

Page 2 | NATIONAL Women's rights hang in the balance in Afghanistan — along with its chance for peace

The U.S. Government Should Be Supporting International Law—Not Undermining It

It's a sad day when the U.S. government openly assails the international law it helped to create. But that day came on ...

Page 2 | NATIONAL

Page 3 | ECONOMY

Kabul to host largest Iran's energy exhibition: TPOI chief



Kabul 25 / 9







Nangarhar 35 / 20





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10 afs



Abdullah Updates Foreign Envoys On **Progress of Peace** Talks in Doha

Abdullah Abdullah, Chairman of the High Council for National Reconciliation, spoke to ambassadors of various countries and international organisations in an online discussion coordinated with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) on Monday.

In a statement released by his press office, Abdullah spoke to ambassadors from Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, U.K. and U.S, along with NATO and European Union (EU) envoys.

"I shared my views on the initial steps taken during and since the Doha intra-Afghan peace process," Abdullah said. He explained that with the beginning of the talks "hopes for peace and stability have increased in the country."





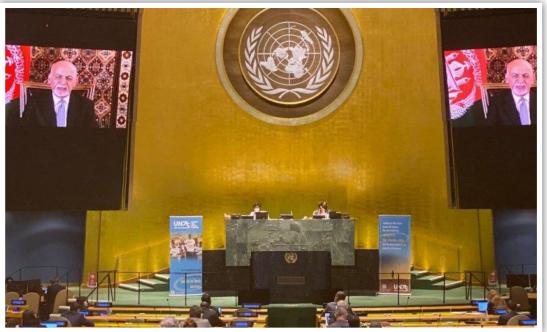
Iran: U.S. Has Not Played a Positive Role in Afghanistan, Simply **Wants to Get Out**

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said that Iran has always been a participant in peace efforts in Afghanistan, however, Iran believes there are major flaws in the U.S.-led peace process in Afghanistan.

Speaking virtually with interviewer Fareed Zakaria for the Council on Foreign Relations, a U.S. based independent thinktank, in a discussion posted on September 21st, Zarif said that Iran played a constructive role in getting the current democratic government in Afghanistan.

"Iran has always been a participant in any peace effort from the Bonn conference in 2001 where Iran played a leading role in getting the current government in place in Afghanistan to all regional attempts--we believe that there are major flaws in the attempt by the United States in the ...

President Ghani in UN Speech Reiterates Call for Ceasefire



President Ashraf Ghani delivered a statement on Monday night at the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the UN, underscoring the important role of multilateralism, and particularly the UN, in addressing the challenges that continue to impact Afghanistan and the world. "The United Nations that we need is an organization with the

authorities, capabilities, capitals, and

commitments to fulfill the purposes

and principles of this charter," Ghani

The Afghan president called on the international community to help the Afghan people achieve the end state of a sovereign, united and democratic Afghanistan.

"I would like to take this opportunity to call on every member of the GA and the P5 to help us achieve the end state of a sovereign, united and democratic Afghanistan, at peace with itself and

the region, capable of preserving and expanding the gains of the last 19 years."

On the importance of the ceasefire, Ghani said: "Though we are facing multiple drivers of turmoil all at once in Afghanistan, there is a clear and urgent priority for us: a ceasefire. An urgent end to the violence will, more than anything else, give us a chance to progress."

President Ghani also highlighted

Afghanistan's geopolitical importance and said: "Afghanistan is a country positioned right at the heart of Asia, right at the heart of untapped potential that could bring prosperity and peace to our region. But this means that we are also right in the middle of the turmoil that is affecting us all today."

Ghani's address to the UN comes as the peace negotiating team representing the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan meets with Taliban negotiators in Doha, Qatar to help find a political settlement to the deadly conflict in the country.

Although the Doha talks have brought new hopes among Afghans for a negotiated settlement of the conflict, civilian casualties remain high in the country amid ongoing Taliban

War continues to take Afghan lives Statistics by the Ministry of Interior Affairs indicate that at least 98 civilians were killed and 230 others were wounded in Taliban attacks in 24 provinces in the last two weeks as violence increases in the country amid the ongoing peace efforts.

