

(1) Afghans Celebrate...

"We want a peaceful Afghanistan. We live with this hope," said Haji Lala, a Khost resident.

The day is celebrated on August 19 every year.

Although Afghanistan was never part of the British Empire, it gained its independence from Britain after the signing of the Anglo-Afghan Treaty in 1919 - a treaty that granted complete neutral relations between Afghanistan and Britain.

And although not having been part of the British Empire, Britain fought three wars in the country.

The First Anglo-Afghan War (1839-1842) led to the defeat of the entire British-led Indian invaders by Afghan forces under Abdur Akbar Khan. The Second Anglo-Afghan War (1878-1880) first saw the British defeated in the Battle of Kandahar only for them to emerge victors - which led to Abdur Rahman Khan becoming the new emir.

This ushered in a new era of friendly British-Afghan relations. Following this war, the British were given control of Afghanistan's foreign affairs in exchange for protection against the Russians and Persians.

In 1901 Abdur Rahman Khan's son, Habibullah, succeeded him.

Habibullah was a relatively reform-minded ruler who attempted to modernize his country. During his reign, he worked to bring modern medicine and other technology to Afghanistan and worked to put in place progressive reforms in his country.

He was assassinated while on a hunting trip in Laghman Province on February 20, 1919. His brother Nasrullah Khan briefly succeeded him as emir and held power for a week before being ousted and imprisoned by Amanullah Khan, Habibullah's third son.

However, the third Anglo-Afghan War started the same year and resulted in the British giving up control of Afghanistan's foreign affairs in 1921. Within a few months, the new emir had gained the allegiance of most tribal leaders and established control over the cities.

Amanullah's ten years of reign initiated a period of dramatic change in Afghanistan in both foreign and domestic politics. Starting in May 1919 when he won complete independence in the month-long Third Anglo-Afghan War with Britain, Amanullah altered foreign policy in his new relations with external powers and transformed domestic politics with his social, political, and economic reforms.

Although his reign ended abruptly, he achieved some notable successes.

Before final negotiations were concluded in 1921 on the foreign policy issue, however, Afghanistan had already begun to establish its own foreign policy, including diplomatic relations with the new government in the Soviet Union in 1919.

During the 1920s, Afghanistan established diplomatic relations with most major countries, and Amanullah officially became king in 1923.

On 14 January 1929, Amanullah abdicated and fled to neighboring British India while Afghanistan fell into a civil war. From British India, he went to Europe where he died in Zürich, Switzerland, in 1960. (Tolo news)

(2) We Don't ...

"very good discussions" with both with the Afghan government and with the Taliban but the President is far from trusting of the group.

"I'm not trusting anybody," Trump said. "It's a horrible situation that's going on in Afghanistan." (Pajhwok)

(3) Kabul Attack...

The bride's 11-year-old brother was also killed in the attack.

Despite that, Mirwais and Roena have tied the knot and they have to live together with the bitter memories. (Tolo news)

(4) UN Condemns Attack ...

who is also head of UNAMA. "The United Nations stands with all Afghans in solidarity and remains committed to an Afghan-led peace process that will end the war and bring about a lasting peace."

The United Nations extends deep condolences to families who lost loved ones and wishes a quick recovery to those injured. (WAM)

(5) President Orders ...

were assessed from September 2017 to January 2019.

The findings show a large number of

employees and diplomats in MoFA had been hired based on their political affiliation, bribery and connections.

The survey shows the MoFA hired more than 490 workers between 2011 and 2017 while the absolute majority or 466 of them were hired informally, without passing a test.

The MoFA, however, rejected the report and termed it baseless and far from reality. The ministry said the MEC research was biased and based on personal creed and tendencies.

Days after the MEC report, the president ordered investigation into the financial affairs, signing of contracts and trips of foreign minister in a decree No# 1444 on August 15.

The presidential decree orders the formation of a powerful delegation to inquire about alleged corruption charges mentioned in the MEC research report. The delegation, headed by an individual from the Presidential Office, will be accompanied by authorized representatives from the Ministry of Finance, the National Directorate of Security, the National Procurement Commission and the Independent Administrative Reforms and Civil Services Commission (IARCSC).

The delegation is tasked with investigating the manner in which diplomats, consulate generals and duties are appointed besides transparency and compliance to legislative decrees.

