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Ministry of Health Reports 547 New Cases of COVID-19

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) on Sunday reported 547 new positive cases of the coronavirus (COVID-19) infection in the last 24 hours.

The ministry also reported 10 deaths and 146 recoveries from COVID-19 in the last 24 hours.

The total number of cases now stand at 66,275, while the number of reported deaths is 2,812 and the total number of recoveries is 56,035.

MoPH added that the new cases were reported in Kabul, Herat, Kandahar, Balkh, Nangarhar, Baghlan, Takhar, Kunduz, Helmand, Wardak, Badakhshan, Daikundi, Logar, Kunar, Laghman, Zabul, Uruzgan, Khost and Farah provinces.



Process to Hire Teachers on Contract Starts

Kabul: To deal with the shortage of teachers in schools, the Ministry of Education is now starting the process of hiring teachers on contract basis.

Shortage of teachers in the current academic year has led to a large number of students being deprived of education and earlier, the ministry used to eliminate this shortage through fee-paying teachers. However, for some time now, the process of hiring "paid" and "contractual" teachers has stopped. This has led to a serious shortage of teachers across the country.

The announcement by the Ministry of Education comes in coordination with the Ministry of Finance and the Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission, and under the guidance of President Ghani.

To ensure transparency in the process, the Ministry of Education has said that applicants' educational credentials must be verified by a competent authority. Similarly, hired teachers must submit their fingerprints and their salaries will be paid through the banking system. It is not yet clear how many contract teachers the Ministry of Education will hire.

Key to War and Peace Lies with Pakistan: Karzai



Former Afghan president Hamid Karzai said Afghans are being used against each other by external forces and that Pakistan wants to exert strategic influence in Afghanistan through the Taliban.

In an interview with Germany's weekly news magazine Der Spiegel, Karzai said: "I realized early into my tenure as president that this war is

not our conflict, and we Afghans are just being used against each other – the republic against the Taliban and the Taliban against us.

"Both the Afghan Republic and the Taliban are victims of these external forces. That is why we are suffering," he said.

Giving background on the events of the past 20 years, Karzai said

that after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the U.S., Washington took the historic opportunity to pursue its global ambitions in Afghanistan.

"Just look at our position on the map. Afghanistan is the most strategically important place in today's global contest for supremacy. At the same time, Pakistan started using the

Taliban to further its own agenda in Afghanistan."

He noted that there are local and regional conflicts, but according to him what is of key importance is "geostrategic domination".

Karzai said a key moment for him had been during a meeting with senior U.S. policymakers in Washington in 2013, including former president Jimmy Carter's now-deceased national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski.

"When I asked whether it was true that America was deliberately promoting radical Islamist forces in Afghanistan and the region, Brzezinski said, yes, they wanted to create as many conflict zones around the USSR as possible, a so-called 'arc of crisis', and that the Soviet invasion was a good opportunity to carry this out.

"I replied that Islamist extremism had been gravely strengthened as a result and had grown into the danger it is today. Brzezinski replied that from a historical perspective, the rise of a few Islamists was 'irrelevant' compared to the failure of communism," he said.

Explaining what this contest of world powers has to do with ... **P3**

First Round of The Women's Kung Fu Qualifiers Held in Kabul

The first round of this year's women's Kung Fu qualifiers started in Kabul on Sunday.

Forty female athletes from Balkh, Ghazni & Kabul provinces came together at the sports gymnasium of the General Directorate of Physical Education and Sports where they take part in the tournament.

Athletes compete in eight weight categories in the youth and adult divisions and will compete for two days to become members of the Kabul team. ... **P2**



Violence Displaces Over 8,000 Families in Afghanistan

Over 8,000 families have been displaced in at least five provinces as fighting intensifies on multiple fronts between government forces and the Taliban, the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations said on Saturday.

The families are faced with lack of shelter, access to health services, education and other facilities for a normal life, according to the displaced persons.

Baghlan, Helmand, Kunduz, Kandahar and Laghman are the five provinces where the families have been displaced. Heavy clashes are underway in the five provinces over the last few weeks, except for the three days of the ceasefire from May 13 to May 15.