"The Taliban has inflicted the casualties on our countrymen in 24 provinces and the most casualties have been in Takhar and Nangarhar provinces," said Tariq Arian, ... P3

Mol: 3,500 Civilians 'Killed and Wounded' In Last 6 Months by Taliban

The Ministry of Interior (MoI) said on Tuesday, that in the past six months, Taliban attacks have killed and injured nearly 3,500 civilians in Afghanistan.

Mol spokesperson Tariq Arian said that the Taliban had carried out nearly 7,000 offensive attacks in the same time period.

He also said that 1,140 Taliban-planted mines and bombs had exploded in the past six months, while over 10,000 explosives had been seized by Afghan security forces.

The forces of the MoI had also discovered and defused, or safely detonated, over 1,300 bombs planted by the Taliban during this ...



China to Construct 1,400 **Housing Units in Kabul**

The Ministry of Urban Development and Land on Tuesday said China would construct a residential township worth \$71 million in Darul Aman area of Kabul city under an agreement.

In a statement, the ministry said it signed the first phase agreement of the township with the project implementing company in the presence of President Ashraf Ghani at the Presidential Palace.

"The launch of the first phase of the project with financial support of China is one of the most important joint and bilateral projects of the two countries, which will begin in Kabul", the statement said.

It added construction work on the project would be completed within 40 months and the residential scheme will be spread over 21 hectors of land in Darul Aman area. The first phase of the township would include 56 residential blocks



consisting of 1,400 residential units. The ministry said 280 units each will have four rooms, 560 three rooms and the rest 560 will have two rooms. The statement further said after completion of the first phase of the project, residential units will be distributed to civil servants and the project launch will solve homelessness of Kabul citizens.

significant changes in economic life of people and enable the private sector and donor institutions to invest in similar schemes.

According to the Ministry of Urban Development, the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Afghanistan and China on construction of 10,000 houses in Afghanistan was signed on The project would bring about November 3, 2015.

Abdullah Updates...

pursuing a "durable and dignified peace."

"We collectively stressed on reduction of violence across the country," Abdullah recounted. All ambassadors emphasized the end of war and violence in the country by welcoming and supporting the start of the peace

negotiations. However, Saudi Arabia has voiced stout support for the reconciliation process and efforts to achieve stability in

In Riyadh, he Foreign Ministry said the Saudi government had followed up on reconciliation between Kabul and the Taliban. A statement from the ministry said the kingdom supported the reconciliation process and everything that reduce violence in Afghanistan.

It added: "The kingdom was and is still with Afghanistan and the Afghan people to fulfill all of their hopes and aspirations." Meanwhile, Afghan Ambassador in Riyadh Ahmad Jawid Mujadidi thanked the government of Saudi Arabia for supporting the Afghan peace process.

Mol: 3,500...

time period.

Last week, the First Deputy Minister of Defense Shahmahmood Miakhel said that the Afghan army had defused 4,776 IEDs in the past six months placed by the Taliban along public roads, residential areas and highways.

In the opening ceremony of the peace talks in Doha, Abdullah Abdullah, chairman of the High Council for National Reconciliation, had said that over 12,000 Afghans had been killed and 15,000 had been wounded since the end of February 2020, when the U.S. and Taliban signed the peace

By Murray Brewster

Women's rights hang in the balance in Afghanistan — along with its chance for peace

When the grizzled leaders of the Afghan government sat across a table for the first time from the equally hard-bitten commanders of the Taliban last week, there was air of collegiality no one was expecting.

Those observing the moment recognized that the two sides saw — perhaps to their own surprise — how much

"I think there was a collective sense or recognition of, 'We actually are all Afghans and we have so much in common at the end of the day," said Andrew Watkins, a senior analyst with the International Crisis Group.

The ease with which the two sides referred to "the same idioms" and to one another, he said, demonstrated that these old enemies are close to being on the "same cultural wavelength.

But Watkins also warned that no one should read too much into this early atmosphere of cooperation especially since it played out against a backdrop of violence that saw dozens killed Thursday in clashes in three of the war-torn country's eastern districts.

What unfolded in the talks between the two sides in Doha, Qatar this week is about as far removed from Canadians' political consciousness as you can get in this age of coronavirus, eye-popping deficits, charity scandals and election threats.

