in Doha, so they can negotiate ending the war. Filkins mentions that some of these Taliban seem dazed and unfocussed after so

many years in prison. From the lower depths to opulence, in the time it takes for one plane trip. ‘We tortured you for years, but now we need you’, is the peculiar message from US negotiators, whom these Taliban must regard with a jaundiced eye, to say the least, that is, those of them who still have the unbroken mental capacity to consider their circumstances.

Western money sponsors the Afghan government, which clings to power and has stalled negotiations on occasion. ‘Without financial pressure’, Moon of Alabama writes, ‘there is no chance that the Afghan government and the Taliban will ever reach a power sharing deal. Even if there would be an agreement, there is little chance that it will be upheld by all sides. The conflict would likely reignite and the Taliban would win.’ The most viable solution is a speedy US departure. But anonymous officials have said that as far as the Biden team’s concerned, a full withdrawal by May is off the table. In his letter, however, Blinken says it’s still possible.

One wonders how the US government will prime the press to cover this likely extension of an utterly pointless war. Will it squawk ‘democracy!’ as it has so often in the past? After the initial US assault to root out al-Qaeda in 2001, democracy-building was the watchword. Then came ... **P3**

By XiMeng

Bandit Bias Campaign

In a recent interview with Greek media, Boris Johnson, Prime Minister of the British Empire, said he refused to return the Parthenon temple sculptures in the British Museum to Greece and said they were legally obtained by Earl Elgin and in line with the laws at that time. When it comes to the British Museum, many Afghan friends may not have been there, but they must know its reputation. I had the honor to visit the museum and saw many precious historical antiques from all over the world, including China, Egypt, Japan, Greece and other countries. When I saw Chinese historical antiques there, as a Chinese, I felt complicated, because I knew that these precious antiques were basically looted when China was poor and weak. Today, let’s talk about the sculptures of Parthenon of Greece. I think most readers may not know why Britain and Greece are at odds about it. One of the origins of the so-called contemporary western civilization is Greece. Philippe Nemo, a famous French scholar, pointed out five origins of Western civilization, one of which was the city states, lawful freedom, science

and schools founded by ancient Greeks. The year 2021 coincides with the 200th anniversary of the independence of Greece, so the Greek government hopes that the sculptures of Parthenon temple should return to its native land as soon as possible. But when and how did these historical sculptures get to the British Museum?

It was in the year 1801, when Greece was under the Ottoman Turkish Empire. The Earl Elgin mentioned above was the diplomatic envoy of Britain to the Ottoman Empire at that time. He was very curious about the sculptures in the Parthenon, removed some of them and then packed them for England. At that time, the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire was quite generous with these Greek relics and did not block the acts of the British envoy. That’s why Prime Minister Boris said these antiques were acquired by Britain “legally”.

The Greek government believes that the Ottoman Empire is an invader, who enslaved the Greek people so the regime had no right to represent the will of the Greek people at that time.

How can it have the right to give Greek historical antiques to a third party?! But I don’t think the Greek government should expect too much from the Britain. The UK will not return these antiques to them. Although donation and purchase were important sources of antiques in the early British period, robbery and theft were still the main means for the British Museum to become a behemoth. Ms. Lina Mendoni, the Greek Minister of culture, said that “Britain still has the ruling ideology of outdated colonial views”. Even though it is 2021 now, Britain still treats the world as a colonist. The British government and its media are still blatantly interfering in China’s internal affairs, accusing and slandering China. I think whether the issues of human rights or Hong Kong are just excuses. I don’t believe that any rational civilized person will remain indifferent facing the ironclad proof, but prejudice blinds their eyes. In short, the colonists cannot accept that the people colonized by them before have enjoyed a good life, especially when their own life is not so good now.

ACB Announces 15-Member Squad for T20 Series against Zimbabwe



The Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) on Sunday announced a 15-man squad for the upcoming three-match T20I series against Zimbabwe that will be played in Abu Dhabi. The first match of the series will be played on March 17.