"8,500 families have been displaced. Of the figure, 3,500 families have been displaced due to the fresh spat of violence," said Sharifullah Shafiq, the head of the refugees and



repatriations directorate in Baghlan. Heavy fighting is underway in three districts of Baghlan for the last two seven days. Taliban on Friday night launched new attacks on the three districts of Baghlan.

Parts of the center of Burka district in Baghlan fell to the Taliban. This led to intense fighting between the government forces and the Taliban. Sources said that at least 10 security force members and 40 Taliban were either killed or wounded Friday

night's clashes in Baghlan-e-Markazi and Nahrin districts.

"A Taliban's shadow governor named Qari Amrullah was killed in the war in Guzargah district," Baghlan governor Mohammad Akbar Barikzai said, Abdul Ghafar, a resident of Imam Sahib district in Kunduz, said he has left the district with his family due to fighting. His son, he said, lost his limbs in the clashes and is under treatment right now. He added that they need urgent help.... **P2**

Violence...

"Fighting has intensified in Imam Sahib. 5,000 families have been displaced. Their homes have been changed into military bases," said Mohammad Yusuf Ayubi, head of Kunduz Provincial Council.

As well as in the eastern part of the country, hundreds of families have been displaced from their homes.

"The situation is quite tense. We don't have anything to eat. We have nothing," said Gul Mohammad, member of a displaced family in Laghman.

"We don't have shelter. We have a miserable life," said Noor Mohammad, member of a displaced family in Laghman.

The government has pledged to address the needs of the displaced families.

"We have planned to help our countrymen who have been displaced from their homes. We are working with foreign NGOs to address their needs," said Sayed Abdul Basit Haidari, a spokesman for the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation.

First Round...

Officials at the National Kung Fu Federation say the aim of the tournament is to select the top 16 athletes for the Kabul women's team.

Putin Ready...

at any time if he wished to discuss bilateral relations. Moscow has reiterated that Russia is not a party to the conflict in Donbass, but is a mediator at the talks seeking peace for eastern Ukraine.

By Muhammad Zamir Assadi

Harmonious Xinjiang Disprove the Western World Lies with Facts

Xinjiang, northwestern part of China has emerged as a region attaching a great significant to economic growth that has helped in providing sense of contentment and happiness to the people of the land in the last many years.

By following the developmental path announced in previous five year plans, the region has emerged as a sustainable economic hub in western part of China that is connecting its borders with different countries. The economic stability of the province has provided more opportunities of growth and development to the local residents in various fields.

The policies adopted and implemented by Communist Party of China has helped the people to increase their sense of fulfillment, happiness and security.

In a historic feat, the region has eliminated absolute poverty, with some 3.06 million rural residents lifted out of poverty in the past five years.

The credit of success in Xinjiang for poverty alleviations goes to the growth of China's main agricultural bases including the production of central Cotton industry.

It is recorded that the secondary sector, including manufacturing and construction, was the primary contributor to growth. Fixed-asset investment grew 16.2 percent over the previous year.

On the upside, the region registered robust growth from new economic drivers, with a 27.6-percent year-on-year growth in online retail sales and a 25-percent year-on-year increase in high-tech manufacturing added value.

The per capita disposable income of rural residents reached 14,056 yuan (about 2,171 U.S. dollars), up 7.1 percent, as the region's anti-poverty campaign bore fruit. The increase was paced at 8.3 percent annually on average over the past five years, as more surplus rural labor force found stable jobs.

In pursuing high-quality development, Xinjiang aims to keep its average annual economic growth rate at 6 percent or above in the 2021-2025 period, driven by key engines like the labor-intensive sector, the emerging industries and tourism, according to the government work report.

Aiming to develop itself as a core area of the Silk Road Economic Belt, the region will also expand opening-up and strengthen exchanges and cooperation with neighboring countries, the report said.

Xinjiang is well known for its outstanding natural beauty, attracting hundreds of millions of tourists

from home and abroad every year. The region received more than 158 million tourists in 2020, and the regional government expects to receive more than 200 million this year and 400 million by 2025.

