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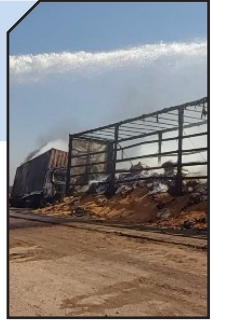
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Heart of Asia

Your Gateway to Afghanistan & the Region

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10 afs



Gunmen Shot Dead Female TV Employees in Nangarhar

Armed men gunned down three female employees of Enikaas TV in Jalalabad city on Tuesday, officials confirmed. Officials at the TV network have confirmed that three of their employees were attacked at around 4:00 pm Tuesday by unknown gunmen in PD4 of Jalalabad city.

Three employees—Mursal Habibi, Nazia, and Saadia—were killed in the attack, sources said.

Nangarhar police also confirmed the attack.

Farid Khan, a spokesman for the Nangarhar police HQ, said Mursal, a presenter for the TV station, and two of her colleagues from the dubbing department were killed in the attack.

So far no group has claimed responsibility for the attack.

This comes as targeted attacks against media workers and civil ...

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UK Envoy, Gen. Bajwa Discuss Afghan Peace Process

The Britain high commissioner and Pakistan's army chief have exchanged views in the Afghan peace process.

Christian Turner called on Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa on Monday at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said.

The overall regional security situation also came under discussion at the meeting, according to a statement from the army's media wing, which gave no further details.

Also on Monday, US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad met President Ashraf Ghani and High Council for National Reconciliation Chairman Dr. Abdullah.

Pakistan claims having played a constructive role in facilitating the Afghan peace process. It has been supporting a political settlement to the war across the Durand Line

Ex-US Defense Officials Urge Longer Afghanistan Presence



US President Donald Trump's last defense secretary and President Barack Obama's first defense secretary say they would advise President Biden against pulling all U.S. troops out of Afghanistan in time to meet a looming May 1 deadline.

In an interview Friday with Brookings Institution analyst Michael O'Hanlon, Mark Esper said

the withdrawal deal negotiated with the Taliban a year ago was always contingent on conditions that the Taliban clearly have not met.

"We implemented our side of it in good faith, but it's fair to say the Taliban have not," Esper said, noting the Taliban have not delivered on any of their key promises, namely a reduction in violence, good faith negotiations with the Afghan

government, and a full break with al Qaeda.

Esper said he would have opposed Trump's post-election order to reduce U.S. troop strength in Afghanistan to 2,500, which he says has effectively undercut any leverage the U.S. had over the Taliban. "I made this clear when I was in the administration at the end, I thought we should hold it

4,500 until the conditions on the ground were met."

Trump has put Biden in a tough spot, Esper says. "We have to make sure that again, Afghanistan doesn't become a safe haven for terrorism. And I say that as somebody who wants to get out of there as badly as anyone else."

In the meantime, Robert Gates, who resisted sending more troops to Afghanistan, argued the "least bad option" is for the U.S. to stay until the Taliban get the message that the U.S. won't leave until they get serious about peace.

"My view is that I think the steps the president has taken in terms of hinting that we might not pull the rest of our troops out on the first of May is exactly right. I think that we do need to take into consideration the possibility of having a presence in Afghanistan at roughly the current level, or maybe even slightly more, along with our NATO allies," said Gates in an interview with Washington Post columnist David Ignatius.

U.S. Subcommittee on National Security to Hold Hearing on SIGAR's Report This Month

The Rep. Stephen F. Lynch, Chairman of the US Subcommittee on National Security, issued a statement on Monday in response to a new report from the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) detailing how billions of dollars Congress appropriated for reconstruction projects in Afghanistan. The US Subcommittee on National Security in the statement said that the recent report from the Special Inspector General demonstrates that the United States has spent billions of taxpayer dollars on ...

P3



Japan's Foreign Minister Condemns Targeted Killings in Afghanistan

In a phone call yesterday, the Foreign Ministers of Afghanistan and Japan discussed the Afghan peace process, continuation of Japanese assistance to Afghanistan, aid effectiveness and the fight against corruption, the investigation into the assassination of Tetsu Nakamura, and the expansion of bilateral relations between the two friendly countries.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) in a press release on Tuesday said that Foreign Minister Haneef Atmar called Japan a trusted and generous partner and expressed gratitude for Tokyo's continued assistance.

