



Kabul
34° / 16°



Herat
38° / 21°



Nangarhar
37° / 26°



Balkh
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Heart of Asia

Your Gateway to Afghanistan & the Region

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Pres Ghani Chairs Security Meeting in Northern Balkh Province

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani on Tuesday visited Balkh province where he chaired a senior security meeting to assess the situation in Balkh and neighboring provinces, the Presidential Palace said in a statement. Provincial security officials briefed Ghani on the security situation in the northern provinces and shared their plans with him on how they aimed to repel the Taliban. "They [officials] assured Ghani that with coordination and joint efforts they will, with the support of the people, to defend the system, neutralize the conspiracy of the enemy, and they are ready for any sacrifice," read the statement. Meanwhile, Ghani expressed his gratitude to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces for keeping up their morale and for their resilience and composure in fighting the enemy. "To finance and equip the country's security and defense forces, international obligations remain in place and you have the full support of the government leadership," Ghani told the security officials present.

Karzai Called on Afghan Government, Taliban to Utilize Peace Opportunity



Former President Hamid Karzai on Tuesday said that meaningful peace talks are expected to resume soon, but he reiterated that the Afghan government and the Taliban should not lose the current opportunity for reconciliation. "You will soon witness the resumption of meaningful peace negotiations," Karzai said at a press conference,

calling on the people to not lose hope and to remain in the country. "Have patience, have plans, and move toward peace." The former president said the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan has deep roots in world powers' interference for the last two centuries. "We called the Taliban brothers repeatedly and we were criticized for this... What

has been built in Afghanistan in the last 20 years, the institutions that were built, all belong to the people of Afghanistan, not foreigners... Don't destroy roads, bridges and institutions," Karzai said, urging the group to show a willingness for peace. "To the Taliban, I would say that you will not gain anything by taking over districts." "And I call

on the Afghan government not to waste the opportunities for peace; make efforts and get to the peace negotiations and create a national government through peace," Karzai said. "I say to both sides that you are the owners of this soil, sit with each other, make peace and save the country from this situation." Karzai said the current situation is temporary. "The conflict is a stranger's conflict. The solution to this conflict is through unity and peace," he added. Karzai also called on Afghans to have faith in themselves, remain in the country and free themselves from fear. "Today, I am here specially to remove your fear that I hear in the media. This is immortal soil, and it will stand on its own. And we have proved it. We should have confidence," Karzai added. "We, the people of Afghanistan, should know the value of our soil and make demands based on that," Karzai said. "Afghanistan is a country for which world powers are in need and we should deal with the world with confidence." In response to a question about Turkey's role in Kabul airport security, Karzai says Turkey is a friend to... **P3**



WHO Donates Emergency Kits to Afghanistan

The World Health Organization (WHO) donated a shipment of 70 metric tons of emergency kits to the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), on Monday. The package has been provided to enable the MoPH address emergency cases. MoPH's Director General for Policy and Planning appreciated the WHO for its assistance and said that the MoPH is determined to provide healthcare services to the people across health centers, in all circumstances. The 2nd shipment is expected to arrive in Kabul on Tuesday. Meanwhile, MoPH and Afghan hospitals... **P3**

Pakistan Refuses to Host Additional Afghan Refugees

Pakistan's government said it has reached its limit and cannot accept more Afghan refugees as the threat of violence looms in Afghanistan. Pakistani officials are demanding that the world make arrangements for the refugees inside Afghanistan, amid fears that millions of Afghans may be forced to flee into neighboring countries if fighting between Taliban and Afghan government forces intensified or deteriorated into a civil war. "As a matter of fact, we are not in position to accept any more refugees," Pakistan's National Security Adviser Moeed Yusuf told VOA in a one-on-one interview. Almost 3 million Afghan... **P3**