In addition, the decree directed the investigative team to probe the already signed procurement contracts of MoFA, transparency, accountability in financial matters including revenue and expenditures. (Pajhwok)

(6) UN Congratulate ...

as the birthplace to many scientific breakthroughs, as the foundation for many developments in literature and the arts. This past is testament to the future of Afghanistan.

"As we mark 100 years of Afghanistan's independence, the United Nations remains mindful that Afghanistan is at a crucial moment in its history, with final preparations now being put into place for an election that will give voice to the people, and with a real possibility for breakthroughs in peace after so many years of war."

"Afghanistan is one of the earliest members of the United Nations, joining in 1946. The United Nations is proud of this long partnership, and proud to be able to work for the people of Afghanistan toward a better future where this country can once again take its place as a crossroads for commerce and culture, for the region and for the world." (Pajhwok)

(7) US Extends Best ...

you celebrate a century of resilience and cultural diversity. We applaud your accomplishments of the last two decades, including significant improvements in education, health, infrastructure, women's rights, economic opportunity, and media freedom." He said.

Sadly Afghanistan's 100 year history has also been marked by conflict. The terrorist attack against a Kabul wedding hall this weekend is an attack against humanity. As we commemorate Afghan history and memorialize Afghan sacrifice, we redouble our commitment to work together toward a peaceful future in which we can strengthen the bonds of friendship between our nations.

"During my most recent visit to Afghanistan this summer, I reaffirmed our commitment to help Afghans preserve the gains of the past 18 years by continuing support to Afghan institutions on the pathway to self-reliance. The United States and Afghanistan are enduring partners, working together toward a sustainable peace and a safer, better tomorrow for all Afghans," he said. (Pajhwok)

(8) Presidential ...

did not take place," she said. She said 19 voter registration centers out of 233 were closed in Ghazni province due to security issues.

Nuristani added the IEC was able to register voters in Darzab district of Jawzjan, Nish district of Kandahar and Kohistan district of Faryab where general registration could be conducted previously due to security problems. Maulana Abdullah, a IEC commissioner, told today's press conference that the commission was committed to holding presidential election on September 28.

He said the IEC had taken some steps for preventing fraud and electoral violations and biometric system and fingerprints were part of those measures.

"This process would be watched by domestic and foreign observers, election oversight institutes, political parties and coalitions, media and observers of candidates", she said. (Pajhwok)

(9) Critics Express...

pro-Taliban figures, meanwhile, say that Afghanistan's independence and sovereignty will remain questioned until the US forces leave the country. "The talks with Americans are underway about their withdrawal. Their presence here has raised questions on our freedom," a former Taliban commander Sayed Akbar Agha said.

Analysts said that today's world scenario is totally different from the past and countries have some type of dependency on each other.

"When it comes to relations between countries, it is mutual dependency but not resolute freedom and independence. For instance, the way the soldiers are dependent on the US money, the US is dependent on the security of Afghanistan," said Abdul Hafiz Mansoor, an MP.

"Political dependency where others make decisions in our absence looks like slavery," political analyst Ahmad Saedi said.

"We are not at that level now. There are no infrastructures. We are still facing problems to implement the ideas of Amanullah Khan despite there is theory for it," said Khan Jan Alokzai, acting head of Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries.

Taliban in a statement on the occasion of Independence Day said foreign forces are preparing to withdraw from the country and that this would mean the complete independence for Afghanistan.

Regardless of what politicians think or evaluate the philosophy of independence, ordinary Afghans said they are firmly committed to safeguarding and loving their motherland.

On Monday, August 19, many people flocked to Kabul streets and expressed their love for their motherland by hoisting Afghanistan's national flag on their cars, homes, and shops.

"We are proud of our 100 years of independence. I salute King Amanullah for giving us this honor," said Ahmad Samir, a Kabul resident.

Other residents raised hopes for lasting peace in the country in the near future.

"These youths are here to celebrate the 100th Independence Day of Afghanistan," said Dawlat Khan Ahmadzai, a Kabul resident.

"We are here to celebrate our independence in this free environment," said Aziz-Ur-Rahman, a Kabul resident. (Tolo news)

(10) Afghan Forces ...

in ARG Presidential Palace and Ministry of Defense.

