

War Heroes or Murderers?

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Long-awaited Badakhshan Power Plant Switched on in Test Phase



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Heart of Asia

Your Gateway to Afghanistan & the Region

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President Ghani Says Afghans Will Not Bow to Force

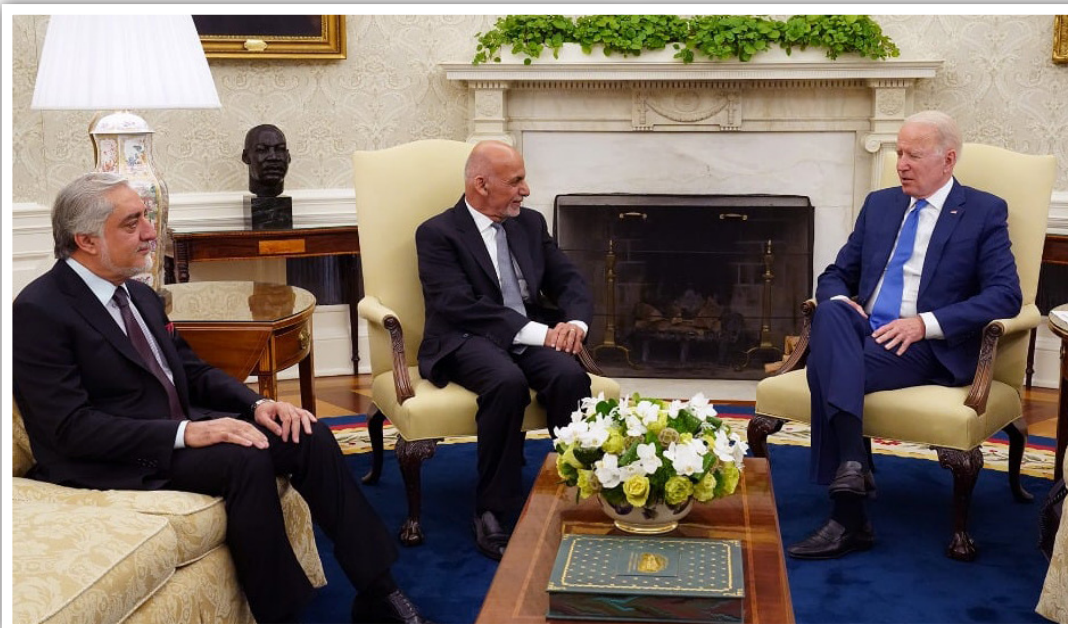
Abdullah meanwhile says the Afghan Republic will not stop talks with the Taliban unless the group shuts the doors for negotiations. President Ashraf Ghani on Friday said that Afghans will not be compelled to submission by force and that the Taliban should agree to a ceasefire and enter a political process. Addressing a press conference following his meetings with US President Joe Biden, US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other American officials and lawmakers, Ghani said that the Afghan forces are prepared to ensure the country's security and that he respects the decision by the United States to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan. "Force... P2



COVID-19: 1,095 New Cases, 56 Deaths Reported in Afghanistan

The Public Health Ministry also reported 56 deaths and 300 recoveries from COVID-19 in the same period. The Ministry of Public Health on Saturday reported 1,095 new positive cases of COVID-19 out of 3,840 samples tested in the last 24 hours. The ministry also reported 56 deaths and 300 recoveries from COVID-19 in the same period. The deaths were reported in Kabul (27), Balkh (2), Kandahar (1), Takhar (1), Kunduz (2), Faryab (3), Helmand (2), Paktia (2), Nimroz (2), Kapisa (1), Ghazni (2), Panjshir (3), Daikundi (1), Zabul (1), Ghor (1), Khost (1) and Samangan (1) provinces. The new cases were reported in Kabul (166), Herat (4), Kandahar (30), Balkh (43), Nangarhar (36), Takhar (57), Faryab (68), Maidan Wardak (36), Parwan (28), Helmand (28), Bamiyan (128), Badakhshan (58), Kapisa (35), Logar (22), Laghman (61), Daikundi (17), Zabul (44), Ghor (61), Farah (67), Sar-e-Pul (4), Nuristan (4) and Samangan (44) provinces... P3