Mr. Atmar shared the latest developments in the peace process with his Japanese counterpart, including the Taliban's breaches of their commitments.

He briefed the Japanese Foreign Minister about the Government of IROA's commitment to advance



the peace process and fulfill its obligations in this regard.

In the meantime, the Japanese Foreign Minister condemned the targeted killings and car bombings in Afghanistan, calling for a reduction in violence and making progress in the peace process.

Mr. Toshimitsu Motegi assured FM Atmar that Japan would continue to

provide aid assistance to Afghanistan until 2024 and help our country fight the Covid 19 pandemic.

He highlighted the effectiveness of aid assistance and stressed the importance of combatting corruption in this regard. Mr. Motegi also thanked Afghanistan for investigating the murder of late Mr. Tetsu Nakamura.

WHO Warns...

countries in COVAX," he said.

UAE's Emirates SkyCargo and Etihad Cargo have signed separate agreements with UNICEF to prioritise the transport of Covid-19 vaccines, essential medicines, medical devices and other critical supplies to help fight the pandemic, gulfbusiness reported.

According to the report the UNICEF drive convenes a number of partners capable of distributing essential supplies to more than 100 markets in support of the COVAX Facility, the global effort aimed at equitable access to Covid-19 vaccines. In January 2021, Emirates SkyCargo joined hands with three other Dubai-based entities- DP World, International Humanitarian City and Dubai Airports to form an alliance for the rapid transport of Covid-19 vaccines to the developing world through the emirate, report added.

The UAE has administered a total of 6,028,417 doses of the Covid-19 vaccine till March 1.

Gunmen Shot...

activists have been increased in the past few months.

Nearly three months ago, Malala Maiwand, the host of Erikaas TV, was killed in a similar attack.

Meanwhile, Afghan Journalists Safety Committee (AJSC) has asked the Afghan government to probe targeted attacks on journalists and media workers and share the results with the public.

By WALTER PINCUS

Afghanistan's Great Gap

The Biden administration is reviewing not just the February 2020, Trump administration agreement with the Taliban that calls for all U.S. forces to be out of Afghanistan by May 1, but also the impact of Trump's surprise, pre-election, October tweet to cut current troop levels to 2,500 from 4,000 by last Christmas.

On November 17, as a lame duck, Trump ordered then-Acting Defense Secretary Christopher Miller to carry out the reduction. However, Congress in the fiscal 2021 Defense Authorization Bill, which passed January 1, limited use of funds to lower below 4,000 the U.S. forces in Afghanistan without a report detailing the impact such a reduction would have on U.S. counterterrorism objectives and the Afghan peace talks.

However, Trump followed that with a waiver to the stipulated force level and the reduction to 2,500 was accomplished by January 15, five days before Trump left office.

Although American commanders in Afghanistan claimed at the time that the Trump reductions would not affect their mission, the January 31, most recent quarterly report of John Sopko, Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), took issue with that position.

He pointed out that he has not yet had a chance to test or audit whether the lower number of U.S. forces have the "ability to execute and/or oversee costly and necessary taxpayer-funded contracts to train and sustain the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces, and to provide them [Afghan forces] hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of equipment and direct-assistance funds."

In his report, Sopko pointed out that after spending some \$8.5 billion

since 2010 on the Afghan Air Force, his inspectors have found there is no policy or strategy to recruit new personnel as pilots or maintenance personnel despite providing financial incentives for such positions.

In addition, a Defense Department investigation found almost 94 percent of NATO trainers helping build the Afghan Air Force, mostly Americans, have departed over the past several months, thereby limiting missions flown by its pilots, which provided the major firepower to defeat Taliban attacks. That has meant a sustainable Afghan Air Force will require outside contractors for years to come, according to the SIGAR report.

Sopko also reported, "U.S. Forces-Afghanistan said that this quarter, enemy attacks in Kabul were higher than they were last quarter, and 'much higher' than in the same quarter a year prior. Recent heavy fighting between U.S., Afghan, and Taliban forces in Helmand and Kandahar Provinces has forced thousands of Afghan civilians to flee their homes."