Russia Against US Troops in Central Asia Near Afghanistan

Russia has strongly warned the United States against deploying its troops in the former Soviet Central Asian nations following their withdrawal from Afghanistan, a senior diplomat said in remarks published on Tuesday. Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said that Moscow conveyed the message to Washington during Russian President Vladimir Putin's summit with U.S. President Joe Biden in Geneva last month. The warning comes as the U.S. military said last week that 90% of the withdrawal of U.S. troops and equipment from Afghanistan is complete. Biden said the U.S. military mission in Afghanistan will conclude on Aug. 31. "I would emphasize that the redeployment of the American permanent military presence to the



countries neighboring Afghanistan is unacceptable," Ryabkov said. "We told the Americans in a direct and straightforward way that it would change a lot of things not only in our perceptions of what's going on in that important region, but also in our relations with the United States." He added that Russia has also issued the warning to Central

Asian nations. "We cautioned them against such steps, and we also have had a frank talk on the subject with our Central Asian allies, neighbors and friends and also other countries in the region that would be directly affected," Ryabkov said in an interview published in the Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn magazine... **P3**

US Deploys...

sent to US bases in eastern Syria. The US move comes as news sources reported a rocket attack on a US base at the al-Omar oil field on Sunday. US forces are stationed at several military bases in Syria, the most important of which are near the al-Omar oil field and the Koniko gas field in Deir ez-Zor and al-Tanf in southeastern Syria.

Canada...

keeps a running tally of global virus statistics, reported as of Monday over 187 million virus cases worldwide and more than four million deaths. "While Canadians continue to lead the world in vaccine administration, we know the picture is very different in many parts of the world," Anand said. WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the Delta variant of the virus is "ripping around the world at a scorching pace."

"We need more [vaccines] and we need them now."

China...

and their "call for freedom." However, China's foreign trade reached 18.07 trillion Chinese yuan (\$2.79 trillion) in the first half of 2021, up 27.1% year-on-year, official data said Tuesday. The figure indicates 22.8% growth from the pre-pandemic level in 2019, the General Administration of Customs said. The country's exports saw an annual rise of 28.1%, while imports surged 25.9% in the same period from a year earlier, the administration said. According to customs figures, the country's imports and exports rose 22% annually to \$500 billion this January to June, posting an increase for the 13th month in a row.

By: PATRICK COCKBURN

The Forever War in Afghanistan is Far from Over

Over the last week, I have been watching the Taliban sweep across the map of northern Afghanistan, capturing places that I first visited in 2001 at the beginning of the US-backed war. Taliban fighters have seized the main bridge to Tajikistan on the Amu Darya, a river that I crossed on an unwieldy raft a few months into the conflict. The last US commander of the giant Bagram airbase north of Kabul, once headquarters for 100,000 American troops in the country, left in the middle of the night last weekend without informing his Afghan successor – who has said he did not learn of the final US evacuation until two hours after it had happened. The most immediate cause of the implosion of Afghan government forces was the announcement by President Biden on 14 April that the last US troops would leave the country by 11 September. But the complaints of US and British generals that this is all happening too quickly for them to prepare the Afghan security forces to stand alone are absurd, since they have spent two decades failing to do just that. As western military intervention ends, it is worth asking what are the causes of this humiliating debacle. Why are so many Taliban willing to die for their cause, while government soldiers take flight or surrender? Why is the Afghan government in Kabul so corrupt and dysfunctional? What happened to the \$2.3 trillion spent by the US, trying, and failing, to win a war in a country that remains miserably poor? More generally, why did what was presented as a decisive victory by US-backed anti-Taliban forces twenty years ago turn into the present rout? One answer is that Afghanistan – like Lebanon, Syria and Iraq – is not a country where the word "decisive" should ever be used about any military victory or defeat. Winners and losers do not emerge, because there are too many players, inside and outside the country, who cannot afford to lose, or to see an enemy win. Simple-minded analogies with Vietnam in 1975 are misleading. The Taliban does not have anything like the military might of the North Vietnamese army. Moreover, Afghanistan is a mosaic of ethnic communities, tribes and regions, which the Taliban will struggle to