The outstanding achievements in Xinjiang region shows that Claims that China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region has conducted "genocide" or built "concentration camps" are baseless slanders.

Claims of genocide in Xinjiang are lies fabricated by former U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and his like, adding that the people of various ethnic groups in Xinjiang enjoy extensive rights and freedom.

The claims blatantly trampled on international law and basic norms, grossly interfered in China's internal affairs and seriously hurt the feelings of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang.

The Uygur population in China's Xinjiang has doubled from 5.55 million to over 12 million in the past over 40 years.

Facts speak louder than words. From 2010 to 2018, the population of the Uygurs in Xinjiang increased by 25 percent, much higher than that of the Han population, which is 2 percent. Over the past 60 years, average life expectancy in Xinjiang increased from 30 to 72, and gross domestic output in Xinjiang expanded by over 200 times, with per capita GDP growing by nearly 40 times.

Members of the Muslim clergy in Northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region have refuted the lies and rumors that have been spread by Western media about the demolition of mosques, the restriction of religious activities or the detention of Muslim devotees.

The clerics also shared the view that Western lies and rumors about Xinjiang have the purpose of putting a wedge between the government and the people, between Muslims and non-believers.

They expressed that the vicious motivation has been revealed and they will oppose any forces that want to disturb the happy lives of the local population.

Some Western media have been using satellite images to prove their claims that Xinjiang is tearing down mosques. However, AbuduwailiAbulimiti, the hajib of Aletun Mosque denied what is being told about the situation in Xinjiang and explained that there is a renovation and expansion plan for some mosques to make the buildings safe and suitable for religious activities.

Some mosques were moved to a new location to better serve needs of devotees and comply with the urbanization regulation and city planning, Abuduwaili said.

The Aletun Mosque was built in 1533 and can accommodate up to 300 worshipers. The government has allocated money to renovate and preserve the building.

Following the development in the region, the locals strongly condemn and resolutely oppose such rumors and slanders made by anti-China forces.

Some Western countries and forces have wantonly discredited China and slandered China's policies on Xinjiang-related issues. In fact, they are using Xinjiang-related issues as an excuse to attack China and interfere in China's internal affairs in an attempt to undermine China's development.

The diplomats and thinkers who have visited China in recent years have also rejected "groundless slanders" that Xinjiang built "concentration camps" to incarcerate millions of Uygurs.

The happy lives of the locals mean that Xinjiang has fully protected human rights in its crackdown on terrorism, noting that a series of measures have greatly improved the stability in Xinjiang, where no violent terrorist incidents have occurred for more than four years.

It is to be noted that social stability emerging from economic progress is helping the development of overall economic structure of Xinjiang rapidly.

This stability has spread the colors of unity and harmony in the ethnicities living in the autonomous region who are playing their vital role for economic progress of the region.

Unfortunately, the rapid and continuous development of Xinjiang has at times been overshadowed on many foreign media sites by often ill-informed reports of terrorism and separatist and sectarian strife

The 46th regular session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) recently recorded that what the world has witnessed during the four-week conference was a record of the repeated double standards of the United States and some other Western countries.

It tells that western nations must abort the double standards on so called human rights claims regarding Xinjiang and open their minds.

It is the dire need of the time that some related countries to abandon ideological prejudice... **P3**

By Jim Jones

We Must Not Repeat the Vietnam Refugee Tragedy in Afghanistan

An April 30, 1975, photo shows a line of captured U.S.-backed South Vietnamese Army soldiers, escorted by Vietnamese communist soldiers, as they walk on a Saigon street after the city fell into the hands of the communist troops on the same day, marking the end of the Vietnam War. (AFP via Getty Images)

The parallel between the Vietnam War and Afghan War is troubling. In both cases, the U.S. became involved in a foreign war without having a clear picture of what our ultimate objective was. We largely took over the direction of each war from a corrupt host government. Many citizens of our host country placed reliance on the U.S. to provide for their safety, come what may. The war became unwinnable because of a series of unfortunate decisions. Losing interest in the endeavor, we shaped settlement terms the host government was required

to accept, intimating we would be there to help if worse came to worst. Here, the similarity ends, for now.