That's not surprising, given how the political and social establishment of Ottawa checked out of Afghanistan long ago. But it's still curious.

Hanging in the balance at these talks is something that was supposed to be one of Canada's principal war aims during its time in the Afghan conflict, and one of the cherished foreign policy goals of the current Liberal government: gender equality.

It was the former Conservative government that made the war about, among other things, getting little girls to school and improving the lives of women in the wake of the Taliban's brutal, oppressive and misogynistic rule. The Liberals, meanwhile, have made gender a focus of their political and policy identity, stitching it into the fabric of the federal government and building it into $their approach \, to \, everything \, from \, cabinet \, composition$ to trade deals.

Tying aid to human rights

Other western nations that have shed blood for the same aim have lined up to lay down some serious markers for the Afghans.

While the United States remains fixated on keeping Afghanistan al-Oaida and ISIS-free, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo warned that the breadth of U.S.



financial assistance in the future would depend upon the "choices and conduct" of Afghans, including their respect for the rights of women and minorities.

Foreign Affairs Minister François-Philippe Champagne's approach to the same question has been, perhaps surprisingly, more discreet.

He issued a statement last Sunday saying only that Canada stands willing to assist and that an "effective peace process will require the meaningful inclusion of all parts of Afghan society, including women, ethnic minorities and other marginalized groups."

It's not what you would expect from a government whose prime minister has declared himself a feminist. A very dangerous place to be a woman

The European Union, in contrast, issued a clear statement of "principles and conditionality of future aid" that Watkins said was predicated on the expectation that women's rights in Afghanistan would "be upheld, at the very least, to the standard they are

That may not be saying very much.

Much of Afghanistan has been transfixed over the last several weeks by an online video showing a woman being viciously beaten — not by a Taliban mullah but (allegedly) by the bodyguard of a former head of the country's intelligence agency.

It's fair to say women still face an uphill struggle in

Afghanistan, regardless of the outcome of the peace talks, said Watkins.

Even the head of Afghanistan's peace council, Abdullah Abdullah, has been timid. While nodding to diversity in his opening remarks, he said a week ago that even if the two sides could not agree on all points, they should

Taliban leader Mullah Baradar Akhund said that Afghanistan should "have an Islamic system in which all tribes and ethnicities of the country find themselves without any discrimination and live their lives in love and brotherhood."

Is Afghanistan changing?

What may have gone unnoticed prior to the conference is how the Taliban have compromised already on women's rights, said Nipa Banerjee, a senior fellow and adjunct professor of international development at the University of Ottawa.

"Some of the things, like women's right to work, the Taliban have accepted already," said Banerjee, who ran Canada's aid and development programs in Afghanistan in the early part of the war.

"They said that the right to work will be acceptable, and the right to education. They don't have any objections. [Women] can even be in politics — but they cannot be the president."

of the process.

Banerjee said she remains guardedly ...

by BOB FLAX

The U.S. Government Should Be Supporting **International Law—Not Undermining It**

It's a sad day when the U.S. government openly assails the international law it helped to create. But that day came on September 2, 2020 when the U.S. government announced economic anctions against top officials of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The reason? The officials were engaged in an ICC investigation of possible war crimes committed during the long war in Afghanistan by representatives of all sides of the conflict, including U.S. military personnel and agencies.

The ICC was established by the United Nations in 1998. It has become the international community's recognized legal authority on the defense of human rights and is tasked with investigating and trying individuals accused of the gravest of crimes, including genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.

Unfortunately, after first signing the Rome Statute that established the Court, the United States has become one of just four signatories to subsequently withdraw under the George W. Bush administration

in 2002. The reason offered was that the US troops would be subject to international law—even though the ability of any country to prosecute foreign nationals who commit crimes on their sovereign soil is a well-established legal practice and the ICC treaty merely allows the ICC to carry out that prosecution.

An executive order earlier this year essentially declares anyone who works with the ICC a criminal, opening the way for lawyers, judges, researchers, and staff to have their bank accounts frozen, U.S. visas revoked, and travel to the U.S. denied. Even U.S. citizens risk sanctions if they "materially support" the ICC.