On Sunday, Afghanistan won the second Test against Zimbabwe by six wickets and leveled the series 1-1. Afghanistan’s 15-man squad: Asghar Afghan (C), Rashid Khan, Mohammad Nabi, Rahmanullah Gurbaz (WK), Afsar Zazai (WK), Usman Ghani, Ibrahim Zadran, Hashmatullah Shahidi, Najib Zadran, Karim Janat, Sharafuddin Ashraf, Amir Hamza Hotak, Fazal Haq Farooqi, Naveen Ul Haq and Farid Malik.

Rashid’s Record in Sunday’s Match Rashid Khan, the Afghan cricket star, broke Australian cricketer Shane Warne’s record in Afghanistan’s second

test match against Zimbabwe in Abu Dhabi on Sunday, according to the Hindustan Times.

The spinner bowled a total of 17 maidens in the second innings, and due to his effort, Afghanistan has just been set a target of 108 runs to win the second Test, it said.

Rashid set a record as he bowled the greatest number of overs in a single Test in the 21st century. He surpassed Aussie spin legend Warne’s record of 98 overs in a Test match against South Africa in Cape Town.

Rashid ended up bowling 99.2 overs in the ongoing second Test against Zimbabwe at the Sheikh Zayed Cricket Stadium in Abu Dhabi.

This is also the biggest number of overs bowled by a bowler since 1998, when Muralitharan had bowled 113.5 overs against England at The Oval, the report said

Women's Economic Empowerment 'National Priority': Govt

Ministry of Finance officials at a conference aimed at women's economic empowerment held on Wednesday said that women's economic empowerment is one of the national priorities and that some programs and projects have been included in the country's national budget.

"We have 2.8 billion Afs (over \$36 million) available for women empowerment projects in our budget from Optional Funds and International Aid. Apart from this, another 300 million Afs has also been allocated for the recruitment of female teachers," said Nazir Kabiri, deputy minister for policy at the Ministry of Finance.

The funds that are provided by non-

governmental organizations and are outside of the national budget need to be aligned with national priorities, officials in the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Economy said.

"We should provide a right path for women's empowerment. We see that \$1 billion is not less money, it is close to the development budget," said the policy deputy minister of economy, Nabi Soroush.

The Ministry of Women Affairs is the implementing agency of the women's economic empowerment program. The ministry says this event is aimed at initiating a roadmap for achieving the goals of the program.

Hasina Sapai, minister of women affairs, said: "We will lay out the women's economic empowerment



roadmap in Afghanistan."

Rula Ghani, the first lady of Afghanistan, participated in the event and said: "Afghan businesswomen financially support their families amid challenges by accepting risks on their way forward."

Meanwhile, figures from the Ministry

of the Economy show that women's participation in business activities has decreased in the current solar year (1399).

According to the figures, 53 percent of women's investments are in industry, 19% are in farming and less than 5% are in the service sector.

Ukraine Officials...

on Trade and Economic Cooperation and the achievement of a number of agreements on deepening economic cooperation between the two countries were noted.

During the meeting, the parties discussed the political and security situation in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the efforts of the Afghan authorities to promote intra-Afghan dialogue.

"Ukraine is closely monitoring the positive changes in Afghanistan. We share the Afghan party's commitment to deepening bilateral relations. The time has come to intensify political dialogue and organize further bilateral contacts at the highest level. We are serious about developing our trade and economic cooperation, restoring bilateral trade," Ihor Zhovkva stressed.

The Deputy Head of the Office of the Ukraine President noted the opportunities to increase the supply of Ukrainian agro-industrial products to Afghanistan, which can contribute to food security.

NDS Kills Key...

9:00 am this morning in the Chowk area in Qalat city. Taliban took the responsibility for the attack.

This comes despite peace efforts in Afghanistan, just recently Los Angeles times reported that Gen. Kenneth McKenzie said that the war in the country will intensify and the Taliban could threaten major cities unless the Biden administration does not push for an end to the conflict within the coming two months.

LA TIMES quoted Gen. McKenzie saying: "If we withdraw and no deal was made with the Taliban, I think the government of Afghanistan is going to be in for a very stiff fight to retain possession of towns and cities".

President Ashraf Ghani and General McKenzie had a meeting on Saturday in Kabul, both discussed the security situation, the peace process, and America's support to Afghan national defense and security forces.