Biden Vows 'Sustained' Partnership as He Meets Afghan Leaders



Biden promised the Afghan leaders a "sustained" partnership even as he moves to accelerate withdrawal from Afghanistan. President Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah, the chairman of the High Council for National Reconciliation, met with US President Joe Biden at the White House on Friday, a key meeting that happens amidst fragile security situation in the country as the international troops are leaving. In this meeting, Biden promised

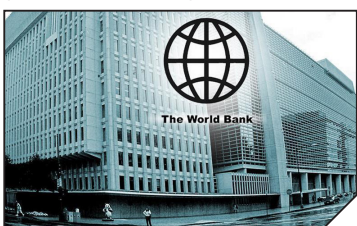
the Afghan leaders a "sustained" partnership even as he moves to accelerate winding down the US's longest war in Afghanistan. President Ghani and Chairman Abdullah also met at the Pentagon with US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin. While Biden vowed that the US was committed to assisting Afghanistan, he also insisted that it was time for the American military to step back, according to The Associated Press report. "Afghans are going to have to decide their future,"

Biden said in brief remarks at the start of his meeting with the Afghan leaders. He did not elaborate more about a "sustained" partnership with Afghanistan. Biden emphasized enduring United States support for the Afghan people, including Afghan women, girls, and minorities, through civilian, development, and humanitarian aid, as well as the continued provision of security assistance to support Afghan National Defense and Security Forces.

He expressed his concern about the recent increase in COVID-19 cases in Afghanistan, and noted additional emergency US assistance, including three million doses of vaccines, to help the Afghan government respond to the pandemic, according to a White House statement. President Biden, President Ghani, and Chairman Abdullah concurred on the need for unity among Afghan leaders in support of peace and stability, and President Biden reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to fully support intra-Afghan negotiations, the statement said. The US and Afghan leaders firmly agreed that although US troops are leaving Afghanistan, the strong bilateral partnership will continue, the statement added. Abdullah Abdullah, head of the reconciliation council, said that US President Joe Biden in his meeting with the Afghan delegation stressed on Afghan unity, continued support and an end to "senseless violence" in Afghanistan. Abdullah said that Biden reassured them that American assistance will not end as the US prepares to end its military presence in Afghanistan. "We expressed our appreciation for US sacrifices and generous assistance over the years, discussed... P3

New Grant to Sustain Afghanistan's Reforms Toward COVID-19 Recovery

The World Bank Board of Executive Directors on Saturday approved a \$132 million grant from the International Development Association (IDA) to help Afghanistan continue implementing critical reforms to improve public spending and fiscal transparency, strengthen governance, and mobilize private investment toward economic recovery. The 2021 Incentive Program Development Policy Grant aligns with the government's priorities under the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework II (ANPDF II). It complements a \$300 million grant from the Afghanistan... P3



50-60 Percent Of All COVID-19 Cases Of Delta Variant: MoPH

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) on Saturday said that the capacity to detect the delta variant of the coronavirus has been developed by in-house specialists in the ministry's central laboratories. Acting Minister of Health, Vahid Majrooh, told a news conference at the government's media center that currently 55-60 percent of coronavirus positive cases are of the delta-type variant. Majrooh also said that the delta type of coronavirus is spreading rapidly and widely in the country and one of the reasons for the increase in the number of positive coronavirus cases and the deterioration of the situation is the circulation of this type of coronavirus. He said that two days ago, 19 samples of suspected cases were tested in the central laboratories of the Ministry of Public Health, of which 11 samples were detected as delta and eight