ICC chief prosecutor Fatou Bensouda — who has been investigating possible war crimes by all parties in the Afghanistan conflict-is now the first to face such sanctions, with the U.S. accusing her and the ICC of attempting "to subject Americans to its jurisdiction"-that is, for expecting the world's most powerful democracy to follow international

Human rights attorney Katherine Gallagher declared that the U.S. government's action against Bensouda was an "unprecedented" deployment of "sanctions against an international prosecutor seeking enforce international law Balkees Jarrah of Human Rights Watch called the move a "stunning perversion of U.S. sanctions, devised to penalize rights abusers and kleptocrats, to target those prosecuting war crimes."

What the ICC is looking at in Afghanistan is holding the Taliban accountable for many crimes and the US to account for its violations of international law that the US signed and ratified, including "serious abuses, particularly against people in custody."

The U.S. government has championed ICC investigations into abuses in Burma and Syria, and even recently used human rights as a cudgel against China, Iran, and North Korea. But when the investigators' eyes turned towards America, cooperation ends.

The United States can and should

do better.

Iran: U.S. Has...

recent process," said Zarif. Zarif said that the U.S's attempt to get out of Afghanistan is a good thing, but it should not be at the expense of the achievements and the democratic process in Afghanistan.

"I believe the United States engaged in all-out efforts to simply get out of Afghanistan which is good, but it should not be at the expense of the people of Afghanistan and at the expense of the democratic process in Afghanistan, at the expense of the achievements of the international community and the Afghan people over the past 20 years," Zarif said.

Zarif said that Iran strongly supports a political settlement in Afghanistan, however, he said that Iran remains pessimistic about the peace process led by the U.S.

"I think for the United States ... the ultimate objective was to simply find the way to leave Afghanistan, it did not have to impose all of that on Afghanistan and on the region, so we are very pessimistic...about the process that the United

participate in that process, but we support any and all intra-Afghan dialogue, we believe that should be...keeping with the democratic achievements of the people of Afghanistan with the participation of all parties including the Taliban," he said. Zarif stated that the Afghan peace process should be inclusive and all Afghan parties should be part

States led, that's why we did not

<u>P3</u>

"We do not believe that it should be ruled by one party, but it should be with the participation of all parties, we believe that the future of Afghanistan should be decided by all Afghans without foreign interference and regional countries should play a role in assisting, in facilitating, not dictating, I think the United States has not played a positive role, we indicate that since Dr. Khalilzad started his endeavors, we said that it was on (the) wrong footing, that it was not based on assumptions and the principles that would serve long term peace and stability in Afghanistan,"

Zarif said that Iran is closely watching the Doha peace talks.

Kabul to host largest Iran's energy exhibition: TPOI chief

technical and engineering services in the field of water, electricity and energy will be inaugurated in Afghanistan's capital today, said an official in Ministry of Industry, mine

Organization of Iran (TPOI) and Deputy of Industry Minister Hamid Zadboum made the announcement on Tuesday.

Referring to the importance of developing Iran's trade relations in the region as well as expanding non-oil exports, he said that based on this important issue, the first exhibition of Iran's technical and engineering services in the field of water, electricity and energy will be inaugurated in Kabul on Tuesday, September 22.



The opening ceremony of this specialized exhibition is set to be held today in Kabul in the presence of officials and businessmen from

both countries, he added. According to the coordination, 100 Iranian companies are scheduled

to introduce their capabilities in related fields in order to develop the export of technical and engineering services and related industries to Afghanistan, Zadboum said.

He went on to say that a 120-member delegation of Iranian businessmen in the field of energy and municipal services will have fruitful talks with the Afghan side during their four dav stav in Afghanistan.

Head of TPOI said that one of the goals of the exhibition is to develop urban diplomacy with Afghan cities.

President Ghani in...

spokesman for the Ministry of Interior Affairs.

The Taliban has rejected the figures provided by the

A security source told TOLOnews that an average of 30 security force members have been killed daily in Taliban attacks over the last two weeks.

Meanwhile, at least 50 security force members were killed in clashes over the last 24 hours.

Also on Monday, Ghani at an event for International Day of Peace said peace is possible only through a political settlement, and insisted that the government is making efforts to end the forty years of war in the country.