rule whatever happens to the Kabul government. The disintegration of the Afghan army and security forces has accelerated the Taliban's attack, which has often faced little resistance, and has enabled it to make spectacular territorial gains. Such rapid changes of fortune on the battlefield in Afghanistan are traditionally fuelled by individuals and communities swiftly changing to the winning side. Families send their young men to fight for both the government and the Taliban as a form of insurance. Swift surrenders by cities and districts avoid retribution, while over-long resistance leads to massacre. There was a similar pattern in 2001. While Washington and its local allies in the Northern Alliance were trumpeting their easy victory over the Taliban, the latter's fighters were returning unscathed to their villages, or slipping across the border into Pakistan to wait for better days. These came four or five years later, when the Afghan government had done enough to discredit itself. The great strength of the Taliban is that the movement has always had the support of Pakistan, a nuclear-armed state with a powerful army, a population of 216 million, and a 1,616-mile-long border with Afghanistan. The US and UK never sufficiently took on board that unless they were prepared to confront Pakistan, they could not win the war. Other strengths of the Taliban are a core of fanatical, experienced commanders and fighters who are rooted in the Pashtun community, which makes up 40 per cent of the Afghan population. A Pakistani colonel commanding irregular Pashtun troops just across the border from Afghanistan once queried me about American and British efforts "to win hearts and minds" in heavily Pashtun southern Afghanistan. He thought their chances of success were low, since, he said, experience had taught him that a central feature of Pashtun culture was that "they really hate foreigners". Propaganda about "nation-building" by foreign occupiers in Afghanistan and Iraq was always patronising and unrealistic. National self-determination is not something that can be fostered by foreign forces, whatever their supposed good intentions. They invariably consult



their own interests first and last, and the Afghan government's reliance on them delegitimised it in the eyes of Afghans, depriving it of roots within Afghan society. The vast sums of money available because of US expenditure produced a kleptocratic elite. The US has spent \$144bn on development and reconstruction, but some 54 per cent of Afghans live below the poverty line, with earnings of less than \$1.90 a day. An Afghan friend who had once worked for United States Agency for International Development (USAID) explained to me some of the mechanics of how corruption was able to flourish. He said that American aid officials in Kabul thought it too dangerous for them personally to visit projects they were financing. Instead, they stayed in their heavily defended offices and relied on photographs and videos to show them the progress of the projects they were paying for. On occasion, they would send an Afghan employee like my friend to see for himself what was happening on the ground. On a visit to Kandahar to monitor the building of a vegetable-packing plant, he discovered that a local company akin to a film studio would, for a fee, take convincing pictures of work in progress. Using extras and a suitable backdrop, they were able to show employees in a shed busily sorting carrots and potatoes, though no such facility existed. On another occasion, the Afghan aid official had discovered evidence of a fraud, though this

time there had been little attempt to conceal it. After looking in vain for a well-funded but non-existent chicken farm near Jalalabad, he met with its proprietors, who pointed out to him that it was a long road back to Kabul. Interpreting this as a threat to murder him if he exposed them, he kept quiet and resigned from his job soon afterwards. Foreign aid has built real schools and clinics, but corruption has corroded every government institution. On the military frontline, it means "ghost" soldiers, and the garrisons of threatened outposts left without enough food and ammunition. None of this is new. Visiting Kabul and other cities over the years, I came to feel that the Taliban had limited support, but that everybody viewed government officials as parasites to be circumvented or bribed. In Kabul, a prosperous real-estate dealer – not a business normally sympathetic to radical change – told me that it was impossible for a system so saturated by corruption "to continue without a revolution". Instead, government failure has enabled the Taliban to believe that they can return to power within a year. Such a prospect frightens many people. What, for instance, will be the response of the 4 million Hazara minority, who are Shia by religion and are close to Iran? Earlier this year, bombs in Kabul killed 85 Hazara girls and teachers as they left their school. As in 2001, the forever war in Afghanistan is far from over.