samples were detected as alpha UK type virus. The capacity to detect the UK variant of the coronavirus was previously established in the central laboratories of the Ministry of Public Health. This comes even as the MoPH recorded 1,095 new positive coronavirus (COVID-19) cases and 56 deaths in the past 24 hours. The total cases now stand at 114,220, while the number of deaths is 4,650. On the other hand, the acting Minister of Public Health said that the process of testing

suspected cases of coronavirus is a long process, but recently Afghan experts have shortened the process by eliminating two steps. Majrooh said that the steps of transferring samples in VTM tools from one province to another and extraction kits have been removed from the process of testing samples suspected of having the coronavirus. He argued that equipment and consumables were scarce and expensive in these two stages. Also, Majrooh... P3

President Ghani...

is not a way to compel an Afghan to submission. We still call on them to have a ceasefire and to engage in a political process because a political settlement is the ultimate mechanism of ending a war. As Lincoln said the best way of treating an enemy to turn him into a friend," he said. Ghani said that a new chapter has been opened in Kabul-Washington relations following the announcement of the withdrawal of troops from the country. "We respect this decision," Ghani said. "It is dealing with a new chapter of our friendship; our strategic relationship and our people-to-people relationship and government to government relationship that we have focused on," he added. Meanwhile, Abdullah Abdullah, Chairman of the High Council for National Reconciliation who accompanied President Ghani in his trip to the US, said the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan will not stop talks with the Taliban unless the group shuts the doors for negotiations. "The absolute majority of the people of Afghanistan, they want a peaceful settlement, inclusive peaceful settlement," Abdullah said in an interview with Reuters. "Without it, what is the scenario? Continue fighting forever? That's not a solution." He added: "There was perhaps some optimism when negotiations started during the Trump administration that Taliban may be willing because they had shown those signs that had created an optimism." This comes as Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan in an interview with The New York Times has said that his country will not take military action against the Taliban if they carry out a full military takeover of Afghanistan. Violence remains high in the country amidst stalled peace negotiations. Several districts are contested between the Afghan forces and the Taliban, and many are retaken by security forces or fall to the group every day.

By: Graham Hryce

War Heroes or Murderers?

Damning and sickening revelations about the conduct of Aussie troops in Afghanistan just keep mounting.

The sensational libel trial involving a much-decorated SAS trooper whom newspapers have accused of illegally killing six Afghani men is uncovering disturbing accusations of horrific war crimes.

The Ben Roberts-Smith defamation case resumed in Sydney this week, and it continues to cast a critical light on the conduct of Australian troops during their deployment in Afghanistan.

Roberts-Smith's lengthy cross-examination by Nicholas Owens, counsel for the three newspapers that the war hero is suing, was very revealing.

The newspapers' case is that Roberts-Smith committed six gruesome murders while serving with Australian SAS forces in Afghanistan, and then engaged in a range of other improper conduct designed to cover up these murders.

The highlights (or perhaps lowlights, depending on one's point of view) of Owens' gruelling cross-examination of the plaintiff included the following: Roberts-Smith denied that Australian troops had planted evidence on the bodies of killed Afghans in order to cover up the fact that they had been murdered – a practice apparently known as "throwdowns". He admitted, however, that he had heard that other Western troops engaged in this practice.

He denied that he had machine-gunned to death an unarmed Afghani captive, who had a prosthetic leg, after he had surrendered. The prosthetic leg was the infamous trophy later used as a drinking vessel by Australian troops. Roberts-Smith said that the Afghani was armed and that he had killed him with two rounds.

He denied killing an unarmed farmer, whose hands had been handcuffed behind him, by kicking him over a cliff and ordering another soldier to kill him. "It didn't happen... That is completely false," he said.

He denied that he took part in the killing of an unarmed detainee by a young



Australian soldier in order to "blood the rookie". Interestingly, Owens said that the defendants would be calling the Assistant Minister for Defence, Andrew Hastie, to give evidence in relation to this incident. Hastie is a former SAS officer who was present when this killing allegedly occurred.

He denied killing an old Afghani man who had been captured in a tunnel.