The war in the country is so complex at a level that Interior Ministry spokesman Tariq Arian said that according to the Mol investigations, a private media outlet was involved in the transfer of explosives.

He added there are serious questions in this regard and that Mol is working to find the desired answer for it.

Arian did not provide any further details about the media outlet.

Leaving...

feminism, promoted by the unlikely trio of Bush, Cheney and Rumsfeld. Lately less of that. Instead, we get tired nostrums about 'reducing the level of violence.' Not to be a party pooper, but there will always be violence in Afghanistan. If we wait until perfect peace breaks out, we'll be there forever, which appears to be the plan.

Just how badly the democracy venture was a bust is instructive. 'Afghan officials have conspired for more than 15 years to both multiply and ignore election fraud,' wrote James Bovard recently. 'US tax dollars poured into the coffers of Afghanistan's Electoral Complaints Commission to safeguard voting. Alas — that agency was a prime source of the most brazen vote stealing.' Tangled up with all these prevarications about why we are in Afghanistan is the heroin trade. Since 2001 Afghanistan has led the world producing

opium, responsible for over 90 percent of the world's heroin. By 2017, according to Alfred McCoy in the Guardian a year later, Afghan opium production had reached 9000 tons. Money from the sale of that pays wages to Taliban fighters. McCoy explains how western intervention made Afghanistan 'the world's first true narco state.'

It's not too much of a stretch to say the Afghan struggle is a war for control of the country's opium profits. A teachable moment is provided by the case of one Afghan drug-kingpin, Haji Juma Khan who, targeted by federal prosecutors and the DEA, never went to trial. His lawyer noted evidentiary discussions of 'several law enforcement agencies from the United States approaching people in Afghanistan, including Mr. Khan, and requesting assistance... payments made, services requested', according to a 2018 article in the Intercept. Allegations of the CIA's enmeshment in Afghan

drug trafficking percolated thorough articles, reports and books in recent years. The US government investigated some of these claims. Suffice it to say, it would be shocking if the CIA were not involved in the Afghan heroin trade. It's simply too lucrative to resist. But even with the CIA's hand in this cookie jar, the Taliban appears to have that jar firmly in its grasp. Which means they have a steady source of income to finance their war indefinitely. The only question is when will Washington accept reality and either leave or admit that it intends to squander blood and treasure in Afghanistan ad infinitum? Or will the high council of ministers that Blinken hopes to convene somehow save the day? Chances are a much more prosaic course will prevail: the US military will stay and gloss over its plans. Democracy, peace, women's rights. Take your pick of these excuses. They all mean the same thing — endless war.

'Peace in Syria...

the peaceful settlement of residents: Euphrates Shield (2016), Olive Branch (2018), and Peace Spring (2019).

In its more than 35-year terror campaign against Turkey, the PKK -- listed as a terrorist organization by Turkey, the US, and the EU -- has been responsible for the deaths of nearly 40,000 people, including women, children, and infants. The YPG is the PKK's Syrian offshoot.

'3 options available to West' Erdogan stressed that the Western world has three options on the Syrian crisis: The first is "to watch from the sidelines as more innocent people lose their lives in Syria," while the second is "to take the military, economic and diplomatic measures necessary to develop a lasting solution."

The third one, he said, being the "most sensible option,"

is supporting Turkey and becoming part of the solution in Syria "at minimum cost and with maximum impact."

Erdogan added that Turkey specifically expects the West to clearly stand against the YPG/PKK terror group, which "plays into the hands of the Assad regime" and attacks safe zones where millions of displaced Syrian live.

"Moreover, we call on the Western nations to live up to their responsibilities to end the humanitarian crisis, as failure to share Turkey's burden may result in fresh waves of migration towards Europe," he added.

The Turkish president also called on the Western world to "invest" in safe zones within Syria and endorse the peace project, saying: "We must show the world that there is a democratic and prosperous alternative for Syria's future."

Turkey's efforts on diplomacy, humanitarian relief

"Turkey proved that it is the only country that can do what's necessary in Syria by leading humanitarian relief efforts, being on the front line against terrorist groups and actively participating in diplomatic processes," Erdogan also said. "The Joe Biden administration must stay true to its campaign pledges and work with us to end the tragedy in Syria and to defend democracy," Erdogan said, adding that the Turkish people are ready to support any initiative that will serve the interests of our Syrian neighbors Syria has been embroiled in a vicious civil war since early 2011, when the Bashar al-Assad regime cracked down on pro-democracy protests with unexpected ferocity. Turkey hosts some 3.6 million Syrian refugees, more than any other country in the world.