One positive sign in Sopko's report was increased activity of the Afghan Special Security Forces (ASSF). In the three months ending January 31, ASSF carried out over 1,000 ground operations, up 4 percent from the earlier quarter and double those from a year ago. More important, 94 percent of the operations "were independent of U.S. and Coalition advisor support or accompaniment," according to Sopko's report. With that as background, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin told reporters last Friday: "We are committed to a responsible and sustainable end to this war while preventing Afghanistan from becoming a safe haven for terrorist groups," "We are mindful of the looming

deadline," he said, adding, "At this time, no decisions about our future force posture have been made."

Austin warned, "Clearly, the violence is too high right now and more progress needs to be made in the Afghan-led negotiations. So, I urge all parties to choose the path towards peace. The violence must decrease now."

He also said, in an obvious contrast to the Trump era, "As we move forward in our review, we will consult with our NATO allies, our Resolute Support partners and of course, the Government of Afghanistan. And there will be no surprises. We will consult each other and consult together and decide together and act together."

Austin said, "No matter what the outcome of our review, the United States will not undertake a hasty or disorderly withdrawal from Afghanistan that puts their forces or the alliance's representation at risk." Based on Austin's words, it is doubtful that further U.S. troop reductions will occur before that May 1 deadline, without a major change in Taliban activities.

But security is far from the only task the U.S. and its allies have underway in Afghanistan, which, according to the World Bank, could not exist as a viable state without outside economic assistance due to its failing economy. Last November, at a donor conference in Geneva, more than a dozen nations pledged approximately \$3.3 billion in new development assistance in 2021 for Afghanistan, with expectations that additional funds totaling over \$12 billion could be forthcoming through 2024.

As the level of foreign troops in Afghanistan declines, "U.S. reconstruction programs aimed at promoting economic development,

rule of law, respect for human rights, good governance, and security for the Afghan people may become the primary lever of U.S. influence in the country, heightening the need to protect those programs against waste, fraud, and abuse with unrelenting and effective oversight," Sopko reported. Congress has also played a part.

The December 27, Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 included provisions that require the Secretary of State "to promote and ensure the meaningful participation of Afghan women in intra-Afghan negotiations," and to develop "a multiyear diplomatic and development strategy for Afghanistan, to include a component to protect and strengthen Afghan women and girls' welfare and rights." It also requires \$20 million be spent for "recruitment and retention of women in the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces and for recruitment and training of female security personnel."

Not everything is working. Sopko's report points out that corruption remains a major problem, saying, "The Afghan government often takes paper or process steps, such as drafting regulations or holding meetings, rather than concrete actions that would reduce corruption, such as arresting or enforcing penalties on powerful Afghans."

A review of the use of cash-counting machines at Hamid Karzai International Airport to detect cash smuggling "found that customs officials rarely used the machines and did not record and send serial number data to proper Afghan authorities." Perhaps more important, "senior government officials and other individuals with political influence, designated by the Office of the President ...

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By XiMeng

400000 doses of Chinese vaccines coming!

Recently, His excellency, Mr. WangYu, China's ambassador to Afghanistan declared, China will donate 400 thousand doses of vaccines to friendly Afghanistan, during the meeting with Dr. Wahid Majrooh, Minister of public health. Many Afghan netizens actively left messages on Mr. ambassador's Twitter, praising highly the friendship between China and Afghanistan and saying that China and Afghanistan are real friends who can stand the test. It is China's responsibility as a major country to donate vaccines to Afghanistan. Previously, Chinese leader has stated on many occasions that once the COVID-19 vaccines developed by China are put into use, China will make them a public good for the whole world with accessibility and affordability. Up to now, China has provided or is providing vaccine assistance to 53 countries and has exported or is exporting vaccines to 27 other countries. China has also formally joined the COVAX and at the request of the WHO decided to provide 10 million doses of vaccines to the above "Implementation Plan", mainly for the urgent needs of developing countries. This is another important step taken by China to promote the fair distribution

of vaccines, advance international cooperation in the fight against the epidemic and implement the concept of a community of human public health.