He denied falsifying official military reports in order to cover up his unlawful actions in Afghanistan.

He denied bullying and assaulting former SAS colleagues in Afghanistan who knew that he had committed unlawful killings.

He denied saying to one former SAS colleague "watch your back...(or you will) ...cop a bullet in your head".

He denied sending an anonymous threatening letter to a former SAS colleague in order to stop him giving evidence critical about Roberts-Smith to an inquiry.

He denied threatening a former SAS colleague in order to prevent him from giving evidence against him in his defamation action.

He denied pressuring other SAS colleagues into giving false evidence for him.

He admitted destroying a laptop in 2018 by setting fire to it and "wiping" another laptop, but denied that he had done this in order to destroy incriminating evidence.

He denied "imperilling national security" by keeping classified surveillance footage and mission reports from Afghanistan on his computer, but admitted that doing so was "a poor decision".

All in all it was a rather difficult week for the Victoria Cross winner, who Owens accused of giving "deliberately false", "completely disingenuous" and "conflated" evidence.

While Roberts-Smith did not make any seriously damning admissions during cross-examination, and his expected denials are fine as far as they go, Owens nevertheless quite effectively built up a picture of gross misconduct and duplicity on the plaintiff's part.

It now remains to be seen whether the newspapers can prove that this picture is accurate – by way of admissible evidence.

Roberts-Smith's cross-examination has not yet concluded, and the outcome of this trial now appears likely to turn on whether the evidence to be led by the defendants is credible or not.

The newspapers propose to call 21 former SAS colleagues of Roberts-Smith and four Afghans to give detailed evidence in respect of the six murders allegedly committed by the war hero.

If their evidence is believed – and counsel for Roberts-Smith has already branded the soldiers who are to give evidence as bitter, jealous and

unreliable – then Roberts-Smith will lose. Much will depend on how these key witnesses perform under cross-examination. In order to succeed in their defence of truth – which is the only viable defence in this case – the newspapers do not have to prove that Roberts-Smith was guilty of all six alleged murders. A couple would probably suffice. The evidence to be given by Liberal MP Andrew Hastie will be of particular interest in this regard.

The incident that Hastie is said to have witnessed was particularly horrific, and if he gives an eyewitness account fixing Roberts-Smith with guilt, this will create a serious problem for the plaintiff. The defendants also propose to call Roberts-Smith's ex-wife – probably to give evidence in respect of the allegations of pressuring witnesses and destroying evidence. Roberts-Smith has foreshadowed calling former Defence Minister Brendan Nelson, who is now Director of the Australian War Memorial, to give evidence as to his good reputation prior to publication of the articles at the center of the case. Roberts-Smith's cross-examination will continue next week, and the defendants will then lead evidence from their witnesses.

The trial is expected to last for another six weeks, and it is certain to reveal more damning revelations about the conduct of Australian troops in Afghanistan before it finally concludes.

By: SETH J. FRANTZMAN

After US Afghanistan Withdrawal, will Pakistan, Iran and Turkey Take Over?

Each of the three are preparing for the day after the US leaves.

Moves by Turkey, Pakistan and Iran are afoot to fill the void left by the US as Washington draws down its last troops from Afghanistan after two decades of war there. The Taliban is advancing on various fronts and there are concerns that when America and its partner forces from other countries in NATO leave, instability and terror could spread.

Turkish media is boasting that Ankara may rush in to backfill the US withdrawal by taking over Kabul International Airport. But Turkey won't be sending more troops to secure the airport, Ankara's media reports. It likely understands the crucial importance of controlling airports. For instance, Ankara has recent experience sending mercenaries to Libya and Syria, and also involving itself in Azerbaijan and northern Iraq. Turkey also has

experience with airports. In the 2000s a Turkish construction group helped modernize Erbil International Airport. Turkey's model for airport control and influence may be by watching how Iran used its role in the Baghdad, Damascus and Beirut airports to build up control for weapons trafficking and other activities. Iran and its network of militias and proxies play a key role at these airports in the region.