In the case of Vietnam, even though we knew weeks beforehand that the fall of South Vietnam was imminent, we made no concerted effort to extract the Vietnamese who had steadfastly supported the U.S. When their government fell, many thousands who had helped, trusted and relied upon us were murdered or incarcerated to the great dishonor of our nation. Hundreds of thousands of refugees fled the south and, although we gave many of them sanctuary, our help was slow in coming. The final chapter in Afghanistan has yet to be written, but it must not end up with a betrayal of our friends. During the long and tortured course of America's war in Afghanistan, many Afghans stepped forward at their great

peril to serve and help protect our military personnel. As we withdraw from Afghanistan, the Taliban have stepped up their violent attacks and the danger to our friends has dramatically increased. We are morally obligated to provide them sanctuary within our borders.

There are two special immigrant visa (SIV) programs in place to bring our Afghan friends to the U.S., but they are mired in red tape — it takes up to three years to process an application. There is a backlog of nearly 19,000 SIV applicants, with about 50,000 family members. They are waiting in line, living in fear of death. There are not enough slots to take care of the backlog. The vetting process is understaffed, underfunded and overly burdensome.

In this crisis situation, there are two feasible alternatives — either review existing documentation

in the files and grant visas to those who U.S. personnel have credibly vouched for in the files, or extract the SIVs and families from Afghanistan and complete any necessary vetting in a safe location. We processed South Vietnamese refugees at U.S. military bases in the late 1980s. We need, also, to consider the plight of Afghans who don't qualify for SIV status. A Taliban take-over, which appears increasingly likely, will create a flood of refugees, fleeing for their very lives. Being partially responsible for their plight, we are honor bound to provide sanctuary for many of them, just as we eventually did for those fleeing Vietnam. We should plan to evacuate Afghans who will be targets of Taliban reprisal — uncorrupted government and military officials, women's rights advocates, educators, democracy advocates and the like.

Like many troops who served in America's wars, this issue is very personal for me. I lived and worked with South Vietnamese soldiers in 1968-1969. I trusted

them with my life, while they relied on the U.S. government as a friend and ally. Most of my Vietnamese friends were Catholics who moved from North Vietnam to Tay Ninh Province in South Vietnam in 1954 to escape persecution. They were fiercely anti-communist and pro-American. It broke my heart when the communists took over in April 1975, knowing that my friends would be killed or imprisoned, as were many thousands of their countrymen. We had a moral obligation to extract as many as possible but, instead, we abandoned them to a horrific fate. We simply cannot allow that kind of tragedy to happen again with the Afghans. I pray that this great nation does not again turn its back on beleaguered people who placed their trust in us.

Jim Jones is a Vietnam combat veteran who served as Idaho Attorney General for eight years and as an Idaho Supreme Court Justice for 12 years (2005-2017). He has written about his Vietnam experience in "Vietnam...Can't get you out of my mind."

Thousands of Cold Storage Units Across the Country Ready for Use

President Ashraf Ghani said on Thursday at a ceremony related to agriculture that 10,685 cold storage units have been constructed across the country, said the Presidential Palace (ARG) in a series of tweets. "In 34 provinces of the country 10,685 cold storage (units) have been prepared for inauguration today," said Ghani.

According to ARG, Ghani said that despite the domestic capacity some goods are still being imported from other countries. Ghani added that Afghanistan has

the capacity to provide agricultural products to the world.

Meanwhile, officials of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) said that nearly 15,000 cold storage units have been established across the country that effect farmers' lives. Economic analysts, on the other hand, said that if the ministry of agriculture changes the agricultural system to an industrial system Afghanistan will a key exporter of agricultural products in the region.



China Makes...

an early decision on this matter."

He raised a proposal for setting up an international forum on vaccine cooperation to promote fair and equitable distribution of vaccines around the world.