It is a vivid manifestation of the deep brotherhood between China and Afghanistan to donate vaccines to Afghanistan. There is an old Chinese poem that says, "You throw a peach to me and I give you a white jade for friendship." The Chinese people will never forget that when the epidemic broke out last year, the Afghan government and people immediately expressed their condolences to us. Many Afghan friends cheered for China through various forms. Some Afghan friends who have studied and worked in China spontaneously bought masks and other anti-epidemic supplies and donated them to the Chinese Embassy in Kabul. When Afghanistan faced the same problem, China has donated six batches of anti-epidemic materials to the country by overcoming lots of difficulties. The promise of further donation of vaccines is a good-neighborly friendship between the two countries too.

It is a concrete action to build a community with a shared future

between our two countries. China and Afghanistan are friendly neighbors. China's prosperity and development will surely benefit Afghanistan and Afghanistan's peace and stability will also benefit China too. China and Afghanistan have neither historical animosity nor actual conflict. We are a community with a shared future. China welcomes Afghanistan to share the dividends and take the express train of China's development. Because of the long-term ravages of war, Afghanistan has not yet exerted its natural resources and geographical advantages fully. There is still huge potential for economic and trade exchanges between China and Afghanistan. We sincerely hope that the peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan would be improved and accelerated and breakthroughs would be made as soon as possible. These 400,000 doses of vaccines are not just only Chinese medicines against the virus, but also full of confidence and blessings from China. There is an old Chinese saying: United we stand, Divided we fall. If we work together, we will surely win the final victory in the fight against the epidemic and we will surely usher in a better and bright tomorrow!

Afghanistan and 16 Countries' Publishing Houses to Translate, Publish Xi's Book on Governance



Publishing houses from 17 countries have partnered with Beijing-based Foreign Languages Press, the publisher of the third volume of "Xi Jinping: The Governance of China," for translating the book into different languages for publication. The countries are Albania, Poland, Romania, Belarus, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Nepal, Laos, Bangladesh, Thailand, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia. The book, first published in Chinese and English on June 30, 2020, records the practices of the Communist Party of China (CPC)

Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at the core in leading the whole Party and Chinese people to make new and major advances in various undertakings of the Party and the country since the 19th CPC National Congress in 2017. "Xi Jinping: The Governance of China" has three volumes, which have been translated into 33 languages and distributed in over 170 countries and regions. The Chinese publisher said it is also working on the translation and publishing process of the French, Russian, Spanish, Arabic, German, Japanese, and Portuguese versions of the third volume.

Weeks Later, Cause of Islam Qala Fire Still Unclear

More than Two weeks after the massive fire at the Islam Qala customs department in Herat province, it is unclear what caused the incident. It has been one week since a probe-team was assigned by the government to investigate the incident comprehensively and find its underlying causes. The probe team has yet to make the results public. Some of the probe team members say that their investigation is not complete and it is not clear how many more days it will take to be completed. Meanwhile, the Afghan private sector criticized the probe team for their slow investigation and called on the government to shed light on the incident and compensate the losses they suffered from the incident. "The investigative team has started its work in three committees, the investigation is continuing and has not been completed yet. Once completed, we will share the results with the relevant entities, as well as with the people of Afghanistan," said Ghulam

Bahauddin Jailani, state minister for disaster management. The private sector is demanding the government compensates the merchants and truck owners who suffered losses in the catastrophic incident. "The investigative team's findings should be precise and quick, merchants and truck owners who have suffered from the incident need to start over. If there will be a delay in the process, the private sector will face more problems," said Mohammad Rafi Rahmani, executive director of the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI). Those merchants whose trucks and commodities burned in the incident say that they have lost whatever they had and now are looking forward to the results of the government investigation, seeking compensation for the losses they endured in the incident. "We expect the investigative team and the president of Afghanistan



to give their best effort to making a legitimate investigation of the incident and compensation must be paid to those who lost their assets," said Mohammad Tahiri, one of the merchants. Experts say that the government must pay compensation from its discretionary budget funds to truck owners and merchants who have sustained losses. "The government has to compensate the losses from the fund code 92, allocating 16 billion Afs, and fund code

25, allocating 25 billion Afs, according to the relevant law in the code, so that the private sector can be restored," said Mohammad Yaqub Mashuof, an economics expert. The government figures show that over one thousand loaded trucks were damaged or destroyed at the Islam Qala massive fire that broke out in Herat province last month. It has been reported that some trucks full of goods and commodities were looted by residents and local powerful men during and after the incident.