Turkey may want a hand in Kabul for reasons of its own desire. It has a close relationship with Pakistan and both countries have religious far-right leaders who are seeking to assert their power. Pakistan has long been accused of supporting the Taliban through its intelligence services and the Turkey-Pakistan relationship could lead to them partitioning Afghanistan or facilitating the Taliban taking over part of the country. Meanwhile, Iran

has its own interests in Afghanistan. It has long sought to target US forces there and eject the United States. It also has designs on a larger presence in Central Asia. This could dovetail with the Pakistan-Turkey plans, but it could also lead to some competition or flashpoints.

Iran ostensibly would like to protect the Shi'ite Hazzara minority in Afghanistan. Islamist extremists linked to Pakistan and ISIS, as well as the Taliban, have targeted Shi'ites in genocidal bombing attacks. These attacks spare no one, including attacks on girl's schools and children. Iran would not welcome more such attacks. But Tehran has flirted with Al Qaeda, hosting its members, and other extremist groups in the past. How this fits in with Turkey's goals and Pakistan's goals is as yet not entirely clear. What is clear by reading the press accounts is that each country has its own policy and

is preparing for the day after the US leaves. Even when it does leave, there will still be hundreds of American personnel in Afghanistan. Around 650 troops will stay, according to reports. The Taliban says it has a "right" to react if the troops remain. Basically, the Taliban appears to be dictating terms to the US now, a major reversal from 2002 when the US helped crush the Islamist movement.

Evidence that Iran and Pakistan may work together can be found at a Press TV article highlighting how Islamabad will no longer permit US bases in the country. In recent interviews, key Pakistani officials have indicated how they are growing closer to China and have voiced antisemitic claims.

Iran also has a new 25-year deal with China. Iran's goal though will be to increase trade with Pakistan and China, and instability in Afghanistan would not help achieve that. This means that insofar as Pakistan supports the Taliban, the goal will be to ease their conquest of the country. Turkey moving into the airport could

fit into that design as well. Afghan leader Ashraf Ghani was in Washington to meet with US President Joe Biden late last week. He compared Afghanistan's current predicament to an 1861 moment of the US Civil War. "The senseless violence has to stop, but it's going to be very difficult," the president said. "But we're going to stick with you and we're going to do our best to see to it you have the tools you need." The comparison to 1861 is an indication that the Afghan leadership wants to mobilize the country to stop the Taliban offensive. However they may find that Iran, Pakistan, Turkey and other countries have other plans. It remains to be seen where those countries will position themselves and whether Afghanistan falls to extremists and becomes a base of terror or whether stability can be maintained and the Taliban offensive checked. Considering the religious extremist nature of the governments in Ankara, Tehran and Islamabad, things do not bode well.

Long-awaited Badakhshan Power Plant Switched on in Test Phase

Five years after construction started on the Shorabak hydroelectric power plant in Badakhshan province, work has been completed and the plant will soon start feeding Fayzabad, the provincial capital, with much needed electricity.

According to officials, the power plant was switched on two days ago in its test phase.

Nizamuddin Khapalwak, spokesman for National Water Regulatory Authority, said the dam was built with Germany's help and cost 45 million euros.

According to him, the dam has three turbines and a production capacity of 7.5 megawatts and will provide electricity to 25,000 families in

Fayzabad.

The construction of the Shorabak Dam was one of the commitments of the government to the nation.

Meanwhile, two days ago, the National Water Regulatory Authority of Afghanistan said that construction work on the Shah wa Arus Dam in Shakardara district of Kabul province has been completed.

Shah wa Arus Dam is another key dam project and once in operation will have the capacity to generate 1.2 megawatts of electricity, irrigate 2,700 hectares of land, regulate 33 million cubic meters of water annually and will store nine million cubic meters of water.