By: Bradley Blankenship

Afghanistan: America Bombs, China Builds

Editor's note: Bradley Blankenship is a Prague-based American journalist, political analyst and freelance reporter. The article reflects the author's opinions and not necessarily the views of CGTN. U.S. President Joe Biden recently defended the troop withdrawal from Afghanistan, saying that "the United States did what we went to do," which he says was delivering justice to the perpetrators of 9/11 and to "degrade the terrorist threat" that Afghanistan poses. According to Biden, the U.S. achieved those objectives – and, moreover, the U.S. "did not go to Afghanistan to nation-build." Biden's statement is merely a deflection from the fact that the U.S. actually had no clear plan in Afghanistan,

though if anything suffered a humiliating defeat. The lack of any clear plan is represented by the fact that objectives and priorities had constantly shifted through the war. For example, the fact that Osama bin Laden, the orchestrator of the 9/11 terrorist attack, was killed 10 years ago – and not even in Afghanistan, but in Pakistan. An account of the bin Laden operation by famous journalist Seymour Hersh actually shows unparalleled incompetence on the part of U.S. intelligence and special forces. On top of this, while the U.S. had vowed to destroy the Taliban, which it had inadvertently helped usher into power beginning in the 1980s when it supported Islamic extremists fighting against the

Soviet Union (including Osama bin Laden himself), the Taliban is anticipating a return to power. It begs the question of what exactly the U.S. accomplished and the answer is, unsurprisingly, very little. As Biden admits, it certainly had nothing to do with nation-building, e.g., creating a stable political or economic situation in Afghanistan that could survive past the U.S. occupation. This is certainly the rule and not the exception for America's track record on foreign intervention because the U.S. and its myriad bureaucracies lack clear strategic aims, and if they do have them then often they contradict one another. Perhaps then this is the most important implication of Biden's speech:

That any "foreign intervention" is "unwinnable" and reckless, as well as the fact that "nation-building" is impossible, because if the U.S. can't do it then no one can. But is this actually true? It's quite an important point since China is now looking for ways to help fill the vacuum left by the United States. This week, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi will be visiting Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, as well as attending a meeting of the foreign ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a Eurasian regional security pact, and the SCO-Afghanistan contact group. Some commentators are already spinning propaganda webs about what Chinese aid might look like, falsely saying any Chinese "intervention" is somehow qualitatively similar to whatever it was the U.S. was doing in Afghanistan for two

decades. For starters, no one is talking about Chinese troops occupying Afghanistan in the absence of American troops, which is the clear implication of some commentators. What they're trying to do instead is perpetuate the myth of "Chinese imperialism," which is the idea that China's cooperation in developing nations is predatory, and then equate this to actual Western imperialism, which has been responsible for countless genocides and wars, on top of centuries of exploitation. China's intentions in Afghanistan are clear: Beijing wants to help Afghanistan rebuild, integrate into the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and join into a connected future in Eurasia – all with no political strings attached. That's because this is already a win-win situation for both China, Afghanistan, the region and the... **P3**

Government Stops Budget to Development Projects

The government has stopped all procurement processes and the budget for development projects due to a reduction in its revenues and an increase in expenses of the security forces, the Ministry of Finance said. The ministry said that based on the decision, the budget for "optional projects" has been stopped. Optional projects, the ministry said, are implemented by the government but are funded by donors. "The electronic identity cards and passport services, as well as the payments of civil service employees and other services by the government, will continue as normal," said Rafiq Tabi, spokesman for the Ministry of Finance. The

decision to stop development projects will harm the economy of the country, a lawmaker said, criticizing the government for delay in sending the report of its mid-year review of the budget. "If they want to continue normal services in the security sector as well as in passport and electronic identity cards, they should stop the budget for development projects for the next year," said Jawed Safi, member of the finance and budget committee of the parliament. Sources have said that the government's revenues have reduced as six customs offices have fallen to the Taliban in recent weeks. Analysts said the government needs to implement plans to return



the development projects to normal. "The fact that they have stopped the development projects is itself considered an achievement for the Taliban," a university lecturer and analyst, Sayed Massoud, said. The

budget for the current fiscal year is over 473 billion Afs (nearly \$6 billion), including 311 billion Afs (\$4 billion) for the regular budget and 162 billion Afs (\$2 billion) for the development budget.