Taliban Meets...

Afghanistan will intensify sharply and Taliban militants could threaten major cities unless a Biden administration

diplomatic push to end the 20-year conflict yields results in the next two months. Quoted by the Los Angeles Times, the US general said: "If we withdraw

and no deal was made with the Taliban, I think the government of Afghanistan is going to be in for a very stiff fight to retain possession of towns and cities."

Exchange Rates

77.4	\$	77.5
92.7	€	92.8
106.7	£	106.8
483	Rp.	484
21.8	درا	21.9
1060	₹	1070

Contact Numbers

Kabul Police -119

Kabul Ambulance - 112

Wazir Akbar Khan Hospital

0202301360

Ata Turk Hospital

0202500312

Corona call center - 166



Aksos

اکسوس کتابپلورنٹی
Aksos Book Store



Add a Book
to
Your Life

- Dehbori Crossroads in front of Park Kabul
- 0798 98 9696, 020 250 46 52
- aksosbookstore@gmail.com
- www.aksosbookstore.af
- Aksos Book Store
- Aksos Book Store



WAYGAL Printing Co.

If You Can Think It,
We Can ink it.

OFFSET PRINTING

- Logo Design
- Business Card
- Books
- Latterheads
- Magazines
- Newspapers
- File Folders
- Brochure
- Flyers
- Calendars
- Posters
- other...

- +93 (0) 704 734 984
- +93 (0) 782 98 9696
- +93 (0) 202512626
- Dehbori Crossroads in Front of Park Kabul
- waygalprinting.co@gmail.com

Heart of Asia

Chief Editor: M. Hamid Hamdard

Reporters: Safiullah Nasary, Shafiq Amirzay,

Jawad Temori & Hameedullah Hamidi

Graphic & Design: Arman

Phone: +93-202502100 - +93-777989696

Website: www.heartofasia.af

Email: heartofasiadaily@gmail.com

Address: Behind Rahman Baba High School

- Opposite to 3rd District,

Kabul - Afghanistan

Print: Waygal Printing .Co - +93 - 202512626

Antony Blinken: No Military Solution to the Conflict in Yemen

The US secretary of state has told the UN special envoy for Yemen that Washington plans to “reinvigorate diplomatic efforts” to end the war in Yemen, reiterating the Biden administration’s stance that there is no military solution to the conflict.

“He [Antony Blinken] highlighted that the US supports a unified, stable Yemen free from foreign influence and that there is no military solution to the conflict,” State Department Spokesman Ned Price said in a statement on Sunday.

Tens of thousands of civilians have died and millions are facing hunger since Saudi Arabia led a coalition that intervened militarily months after Houthi rebels overthrew Yemen’s internationally recognised government in late 2014 and captured large parts of territories in the country’s north, including the capital Sanaa.

Rights groups have criticised Saudi Arabia for its six-year bombing campaign that has created what

the UN termed the world’s worst humanitarian crisis in the Middle East’s poorest nation. They also highlighted how US support to the Saudis helped aggravate the crisis.

US President Joe Biden ended US support for the Saudi-led offensive, in a break with the policies of his predecessor Donald Trump, who turned a blind eye to Riyadh’s human rights abuses in Yemen.

Since taking over in January, Biden has appointed Timothy Lenderking as US envoy for Yemen as his administration boosted diplomatic efforts to end a war that brought catastrophe for the Yemenis. The UN estimates that 80 percent of Yemen’s 24 million people are in need of aid.

Houthis welcome Blinken’s comments

In the introductory call with UN Special Envoy for Yemen Martin Griffiths on Sunday, Blinken expressed US concern regarding the conflict, particularly the humanitarian toll on ... **P3**



A look at the world

‘Peace in Syria Depends on Western Support to Turkey’

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan believes that re-establishing peace and stability in Syria depends on Western support to Ankara.