Biden Vows...

key issues and stressed on a negotiated political settlement to end the war, enhance stability and allow the Afghan people to determine their own future," Abdullah said. Ahead of his meeting with Biden, President Ghani met with US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. "As we enter a new phase of that relationship, we look forward to hearing from you how we can do so with humanitarian assistance," Pelosi said in a press briefing with Ghani. "We look forward to having a conversation about how we strengthen our relationship through humanitarian assistance," Pelosi said. "Our friendship is one that is deep and personal, and one that we value. Again, this visit that you are making to the Capitol is an important one for both of our countries, certainly for us." Ghani said that the decision of President Biden has been a strategic decision and that "we respect it." "It is dealing with a new chapter of our friendship; our strategic relationship and our people to people relationship and government to government relationship that we have focused on," Ghani said. Addressing a news conference after the Oval Office meeting, Ghani said that the talks with Biden were productive. He pointed to an increase in Afghans signing up for the military as a sign of hope. But he also acknowledged the difficulty that lies ahead. He said that the decision by President Biden is not the abandonment of Afghanistan, but it is a new chapter in Kabul-Washington ties. "There have been reverses, we acknowledge it — but the key now is stabilization," he added. In a meeting with Afghan leaders, US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said the United States remains committed to continuing to provide critical security assistance to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces.

"I am confident that as Resolute Support begins to wind down, we will make the transition to a new relationship with Afghanistan and the Afghan forces, one that continues to help you meet your responsibilities to your citizens, and we will remain partners with the Afghan government and the Afghan military, and we will continue to work toward our common goal in -- in new and different ways," he said.

COVID-19...

So far Afghanistan has recorded 114,220 cases of COVID-19, 4,650 deaths and 67,483 recoveries, according to data provided by the Ministry of Public Health.

The data shows that so far, 592,610 samples have been tested for COVID-19 and there are 41,442 active cases of the virus in the country.

According to the ministry, the COVID-19 positivity rate in the

county is 33%. Figures by Johns Hopkins University show that the number of deaths from COVID-19 globally is more than 3,910,311 and the number of known global coronavirus cases is 180,447,976.

New Grant...

Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), a multi-donor trust fund managed by the World Bank on behalf of 34 donors. "It reaffirms the World Bank's strong commitment to helping the Afghan people recover and build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic," said Henry Kerali, World Bank Country Director for Afghanistan. "In these difficult times, the World Bank stands ready to work closely with the government of Afghanistan to maintain its reform momentum and sustain its progress toward inclusive growth and self-reliance."

Amid political uncertainty, the COVID-19 pandemic has severely impacted Afghanistan's economy, public finances, and social development outcomes. In 2020, the Afghan economy shrank by around 2 percent as lockdowns drove significant job losses, especially for informal and service workers. In recent months, poverty has likely increased further because of worsening droughts and difficult economic conditions, compounded by intensifying insecurity and political uncertainties. In fact, in response to a recent surge in COVID cases in Afghanistan, the

United States will donate three million doses of Johnson and Johnson vaccine to the people of Afghanistan through COVAX. COVAX is working to ship those doses to Afghanistan. In fact, a press videographer who was traveling with President Ashraf Ghani's delegation tested positive for COVID-19, according to a notification released by Congress's Office of Attending Physician on Friday. Several members of the high-level delegation, including Foreign Minister Hanif Atmar and negotiating team member Matin Bek, were exposed to the infected person and hence, avoided meeting the Presidents.

50-60 Percent...

said that people still do not follow the health instructions properly and hotels are open in some provinces. Majrooh said that the effects of quarantine and restrictions on the activities of some guilds and the blocking of universities and schools are seen, but the restrictions in cities are not well managed. He added that the situation would be better if the quarantine

situation is managed properly. However, Majrooh said the Ministry of Public Health is "under intense pressure" from various sections of society to reopen private schools and universities. Majrooh added that the Ministry of Public Health has to prepare a plan to determine the fate of private schools and universities. According to him, a national committee will be formed within the ministry

today to work in this field. The committee said that starting today, the committee will work with officials from the Ministries of Education, Higher Education, the Higher Directorate of Technical and Vocational Education, and the Association of Private Schools and Universities to prepare a mechanism for reopening schools and universities with minimum precautions.