U.S. Subcommittee...

reconstruction projects that were either not needed or unwanted by the Afghan Government. "Many of the capital assets provided to the Afghan Government have already fallen into disrepair or have rapidly deteriorated due to the inability of the Afghan beneficiaries to maintain those assets," Rep. Stephen F. Lynch said. "While I believe that targeted humanitarian relief and construction assistance for Afghanistan was and is warranted, this SIGAR Report exposes serious gaps in planning and contract execution and provides guidance on how U.S.-taxpayer resources must be more wisely and carefully allocated to ensure they do not go to waste," he added. On September 27, 2019, Chairman Lynch asked SIGAR to conduct a review of facilities in Afghanistan that were constructed, financed, or subsidized with U.S. taxpayer funds, and evaluate whether these facilities were being used as intended. The SIGAR report released yesterday found that among facilities and assets it had previously reviewed, \$2.4 billion in U.S.-funded projects in Afghanistan "were unused or abandoned, had not been used for their intended purposes, had deteriorated, or were destroyed." SIGAR also conducted follow-up inspections of 60 U.S.-funded capital assets in Afghanistan. According to SIGAR, "Although our follow-up inspections found that most assets were being used as intended, when evaluated by cost, we found that \$723.8 million (or 91 percent of the total costs of all 60 assets in our sample) went toward assets that were unused or abandoned, were not used as intended, had deteriorated, were destroyed, or some combination of the above." The chairman Lynch also announced that on Tuesday, March 16, 2021, at 11:00 a.m., the Subcommittee on National Security will hold a hearing to examine areas of U.S. reconstruction activity that SIGAR has deemed high-risk and vulnerable to waste, fraud, and abuse.

Afghanistan's...

as very important persons (VIP), were exempted from the customs process." In fact, Sopko reported, while non-VIPs go through five checkpoints, VIP passengers are transported directly to the VIP terminal where their luggage is scanned, but they face no declaration forms or cash-counting machines. Meanwhile, VVIP persons are not screened and can be transported directly to aircraft for boarding. Audits have found questionable items, such as \$6.2 million in "questioned costs" on a \$23 million contract to support four C-130 Afghan Air Force aircraft at Kabul Airport. Despite spending some \$9 billion for counternarcotics efforts in Afghanistan since 2002, the opium-economy has grown exponentially over that period. "That trade helps fund insurgents, terrorists, and criminal networks; fosters corruption; undermines public

regard for the government; and creates public-health and social problems," according to the SIGAR report. Overall, since 2001, \$815.7 billion has been spent for Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Freedom's Sentinel in Afghanistan, including the cost of maintaining U.S. troops in Afghanistan. As of September 30, 2020, since 2002, the U.S. has appropriated approximately \$130.5 billion for reconstruction and related activities in Afghanistan, with \$88.32 billion for security (such as \$4.60 billion for counternarcotics initiatives); \$35.95 billion for governance and development (\$4.41 billion for counternarcotics initiatives); \$4.13 billion for humanitarian aid; and \$14.87 billion general agency operations. On February 16, in an open letter to the American people, the Taliban reiterated the terms of the February 2020

agreement that by May 1, "all foreign military forces along with their non-diplomatic personnel, private contractors, advisors, trainers and service providers withdraw from Afghanistan...while the Islamic Emirate [Taliban] would reciprocate by committing itself to preventing all threats to the security of other nations from Afghanistan." Three days later, President Biden said of Afghanistan, "My administration strongly supports the diplomatic process that is underway to bring an end to this war. We remain committed to ensuring that Afghanistan never again provides a base for terrorist attacks against the United States and our partners." As of now, there is a great gap between those two statements and while it is apparent the Biden administration needs to do more to fulfill the President's commitment, the questions remain what more, and for how long?