"We must uphold fairness and equity as we strive to close the immunization gap," Xi stressed. "It is imperative for us to reject vaccine nationalism and find solutions to issues concerning the production capacity and distribution of vaccines, in order to make vaccines more accessible and affordable in developing countries."

More financial support

China has already provided \$2 billion to help with developing countries' responses to COVID-19; it has sent medical supplies to more than 150 countries and 13 international organizations, providing more than 280 billion masks, 3.4 billion protective suits and four billion testing kits to the world, according to Xi.

"China will provide an additional \$3 billion in international aid over the next three years to support COVID-19 response and economic and social recovery in other developing countries," he announced.

Xi, the leader of the world's largest developing country, mentioned "developing countries" 11 times in a speech that lasted less than seven minutes, calling on G20 members to do more to help them and address their concerns.

"China is fully implementing the G20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative for Poorest Countries and has so far put off debt repayment exceeding \$1.3 billion, the highest deferral amount among G20 members," he said.

It is essential that G20 members continue to support developing countries by such means as debt suspension and development aid, said the Chinese president.

Xi went further to call for improvement in the global governance system. G20 countries should strengthen and leverage the role of the United Nations and the WHO and improve the global disease prevention and control system, the Chinese president said.

"It is important that we uphold the spirit of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits, fully heed the views of developing countries, and better reflect their legitimate concerns," he added.

Xi repeated his call for solidarity and cooperation in fighting COVID-19 and building a global community of health for all.

"The pandemic is yet another reminder that we, humanity, rise and fall together with a shared future," he said. "We must champion the vision of building a global community of health for all, tide over this trying time through solidarity and cooperation, and firmly reject any attempt to politicize, label or stigmatize the virus."

Key to War...

the Taliban, Karzai said: "When things started to go wrong in Afghanistan - around 2005, 2006, when the extremist terrorist attacks started - we talked to the U.S. about the different causes of the violence. We knew that these attacks were being organized by intelligence in Pakistan and carried out by the Taliban.

"The U.S. confirmed this independently, telling us: Yes, the violence is coming from Pakistan, and yes, the Taliban's sanctuaries are there. But instead of investigating the root cause of the violence and going after it, Washington started to fund Pakistan's military," he said.

Karzai said the U.S. was supporting both sides of the conflict at the same time.

"It was dropping bombs on Afghan villages in order to fight the Taliban, while at the same time, funding the very country accused of organizing Taliban terror campaigns.

"Former U.S. President Donald Trump once announced that America had paid \$35 billion to Pakistan over these past 19 years. This contradictory policy cost thousands of Afghan lives - troops and civilians alike. Tell me, how was Afghanistan supposed to come to peace?," he asked.

Asked how the U.S. responded to his take on this, Karzai said there has never been a satisfactory answer.

"Either the U.S. has really miscalculated strategically, or Pakistan, which is so closely linked to China and Great Britain, is simply more important than we are for achieving Washington's global goals," he said.

Karzai stated that Pakistan wants to exert strategic influence in Afghanistan through the Taliban adding that this traces back to fears

related to the legacy of British colonial rule in the region.

He said however that Afghans want strong relations with Pakistan but that this can only exist if there is peace and stability in Afghanistan and "if the trust deficit is eliminated, and if Pakistan shows itself to be a good neighbor".

On the disputed border issue - the Durand Line - between the two countries, Karzai said: "We want an open exchange between people on both sides, without border controls, and with freedom of movement, similar to what Europeans have achieved today between Germany and France."

He went on to state that Pakistan would like Afghanistan to break off relations with India. "That is impossible. If we give in to this, we would give up our sovereignty and independence. If we want to send our police or our army or our boys and girls to India for training because it is good for our country, we should do so. Conversely, India should not complain if we have friendly relations with Pakistan," he said.

Asked why Pakistan should give up its fight now, Karzai said: "The Pakistani offensive is in full swing right now. There is fighting going on. But Pakistan must know that it cannot win by force.

"They may kill us. They may send us bombs, they may send us extremists, but that does not kill our spirit. Dominating Afghanistan from the outside has never worked. It didn't work for the British, it didn't work for the Soviets, and it didn't work for the United States, even with all of its resources.