Karzai...

Afghanistan and that he hopes Afghanistan will witness "good days" through its cooperation with Turkey. He said that individuals cannot decide on who will run the country. "The leadership of the country and decisions about a (future) government in the country is not in any individual's authority; it belongs to the will of the Afghan nation," Karzai said. "It is done through the Afghan nation's will. We will accept anyone's leadership on the condition that the will of every individual in Afghanistan is part of it." Karzai also mentioned the freedom of the press as one of the biggest achievements of Afghanistan in the last 20 years.

Pakistan...

refugees, half of them unregistered, have been living in Pakistan since the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980s and subsequent waves of violence and later a civil war, according to the U.N. "We are willing to help but we are in no position to take in new refugees this time around. The international forces and the U.N. should make arrangements for them inside Afghanistan," Yusuf Said. Yusuf said there needs to be an effort to prepare for the refugees, highlighting his government's policy. "If such a situation arises, then the United Nations refugee agency, UNHCR, should set up camps for the refugees on the Afghan side of the border," he said. At present, there are two key border crossings between Pakistan and Afghanistan — Chaman in Balochistan and Torkham in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa — apart from several small trading points. Of the 2,640-kilometer boundary with Afghanistan, Pakistan has fenced nearly 90% and deployed the army and the Frontier Constabulary, a militia under the federal interior ministry, to man it. Pakistani authorities say they have been hosting millions of refugees even though they are not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention or the 1967 Optional Protocol for refugees. U.S. President Joe Biden on Friday announced that the U.S. would complete the troop withdrawal in Afghanistan by August 31, nearly 20 years after the U.S. led an invasion of the country following al-Qaida's attack on the U.S., September 11, 2001.

WHO Donates...

gained the membership of the International Hospital Federation. Acting Public Health Minister Vahid Majroh held a videoconference with Federation's CEO Ronald Lavater on Tuesday, and discussed Afghanistan's membership, bilateral cooperation, particularly launching capacity building programs, defining and implementing standards within Afghanistan's public hospitals, and Lavater pledged to cooperate. Located in Geneva, Switzerland, the International Hospital Federation is a non-profit, non-governmental international membership organization, which helps hospitals and

Russia...

On Monday, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov emphasized that Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are all members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, and any presence of foreign troops on their territories must be endorsed by the security pact. He added that none of those countries have raised the issue. Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan both host Russian military bases. Kyrgyzstan, which hosted a U.S. military base that supported operations in Afghanistan, closed it in 2014. Uzbekistan, which also hosted a U.S. base, ordered it shut in 2005 amid tensions with Washington. "I don't think that the emergence of new American military facilities in

healthcare organizations deliver better health. Also, a coordination meeting between the leadership of the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH), Civil Aviation Authority, Investment Facilitation Unit of the Administrative Office of the President, and Afghanistan's Embassy in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) focused on the UAE's concerns about the high number of COVID-19 cases in Afghanistan, flight suspension, and plans of the MoPH and partner agencies to control and limit the spread of the virus in the country, and comply with international health rules as a prerequisite for the re-launch of flights to UAE. Acting Public Health Minister Vahid Majroh issued the necessary directives

to the relevant agencies about the quick response Code (QR-Code) to ensure transparency, prevent corruption and fraud in PCR tests and COVID-19 vaccine cards, and the compliance of these documents with international standards. The meeting also emphasized on the need for serious oversight for ensuring the quality of PCR test results by public and private COVID-19 laboratories, and joint cooperation and work between relevant agencies. This comes even as the Ministry of Public Health MoPH recorded 754 new coronavirus (COVID-19) infections and 72 deaths in the past 24 hours. The total cases now stand at 136,643, while death toll is 5,921.