President Ghani said the Afghan government, by agreeing to a ceasefire two years ago, showed that it is possible to make a truce, and he called on the Taliban to end violence and agree to a ceasefire.

"What will you do a day after success? At least we should absorb 60,000 to 120,000 Talib fighters. We have plan for it. We are ready for it. We should embrace four to six million refugees," Ghani said.

Ghani's Second Vice President Mohammad Sarwar Danesh at the same event on International Day of Peace called on the Taliban to not disrupt unity among Afghans when it comes to a religious basis for the peace negotiations in

Sources have said that out of the three disputed issues in the talks between the Taliban and the Afghan negotiating team, one is the religious basis for the negotiations, which the Taliban is insisting be Hanafi jurisprudence.

"On behalf of the Shias of Afghanistan, I urge the Taliban not to make attempt to disrupt the friendship and unity among the people of Afghanistan," Danesh said, adding that Afghanistan's peace "belongs to everyone," not to any specific group.

Negotiators from the Islamic and Republic of Afghanistan and the Taliban are discussing 20-article rules and regulations for the peace negotiations. The two contact groups are expected to hold more meetings this week to finalize the procedure and then work on the agenda for

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China makes...

security, development and human rights in a balanced manner and give more emphasis to development on its global agenda, he added. Uphold multilateralism,

enhance cooperation

"During the 75 years of the UN, the world has seen rapid progress of the human society, profound changes in international situations and fast development of multilateralism," the Chinese president said.

China's He reiterated $commitment \, to \, multilateral is m$ and determination to safeguard the international system with the UN at its core.

As the international community strives to find solutions to problems faced by mankind, "multilateralism" has been a buzzword during the 75th session of the UN General Assembly that opened last

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged world leaders to work together at a time when there is a surplus of multilateral challenges and a deficit of solutions. "The future we want, the United Nations we need, is reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism is under way," he said.

Indeed, the need for more

- and more effective multilateralism is well known, he said, stressing that national sovereignty – a pillar of the Charter of the United Nations – goes hand in hand with enhanced international cooperation, based on common values and shared responsibilities for progress.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said the international community is becoming increasingly fragmented, adding that "this is largely attributable to the fact that some countries are meddling in the domestic affairs of other states and imposing unilateral sanctions."

"The world is tired of dividing lines, of separating states into friends and foes, and demands stepping up all-encompassing and inclusive mutual assistance and cooperation," he said.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said the interests of individual member states had "too often" forced the UN to lag behind its ideals.

"Those who believe that they can get along better alone are mistaken. Our well-being is something that we share our suffering too. We are one world," she told the General Assembly.

While customs and cultures may differ, cooperation requires unstinting efforts to overcome misunderstanding, and beyond that, to embrace respect, European Council President Charles Michel noted.

"It is not our rhetoric that will matter," he said, but rather, the collective actions taken to foster a better world.

The theme of this year's UN high-level sessions is "The Future We Want, the UN We Need: Reaffirming Our Collective Commitment to Multilateralism." It echoes Xi's consistent call to build a community with a shared future for mankind.

Meanwhile, 48 former UN and government officials from around the world released an open letter - "A Time for Renewal: Calling for a Strengthened Multilateral System" - last Friday, expressing their hope that the UN would be transformed into a "stronger, more accountable, inclusive multilateral system." "There is an urgent need for an explicit recognition by global leaders that we are at a turning point and must act decisively to defend and rejuvenate multilateralism," they said, stressing that recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic needs national leadership and effective global cooperation.

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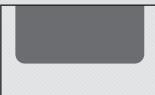
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Women's rights... optimistic and warned that

western nations need to show flexibility, because Afghanistan's future government will have some form of Taliban involvement. The West also needs to demonstrate patience, she said — especially when it comes to the issue of gender equality.

In Bangladesh, the introduction of women's rights into rural regions (not dissimilar to Afghanistan's hinterlands) has been handled subtly and with finesse, she said.