Pakistan Stays...

risks, and developing and using financial intelligence to build cases. However, he added, Pakistan is still failing to effectively implement the global standards across a number of areas. This means, he opined, the risks of money laundering remain high, which in turn can fuel corruption and organized crimes. "I want to thank the Pakistani government for its continued strong commitment to this process. And I know the authorities will continue to work to make the necessary changes," he maintained. Islamabad's steps

2018, when it was placed on its gray list for terrorist financing and money laundering risks after an assessment of the country's financial system and security mechanism. The South Asian nuclear nation has since thrice escaped being placed on the watchdog's financial crime blacklist with the support of Turkey, China and Malaysia. According to the FATF charter, a country must have the support of at least three member states to avoid blacklisting. In recent years, Islamabad has taken some major steps under the plan, which include strict checks on opening of new bank accounts, and ban on foreign currency transactions without a national tax number and

currency changes of up to \$500 in the open currency market without the sides submitting a copy of their identification documents. In addition to that, Pakistan has also proscribed several militant groups and seized their assets, including Jamaat ud Dawah, and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) – the groups blamed for several terrorist attacks such as the 2009 deadly Mumbai attacks killing over 150 people. Last year, an anti-terrorism court sentenced Hafiz Mohammad Saeed, the chief of the Jamaat ud Dawah (JuD), to 11 years in jail in two terror-financing cases – a development widely seen as an attempt to woo FATF members.

Heart of Asia

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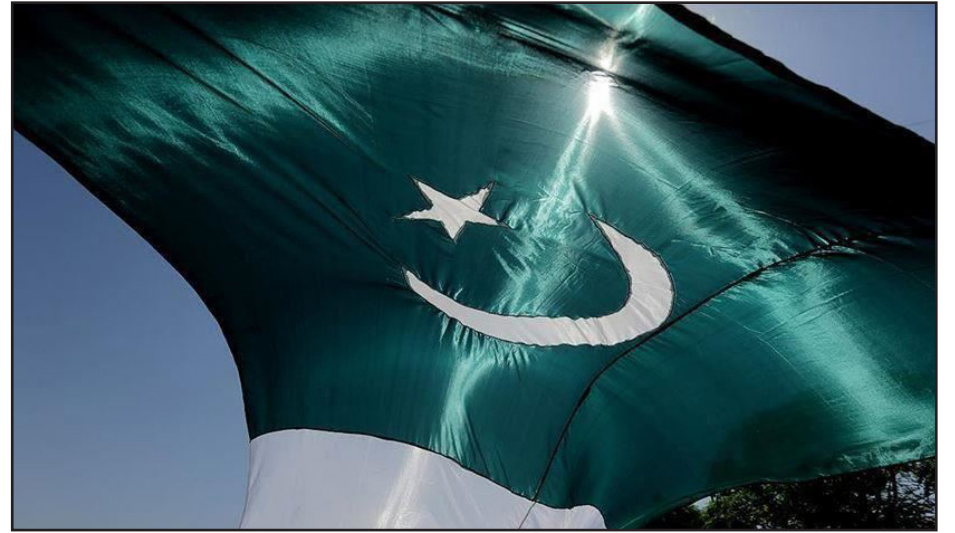
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Pakistan Stays on Global Watchdog FATF's Gray List