Central Asia would promote security in the region," Lavrov said. The Biden administration has reportedly considered Uzbekistan and Tajikistan that border Afghanistan, as well as Kazakhstan, as possible staging areas for monitoring and quickly responding to possible security problems that may follow the U.S. military's withdrawal from Afghanistan. "I don't think that anyone is interested in becoming a hostage to such US policy and intentions, and in inviting retaliation," Lavrov said. The Russian foreign minister questioned what results would be achieved with a small U.S. presence outside Afghanistan when a 100,000-strong NATO force inside the country "failed to do anything." "Most probably, they simply want to ensure their

military presence in Central Asia and be able to influence the situation in this region." As the American and NATO troops were swiftly pulling out, the Taliban have made quick gains across the country. They claimed on Friday that they now control 85% of Afghanistan's territory. Russian officials have expressed concern that the Taliban surge could destabilize Central Asia. Taliban advances already have forced hundreds of Afghan soldiers to flee across the border into Tajikistan which called up 20,000 military reservists to strengthen its southern border with Afghanistan. Last week, a senior Taliban delegation visited Moscow to offer assurances that the insurgents' advances in Afghanistan do not threaten Russia or its allies in Central Asia.

Afghanistan...

entire world. As the most important political and economic power in the region, China is logically positioned to help Afghanistan transition from U.S. occupation. At the same time, China understands through lived experience that economic investment that creates sustainable

opportunities for people on the ground is important for peace and prosperity. A safe and prosperous Afghanistan that is not a playground for international terror networks would benefit everyone. Already, the clarity (and simplicity) of such a plan stands far and away from America's misdeeds in Afghanistan. Plus there's

also the obvious qualitative difference between Washington literally bombing a country for two decades and, on the other hand, Beijing helping Kabul join the most ambitious global infrastructure plan in history. To put it simply, China will not be the next empire to die in Afghanistan.

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US Deploys Air Defenses in Syria After Rocket, Drone Strikes

Amid some reports about the strengthening of the US position in eastern Syria, news sources reported that US troops had deployed air defenses in the Syrian province of Deir ez-Zor. News sources reported on Tuesday morning that the United States has strengthened its position in Deir ez-Zor province after rocket and drone strikes on its bases in eastern Syria in recent days. MS Press Agency reported that military equipment has been sent to US coalition bases in the Koniko gas field and al-Omar oil field on a regular basis since Monday morning. Referring to recent rocket attacks on US positions in eastern Syria, the news agency quoted sources as saying that 20 military vehicles had been dispatched just hours after the attack on the al-Omar and Koniko bases. It also quoted Syrian television as saying that among the

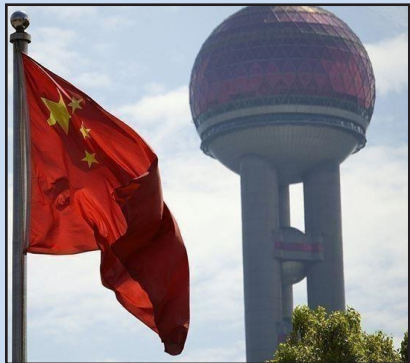
equipment sent to the Rmelan military base northeast of al-Hasakah (northeastern Syria) were three Bradley Fighting Vehicle type 9, two 130 mm caliber cannons, all kinds of ammunition, and American military forces. The report goes on to say that simultaneously with sending equipment to US bases, Syrian Democratic Forces [affiliated with the US] have strengthened their positions around and inside the al-Omar oil field with 150 troops, as well as made several trenches around the base. Meanwhile, Al-Mayadeen correspondent reported on Tuesday on his Twitter account that after repeated attacks on US bases in eastern Syria, the US deployed several air defense systems in the Koniko gas field. The reports came as the official Syrian News Agency (SANA) confirmed on Monday that large-scale equipment had been... **P2**