When western development

groups arrive in Bangladeshi villages, she said, "they don't talk about feminist principles and the fundamentals of women's rights." They introduce the concept into the conversation slowly, she said, rather than hitting local patriarchs over the head with values that they'll see as being imposed by foreigners. Perhaps that is what's behind the "air of collegiality" and the sense of common misfortune at the start of the conference. Being a geopolitical pawn for

the better part of the last half century is not what Afghans wanted for themselves. Finding

with Afghanistan's wars — is an enormous challenge. Still, it's evident to anyone who knows the country that there are those with a vested interest in maintaining the status quo of hostility. Some of those people

a way out of the blood feuds —

and the entrenched political and

economic interests associated

were at the table in Doha. It's one of the reasons Banerjee counsel's patience.

Ending the bloodshed is the "absolute highest priority" right now, she said, and the Afghans "have to think of this as almost the last chance to make peace."



China makes proposals for UN's role in post-pandemic era

The United Nations, beginning with 51 signatories at the end of World War II, has now grown to be a 193-nation body. As it celebrates its 75th founding anniversary, the organization and multilateralism it represents are facing unprecedented challenges with the rise of unilateralism and protectionism.

WORLD

The challenges are being compounded by COVID-19, which has infected more than 31 million people and taken over 960,000 lives worldwide.

"What kind of UN does the world need and what role should it play in the post-pandemic era?" Chinese President Xi Jinping raised the question and made proposals on Monday when addressing the high-level meeting to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the UN via video link.

The UN should uphold justice as countries, regardless of their sizes, are equal and should respect each other, Xi said, noting that this is a requirement of the progress of the times and the most important principle in the UN Charter. The organization should be committed to achieving shared growth through consultation and collaboration, he stressed, calling on countries around the world to maintain common security and share the fruits of development.

Xi called for increased representation and a louder voice for developing countries in the UN and upholding the purposes and principles of the UN Charter.

He said the UN should promote international cooperation and lead efforts to solve various problems in the world. It should advance ... P3



A look at the world

EU imposes sanctions on violators of Libya weapons embargo



EU foreign ministers on Monday agreed to sanctions against entities that violated the UN embargo on arms flowing into Libya. The measures target three companies from Jordan, Kazakhstan, and Turkey as well as two individuals for providing planes, ships and other logistics to funnel combat equipment into Libya.

The 2011 toppling of dictator Moammar Gadhafi plunged Libya into chaos, making it a battleground for rival forces. The UN weapons embargo was imposed that year, although this has often been broken. Libya has two competing administrations: The Government of National Accord (GNA) in Tripoli, and a government in the eastern city of Tobruk. The Tobruk-based administration is aligned with the leader of the so-called Libyan National Army, Khalifa

Haftar has been laying siege to Tripoli since April 2019, seeking to take it from the control of the UN-recognized GNA, which is backed by both Turkey and Qatar. He has the support of Egypt, Russia, and the United Arab Emirates.

Almost all countries involved in the conflict promised to stop supplying the warring factions with fighters and weapons at a summit in Berlin in January. However, neither side fully kept to this.

The EU is particularly keen to see the dispute resolved, because the fighting in Libya has made conditions easier for people smugglers take migrants to Europe to operate in the Mediterranean Sea.

Scientists: Climate change bacteria killed 300 African elephants

Veterinary scientists have confirmed that a bacterial toxin other scientists say is thriving more because of warming temperatures in water bodies as a result of climate change is the cause of massive elephant deaths in Botswana this year.

The death toll of elephants in the southern Africa country has subsequently risen to 330, with Monday's announcement by its Department of National Parks and Wildlife confirming the elephants drank water contaminated by cyanobacteria. The research findings, building on tests conducted in laboratories in Zimbabwe, South Africa, the US, and Canada, represents a ground-breaking and until now elusive scientific explanation that could also provide answers to the yet to be explained deaths of more elephants in neighboring Zimbabwe.

Botswana first discovered carcasses of elephants along the wildlife rich



Okavango Delta in May and June but was authorities were uncertain as to the cause of the mass deaths, leaving scientists and conservationists puzzled. Only last month, Zimbabwe's Parks and Wildlife Authority said more than 20 elephants had also died in its massive Hwange National Park although this time there was a clue that the deaths could have been caused by bacterial infection after ruling out anthrax and poisoning by poachers.

Volunteer announcement

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5	Bean	3.48 ton	Turkmeni	red		
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