"And the Pakistanis will not succeed either. Right now, we are closing ranks in Afghanistan and organizing resistance. So my appeal to Pakistan is: Let's be reasonable. Let's start a

civilized relationship between our two countries," he said.

"We would welcome such a proposal with the utmost interest. At the same time, we have high hopes for the so-called Troika plus, a diplomatic initiative launched by Russia, which also includes China and the United States," he said.

Karzai said however that both sides need to stop claiming to have the right to represent the Afghan people while holding the guns of a foreign power in their hands.

"My advice is this: Let the Taliban come back. Let them participate and prove themselves in public, whether in the Loya Jirga - the traditional representation of the people - in elections or in a referendum, as is customary around the world. Only then will it become clear who truly represents the people," he said. He also pointed out that after the Taliban's agreement with the U.S. last year, there is no longer any religious or patriotic legitimacy for them to attack their own countrymen or to instigate conflict in Afghanistan.

"Additionally, we cannot preserve the achievements of the last 20 years without the full participation of Afghan women. I am particularly proud and happy about their return to public life, by the way, and so are the Afghan people. We cannot allow Afghan girls not to go to school. The Taliban know that," he said.

In conclusion he said ultimately, the Taliban are also Afghans, and that he hopes they will stand up to foreign influences where necessary, such as in Pakistan.

"My appeal to Afghans, including the Taliban, is that we come together and finally take our fate into our own hands against all foreign powers," he said.

Harmonious...

and stop double standards on human rights issues.

Everyone must see the achievements in economic and social development, poverty alleviation, ethnic unity and harmony, and human

rights, and the outcome of counter-terrorism and de-radicalization efforts.

Some of the social media platforms and media outlets also fall victim to the propaganda of western media and becomes a player in

spreading lies about Xinjiang. The media outlets must analyze the blind propaganda coming from western think tanks and Medias about Xinjiang and should not be helping hand in spreading the lies about China.

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UN Security Council Welcomes Announcement of Ceasefire in Gaza

United Nations Security Council on Saturday welcomed the announcement of a ceasefire in Gaza.

Through a press statement, the council welcomed the announcement of a ceasefire beginning May 21 and recognized the important role Egypt, other regional countries, the UN, the Middle East Quartet and other international partners played in this regard.

The council called for the full adherence to the ceasefire and mourned the loss of civilian lives resulting from the violence.

The members of the Security Council stressed the immediate need for humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian civilian population, particularly in Gaza, and supported the secretary-general's call

for the international community to work with the United Nations on developing an integrated, robust package of support for a swift, sustainable reconstruction and recovery.

The council members stressed the urgency of the restoration of calm in full and reiterated the importance of achieving a comprehensive peace based on the vision of a region where two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, live side by side in peace with secure and recognized borders.

An Egyptian-brokered ceasefire agreement came into effect early on Friday at 2:00 a.m. Palestinian time between Israel and militant groups led by the Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas).



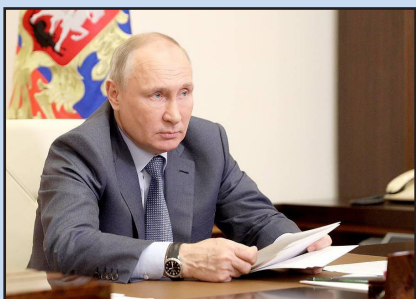
A look at the world

Putin Ready to Discuss Crimea with Zelensky in Context of Border Cooperation - Kremlin

Russian President Vladimir Putin is ready to discuss with his Ukrainian counterpart Vladimir Zelensky Crimea in the context of border cooperation between the two countries' regions, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

"Our Ukrainian vis-a-vis, for example, say: we will discuss Crimea. But if to discuss Crimea in the context of developing border cooperation - Russia has border cooperation between regions and foreign countries - if in this context, I'm sure Putin will be ready," Peskov told Moscow. Kremlin. Putin program on Rossiya-1 TV channel.