A look at the world

China Backs Cuban Government Amid Unprecedented Public Protests

China on Tuesday extended support to the government in Cuba after massive protests over the public health and economic conditions caused by COVID-19, according to media reports from Beijing. "China firmly supports Cuba's efforts in combating COVID-19 and maintaining social stability," spokesman Zhao Lijian for China's Foreign Ministry told a news conference in Beijing. "The US should fully lift its blockade against Cuba," Zhao said, according to the Chinese daily Global



Times. For the first time in the country's history, thousands demonstrated in Havana and other cities on the island last Sunday against blackouts, food shortages, the coronavirus outbreak and an economic crisis stemming mainly from crippling US sanctions exercised for decades. Dozens of demonstrators were arrested during the protests. Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel, however, said on Monday that the policies adopted by Washington against the island provoked "social outbursts in the country." In a live television broadcast, Diaz-Canel said his government tried to "face and overcome" difficulties amid "a policy of economic asphyxiation to provoke social outbursts in the country." Zhao said: "China believes under the leadership of Cuban party and government, Cuba will surely maintain social stability." Diaz-Canel said that demonstrators "got what they deserved." "Yesterday we saw criminals. The protest was not peaceful, there was vandalism, they stoned foreign currency stores, items were stolen," the president said as he accused the US of orchestrating social media campaigns to manipulate protesters. US President Joe Biden on Monday voiced support for the Cuban people... **P2**

Turkish Party Leader Calls on US to Extradite Fetullah Gulen



The US should extradite the leader of the Fetullah Terrorist Organization (FETO), the group behind the 2016 defeated coup in Turkey, the head of a Turkish major political party said on Tuesday. "Unless the terror nests in Pennsylvania are dispersed and the terrorist leader (Fetullah) Gulen and his gang are held accountable before Turkish justice ... the Turkish people will not be able to breathe a sigh of relief," Devlet Bahçeli, leader of the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), told his party's parliamentary group. Gulen is a resident alien of the US state of Pennsylvania. Bahçeli said that if the US had not been behind FETO, then under the rules of alliances, the US would have "immediately" extradited Gulen to Turkey. "There is no alternative, no other solution, no other choice, the price of betrayal would not have been paid otherwise," he said. "The US is obliged to fulfill this historic duty to support the fight against terrorism," he added. Since 2016, US presidents have said it is up to independent judicial authorities to decide on Gulen's extradition, claiming that Turkey has not given them sufficient evidence of Gulen's guilt. But Turkey has said it sent US officials extensive evidence showing that Gulen was the coup ringleader. FETO and its US-based leader Fetullah Gulen orchestrated the defeated coup of July 15, 2016, in which 251 people were killed and 2,734 injured. Ankara also accuses FETO of being behind a long-running campaign to overthrow the state through the infiltration of Turkish institutions, particularly the military, police, and judiciary.

Canada to Donate 17.7M COVID Vaccine Doses for Poorer Countries

Canada will donate 17.7 million AstraZeneca vaccine doses to help inoculate people in Third World countries, the government announced Monday. The announcement also included a commitment of CAN\$10 million (US\$8 million) that will match donations dollar-for-dollar to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) by individual Canadians. The vaccines will be administered by COVAX, a joint vaccine-sharing program run by the



World Health Organization (WHO), the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovation (CEPI) and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. "This donation is a result of our proactive approach to securing hundreds of millions of COVID-19 vaccines in our initial contracts. With close to 55 million vaccines in Canada, and with the demands of the provinces and territories for this vaccine being met, we are now in a position to donate these excess doses," said Canada's Procurement Minister Anita Anand. As well, donations to UNICEF by Canadians will be matched by the federal government up to CAN\$10 million. If the donations and the federal government reach the goal of \$20 million, it will provide funds to vaccinate four million people, Anand said. The 17.7 million doses and CAN\$10 million matching donor program are on top of Canada's CAN\$440 million contribution to COVAX. The doses come at a crucial time as global cases of the coronavirus rise and WHO officials warn that wealthier countries must do more to help lower- and middle-income countries that are struggling with skyrocketing cases. US-based Johns Hopkins University, which... **P2**



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