Global Climate...

environmental protesters continue to raise awareness about climate change and environmental issues. - A group of activists in Jamalpur, Bangladesh stages a climate strike observing physical distance and holds signs reading "No more excuse". Feb. 14: - Thunberg completes her 130th week of school strike. - Brazilian climate activist Joao Duccini completes his 50th week of university strike. "Emissions are still the same, the media is still not talking about it and the climate crisis is still not treated as a crisis," he says on Twitter. Feb. 14: - On Valentine's Day, some Extinction Rebellion protesters in Boston, Massachusetts holds streets by carrying signs reading "Climate action is an act of love".

Feb. 15: - The arrest of 22-year-old climate activist Disha Ravi in India triggers outrage, with opposition politicians, prominent voices, and rights activists calling the move an "attack on democracy." Feb. 19: - Fridays for Future holds the third strike of the month, with climate activists and environmental protesters raising awareness about climate change and environmental issues. - Turkish climate activist Deniz Cevikus completes her 100th week of climate strike. "When I started striking 100 weeks ago, I never thought I would go on doing this for so long, but I did. I'm very proud to be doing my part in this journey to save our future," she says on Twitter.

Feb. 23: - A Delhi court in India grants bail to Ravi, an Indian climate activist arrested for sedition in connection with a toolkit to help to protest farmers. Feb. 26: - The last Fridays for Future strike of the month is held. - On his 33rd climate strike, 12-year-old Indian climate activist Aarav Seth along with a group of other protesters stage a protest. "They cut #forests, they destroy #nature & we lose lives, but they consider it #GDP Growth," he says on Twitter. - Turkish climate activist Atlas Sarrafoglu called on activists around the world to support them in having the Paris Agreement ratified in Turkey. "We are running out of time and they are running out of excuses," he says on Twitter.

Exchange Rates

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Biden Congratulates Mikhail Gorbachev on His 90th Birthday

US President Joe Biden has offered his congratulations to first President of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev on the occasion of his 90th birthday and highlighted his contribution to a safer world, the text of the congratulatory letter was published by Pavel Palazhchenko, chief interpreter for Gorbachev, on his Facebook page.

“Dear President Gorbachev: on behalf of the American people, I would like to congratulate you on the occasion of your 90th birthday, a tremendous milestone in your storied life,” the letter reads.

Biden also highlighted Gorbachev’s commitment to freedom. “Your commitment to freedom and your courage over the decades to make the tough, albeit necessary, decisions

have made the world a safer place and continue to be a source of inspiration. It is my sincere hope that the five-year extension of New START is proof that the United States and Russia can continue to work together as we jointly carry on your legacy,” the US leader noted.

The Soviet Union’s first president, Mikhail Gorbachev, has said a book of letters he has received over years is due to be released shortly. “A collection of letters to me from across the nation and from abroad - is due to be released soon. It is called Understanding Gorbachev,” Gorbachev told TASS on the eve of his 90th birthday.

He recalled that a book devoted to reforms in the Soviet Union, entitled Understanding Perestroika, was published several years ago.



A look at the world

Pakistan Condemns Houthi Attack on Saudi Arabia

Pakistan on Tuesday condemned the Houthi projectile attack on Saudi Arabia.

“These attacks not only violate the territorial integrity of the Kingdom but also threaten the lives of innocent people. Pakistan calls for their immediate cessation, as it stands in solidarity with Saudi Arabia,” the Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Islamabad also called on the Houthi rebels to halt its attacks on Marib, Yemen, and reiterated its call for a comprehensive political solution to the conflict through peaceful means.

According to Saudi state-run media at least five people were injured on early Tuesday when a projectile launched by Houthi rebels



struck the southern Saudi region of Jazan.

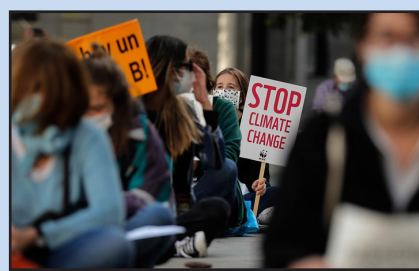
“The military projectile had fallen in a public street, resulting in the injury of five civilians, including three Saudis and two Yemeni nationals,” Saudi Press Agency quoted Mohammed Al-Ghamdi, a spokesman for the Civil Defense Directorate in Jazan, as saying. The attack also damaged two houses, a grocery store, and three civilian vehicles.