Meanwhile, he noted that if Kiev sought to



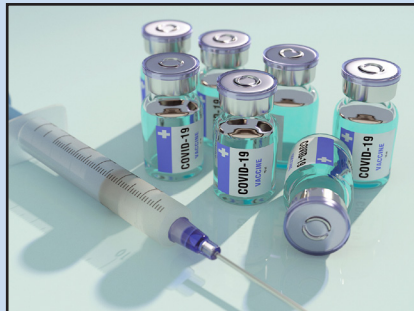
"discuss something else than that Crimea is a region of the Russian Federation, then no one would ever discuss this with anyone."

The Kremlin spokesman pointed out that the Constitution clearly says that it's a crime to speak about the alienation of Russian territories. According to him, "certainly, a lot needs to be worked out and the exchange of views should continue" on a possible meeting between the two leaders. "Let's see what will be the result. But this exchange of views is indeed taking place," he said.

Earlier, Zelensky said that he was ready for dialogue with Putin, adding that his office had begun talks with Moscow about the meeting. Peskov confirmed later that the two countries still maintained contacts, but said "the process is not easy," and the outline of issues is "rather conceptual than substantive." He added that currently there was no timeframe for a possible meeting.

On April 22, commenting on Zelensky's proposal to hold a one-on-one meeting, Putin pointed out that, if Donbass issues were in question, the Ukrainian leadership should, first and foremost, hold talks with representatives of the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics to resolve the problems in Donbass, and only then can these issues be discussed with officials from third countries, including Russia. Putin added that he was ready to welcome Zelensky in Moscow ... **P2**

China Makes New Pledges to Help Developing Countries Defeat COVID-19



China on Friday announced several new measures to help developing countries tackle the COVID-19 pandemic and its sweeping impacts, pledging to contribute \$3 billion in the next three years and provide more vaccines.

Addressing the Global Health Summit via video link, Chinese President Xi Jinping urged the world's leading economies to remedy deficiencies, close loopholes and strengthen weak links in fighting "the most serious pandemic in a century."

The summit was co-hosted by the European Commission and Italy, chair of the Group of 20 (G20) this year.

The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases worldwide has surpassed 165 million, with more than 3.4 million deaths, according to data from Johns Hopkins University.

'Close the immunization gap'

"A year ago, I proposed that vaccines should be made a global public good," Xi said. "Today, the problem of uneven vaccination has become more acute."

More than 1.1 billion COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered globally, but over 80 percent of those were administered in high and upper-middle income countries, with just 0.3 percent of inoculations taking place in low-income countries, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director general of the World Health Organization (WHO), said earlier this month.

China has supplied 300 million doses of vaccines to the world; it has provided free vaccines to more than 80 developing countries in urgent need and exported vaccines to 43 countries, Xi noted, adding that China will provide more vaccines to the best of its ability. China supports its vaccine companies in transferring technologies to other developing countries and carrying out joint production with them, he said.

Reaffirming China's support for waiving intellectual property rights on COVID-19 vaccines, he said the country "supports the World Trade Organization and other international institutions in making ... **P3**

Iran-IAEA Agreement may be Extended for One Month More

An informed source in the Secretariat of Iran's Supreme National Security Council announced the possibility of extending the agreement between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency for one month more.

Due to the end of Iran's quarterly deadline to the International Atomic Energy Agency, there is a possibility of conditional extension of the previous agreement for one month more, said the source to Nour News.

"The consideration of this issue stems from



Iran's goodwill to give an opportunity to the ongoing negotiations process in Vienna. If the decision is finalized, the negotiating parties are expected to seize the opportunity that Iran will give them again and facilitate the process of reaching an agreement by accepting Iran's legal demands," the source added.

According to an agreement reached between the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran during the IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi's visit to Iran in March, the camera's footage in Iran nuclear sites will be handed over to the IAEA only if the Vienna talks are concluded, otherwise, the footage will be permanently deleted.

This while, earlier, Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf pointed to the quarterly deadline for the Agency which expired on May 22, saying, "The International Atomic Energy Agency has no right to access the cameras footages and information of the Atomic Energy Organization due to the expiration of the deadline."



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