Money laundering watchdog lauds Islamabad for making 'significant' progress on 26 points of its 27-point agenda. Pakistan will continue to stay on the gray list of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the global money-laundering watchdog announced on Friday. Announcing the decision after a five-day virtual plenary session, FATF President Marcus Pleyer said that Islamabad has made "significant" progress on 26 points of the watchdog's 27-point action plan for the South Asian nuclear Muslim country. However, he added one "key issue" of the action plan still needs to be completed, which is about the investigation and prosecution of senior leaders of the UN-designated terror groups. This is the third extension given to Islamabad

since 2018. However, contrary to the past practice, no time period has been given this time. Previously, Islamabad was placed on the gray list for six months. "Pakistan's continued political commitment has led to significant progress," Pleyer said. The FATF, he added, encourages Pakistan to continue to make progress to address as soon as possible the one remaining item. The watchdog, he went on to say, recognizes Pakistan's progress and efforts to address the action plan. Since February 2021, he noted, Pakistan has made progress to complete two of the three remaining action items. He said since February 2019, Pakistan has made significant improvements in raising awareness in the private sector about Pakistan's money-laundering... **P3**



A look at the world

FDA Adds Heart Inflammation Warning to Moderna, Pfizer Vaccines

Warning update follows an extensive review of information and discussion by CDC's Advisory Committee. The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has added a warning about the risk of heart inflammation to fact sheets for Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccines. The warning on Friday noted that reports of adverse events following vaccination – particularly after the second



dose – suggest increased risks of myocarditis, or inflammation of the heart muscle, and pericarditis, or inflammation of the tissue surrounding the heart. The warning update follows an extensive review of information and discussion by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC's) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices meeting on Wednesday, the FDA said. At end of the second week of June, more than 1,200 cases of myocarditis or pericarditis have been reported to the US Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System. The cases reportedly appear to be notably higher in males and in the week after the second vaccine dose. There has been no comment from Pfizer and Moderna yet.

Russian Envoy Hopes for Iran's Positive Response Over Nuclear Monitoring Agreement

The head of the Russian delegation to talks on resuming Iranian nuclear deal, Russia's Permanent Representative to International Organizations in Vienna Mikhail Ulyanov, hopes that Iran would answer positively to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)'s initiative to extend a technical agreement on monitoring Iranian nuclear facilities. "The IAEA hasn't yet received a



confirmation from Iran that temporary understandings on verification will continue to work. Hopefully the positive answer will follow soon. It would allow to avoid uncertainties which can have unjustifiable long-lasting negative effects," the Russian diplomat said in a Twitter post on Friday. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said on Friday it had not yet received Iran's response on extending the temporary technical agreement and called upon Tehran

to immediately respond on the matter, Reuters reported. Earlier, the agreement paved the way for in-person talks in Vienna aimed at fully restoring the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on Iran's nuclear program. The talks on the issue, which are under way in Vienna, have been successful so far and are nearing completion. In late May, the

IAEA and Iran reached an agreement about extending by three months the deal about technical monitoring of Iranian nuclear facilities, which expired on May 23. The initial agreement on the issue was reached on February 23 after Iran enacted a new law to suspend the additional protocol to the safeguards agreement with the IAEA. Tehran said all data would be erased from the cameras upon the expiration of a three-month deadline if the United States failed to lift the sanctions from Iran.

GAAC is having the honor and privilege to have distributed food rations to 500 families who are displaced due to ongoing conflicts in Ghazni, Bamyan, and Maidan Wardak provinces under leadership of Mustafa Shahab, Deputy Director of German Aid for Afghan Children. These people are destitute and living in abject poverty. GAAC is extending its gratitude to Dr. Reinhard Eros and his family for their donation coming as a benevolent gesture to the people during their harshest days of their lives.

In the recent years, west of the capital, Kabul, has witnessed an influx of migrants coming provinces in search of peace and security. With remorse, the number of migrants climbs up every day. In such a plight, any drop of assistance can be life saving. GAAC has it incumbent on itself to reach out the hapless people and carrying out its humanitarian duty with assistance of local and international philanthropists.

Other areas where GAAC is present are construction and medicine.

In pursuit of its vision the staff along with the leadership works indefatigably for the welfare of people of Afghanistan. Thousands of people have been helped with hygiene kits and food packages since the spread of Covid-19.



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