In a column titled The West should help Turkey end Syria’s Civil War for Bloomberg, Erdogan wrote that a peaceful and lasting solution will not be possible unless Syria’s territorial integrity and political unity are respected.

“On the 10th anniversary of the Syrian uprising, we should remember the hundreds of thousands of people killed and tortured, and the millions displaced - all because they demanded democracy, liberty and human rights,” he noted.

Erdogan stressed that Turkey rejects “any plan that does not address the Syrian people’s demand for human dignity,” as such options would only deepen the crisis.



“At the same time, we stress that a peaceful and lasting solution will be impossible in the absence of respect for Syria’s territorial integrity and political unity,” he added.

“Safe zones become islands of peace, stability” The Turkish president said safe zones in Syria, which Turkey created in cooperation with its local partners, are proof of Ankara’s commitment to the future of the war-torn country.

“These areas have become islands of peace and stability, as well as self-sustaining ecosystems. We have implemented basic programs to establish and train law enforcement; improve civilian infrastructure, including power and drinking water; and reopened schools and hospitals,” said Erdogan.

He went on to say that Ankara created safe zones in areas liberated from terrorist organizations, including the YPG/PKK and Daesh/ISIS, “patiently and decisively” to create “new hope” in Syria.

“By taking all these measures, Turkey has sheltered Europe from irregular migration and terrorism, and secured NATO’s southeastern border. Our actions, which reflect our values, support our claim that Turkey is the hope of oppressed peoples, the guardian of innocents, and the key to a solution,” Erdogan noted. Since 2016, Turkey has launched a trio of successful anti-terror operations across its border in northern Syria to enable ... **P3**

Netherlands Suspends Rollout of AstraZeneca Jab



Dutch health officials said that they had suspended the use of AstraZeneca’s coronavirus vaccine on Sunday for two weeks after ‘possible side effects’ were reported in Denmark and Norway.

‘Based on new information, the Dutch Medicines Authority has advised, as a precautionary measure and pending further investigation, to suspend the administration of the AstraZeneca vaccine,’ the health ministry said in a statement.

‘The crucial question is whether these are complaints after or because of the vaccination. There should be no doubt about the vaccines,’ health minister Hugo de Jonge said in the statement.

‘We still need to be careful, so it is wise to press the pause button now as a precaution,’ he added.

Countries including Norway and Denmark have already suspended their rollouts of the AstraZeneca vaccine because of concerns about blood clots.

No similar cases are currently known in the Netherlands, the ministry said, but it advised people who had received the vaccine to contact their doctor if they develop ‘unexpected and/or unknown’ symptoms after three days.

The World Health Organization said on Friday that there was ‘no reason not to use’ the vaccine developed by Swedish-British laboratory AstraZeneca and Oxford University. AstraZeneca said its vaccine was safe.

Saudi Arabia Begins Reforms for Foreign Employees

Saudi Arabia on Sunday began an initiative to improve contractual relationships to give foreign employees greater flexibility in their relationship with employers.

The reform effectively did away with the Kafala system, a common tool in Gulf countries for employers to monitor migrant laborers.

Last November, the Saudi Human Resources and Social Development Ministry announced a decision to improve the contractual relationship between workers and employers through a number



of policies, including abolishing the Kafala system.

The decision was scheduled to enter into force this Sunday.

The Saudi initiative allows foreign employees to exit, return, and move from one job to another without the need for employers’ approval.

The initiative defines the mechanisms of transition during the duration of the contract, provided that the notice period and the specified controls are adhered to.

The initiative encompasses all expatriate workers in the private sector under specific conditions that take into account the rights of both the employer and the employee.

Official estimates show that the unemployment rate among Saudis during the third quarter of 2020 reached 14.9%.

According to the Labor Ministry, the oil-rich kingdom seeks to enhance its private sector and make it more competitive internationally and attract foreign talent.

The initiative also seeks to reduce the disparity in contractual procedures between Saudi and expatriate workers by boosting employment opportunities for citizens in the labor market.



Shigal
English Academy

AMERICAN
ENGLISH FILE



Western Street of
Kabul University Close to
Dehbori Park.



+93 (0) 789 98 9696



shigal.edu@gmail.com



Shigal English Academy