However, Turkey is looking to co-manufacture missiles and warplanes with Pakistan, with the collaboration likely to pave the way for the country to access Chinese war technology as well.

According to a Bloomberg report, Turkish defence and government officials have held meetings with their Pakistani counterparts on the prospects of developing and manufacturing military hardware together.

People from both countries, according to Bloomberg have confirmed the development, adding that the last such meeting took place in January. However, they didn’t disclose how far the two countries are to reaching a deal or when such a meeting will take place again. Pakistan develops the JF-17 Thunder fighter jet with China. This means that Turkey can get its hands on Chinese military technology when it collaborates on defence projects with Pakistan.

Global Climate Strikes, Environmental Protests in February 2021



Strikes, demonstrations, and protests continued across the globe in the second month of 2021, with protesters demanding more decisive actions to tackle climate change.

Activists and concerned citizens continued their online campaigns and street protests while keeping socially distant due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Events included Fridays for Future protests launched in 2018 by Swedish environmental activist Greta Thunberg, various campaigns worldwide against anti-environmental practices and attitudes, including farmer protests in India, and several virtual climate strikes.

Here is a timeline of protests and demonstrations compiled by Anadolu Agency. Feb. 4:

- Indian police lodges a complaint against Thunberg over her tweets on the ongoing farmer protests in India, according to local media reports.

- “I still #StandWithFarmers and support their peaceful protest. No amount of hate, threats, or violations of human rights will ever change that. #FarmersProtest,” Thunberg says on Twitter.

Feb. 5:

- On the first Fridays for Future strike of the month, climate activists and environmental protesters continue to raise awareness about climate change and environmental issues.

- Indian climate activist Licypriya Kangujam completes her second year of #SchoolStrike4Climate. “I demand our leaders to enact a climate law in the parliament to give climate justice to the millions of poor vulnerable people who are the victims of climate change,” she says on Twitter.

Feb. 8:

- Mentioning the effects of collapsing Himalayan glacier, David Fopp, a senior lecturer at Stockholm University, calls for action on climate change as he says the incident with disastrous consequences for hundreds of people in India is linked to climate change.

Feb. 12:

- On the second Fridays for the Future strike of February, climate activists, and ...

P3

WHO Warns Vaccines Alone Won’t Curb Spread of Coronavirus

The World Health Organization (WHO) on Monday said governments and individuals cannot rely solely on vaccines to curb the spread of the Coronavirus.

The organization said vaccines alone will not keep them ‘safe’ and that basic public health measures remain the basis of the response. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, said at a media briefing that: “Vaccines will help to save lives, but if countries rely solely on vaccines, they’re making a mistake. Basic public health measures remain the foundation of the response.”

For public health authorities, that means testing, contact tracing, isolation, supported



quarantine and quality care, while for individuals, it means avoiding crowds, physical distancing, hand hygiene, masks and ventilation.

“This is a global crisis that requires a consistent and coordinated global response,” he added.

In the past week, Ghebreyesus noted, the number of reported cases of Covid-19 increased for the first time in seven weeks.

“Reported cases increased in four of WHO’s six regions: the Americas, Europe, South East Asia and the Eastern Mediterranean – so we don’t report increases in Africa and the Western Pacific.

“We’re working to better understand these increases in transmission. Some of it appears to be due to relaxing of public health measures, continued circulation of variants, and people letting down their guard,” he added.

Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire started vaccinating health workers against Covid-19, becoming the first countries to start vaccination campaigns with doses supplied through COVAX, the vaccines pillar of the Access to Covid-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator.

“A further 11 million doses will be delivered this week. Between now and the end of May, 237 million doses of vaccines will be allocated to 142 participating economies and ...

P2



Shigal

English Academy

AMERICAN
ENGLISH FILE



Western Street of
Kabul University Close to
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