The statement by National Directorate of Security also added that the NDS Special Forces arrested the two militants at 9:00 am local time on Monday in Qala-e-Zaman Khan area of Kabul. The NDS Special Forces also confiscated a mortar launcher with its 16 rockets, 45 kilograms of explosives, 12 magnetic bombs, an Ak-47 assault rifle, remote controls and some other equipment which are used in making suicide bombing vests and bombs. (KP)

(11) Blasts Disrupt ...

between Afghanistan and Britain. And although not having been part of the British Empire, Britain fought three wars in the country.

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(12) Putin, Macron...

in eastern Ukraine that has killed more than 13,000 people since 2014.

The Kremlin has kept the door open for such a meeting, but urged Ukraine to first honor provisions of a 2015 Minsk agreement that was brokered by France and Germany. The deal has helped reduce fighting, but clashes have continued and political settlement has stalled.

Iran will also be high on the agenda in the context of heightened tensions between the country and the United States. France wants Russia to use its close ties with Tehran to push for de-escalation.

Macron has taken a lead role in trying to save the 2015 nuclear accord, which has been unraveling since Trump pulled the U.S. out of the agreement. Russia, along with Britain, Germany and China, remains a part of the accord.

France also hopes to convince Putin to use his influence in Syria to stop a government military offensive in the region of Idlib, a rebel-controlled area in the northwest of the country. Moscow backs Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's government, but Paris is pushing for a truce that would prevent more civilian deaths and flows of refugees. (AP)

(13) Turkey Ousts...

Erdogan had warned ahead of local elections in March of such a move against elected officials if they were found to have had connections to the PKK.

"For the health of the investigations, they have been temporarily removed from their posts as a precaution," the ministry said, referring to Diyarbakir Mayor Selcuk Mizrakli, Mardin Mayor Ahmet Turk and Van Mayor Bedia Ozgokce Ertan.

Police detained 418 people in 29 provinces in a related investigation targeting suspects with links to the PKK, the ministry added.

The pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), to which the three mayors belong, said they had been dismissed "on an order based on lies and illegal justifications".

"This is a new and clear political coup. It is a clear and hostile stance against the political will of the Kurdish people," the HDP executive board said in a written statement.

It said the three mayors had been elected with between 53% to 63% of the vote in their cities in March and called for support from other political parties.

"This is not just the problem of the HDP and the Kurdish people. It is the shared problem of all Turkey's peoples and all democratic forces," it added. (Reuters)

(14) UK's Johnson ...

took office last month after his predecessor, Theresa May, failed three times to get parliament to approve the withdrawal deal she had negotiated with the EU.

He is insisting Britain will leave with or without a transition deal on Oct. 31 although a majority in parliament have previously tried to prevent a so-called no-deal Brexit. Johnson's calls for the EU to renegotiate the deal have so far been rejected by the bloc's negotiators. That puts Britain on course for an unmanaged exit, which an official assessment published by the Sunday Times said would jam ports, increase the risk of public protests and severely disrupt the world's fifth-largest economy.

In his first foreign trip as prime minister, Johnson will meet Merkel in Berlin on Wednesday and Macron in Paris on Thursday.

The European Commission, which is leading negotiations on behalf of France, Germany and other EU members, said it was ready for a no-deal Brexit and that Britain would suffer most under such a scenario. On Sunday Merkel said Germany would be prepared whatever the outcome.

Ministers in Johnson's Conservative government have played down the leaked no-deal assessment on Sunday, saying the document was old and did not reflect increased funding and planning undertaken by the prime minister since he took office.

They accuse the opposition Labour Party and others who are opposed to a no-deal Brexit of undermining negotiations with the EU, saying European leaders will wait to see if parliament can block such an outcome before deciding whether to renegotiate the deal. (Reuters)

(15) Iran Tanker ...

Thursday but the next day a federal court in Washington issued a warrant for the seizure of the tanker, the oil it carries and nearly \$1 million.

Gibraltar said on Sunday it could not comply with that request because it was bound by EU law. Washington wanted to detain the tanker on the grounds that it had links to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), which it has designated a terrorist organization.

"We are happy this ordeal has ended and I hope this will lead to less escalation," Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said while visiting Finland.

He also said the U.S. warrant had no legal basis and was politically motivated to "make more escalation".

Greek authorities had no immediate comment on the situation. (Reuters)

(16) Beijing Warns ...

"China will take necessary measures to defend its self-interest based on the development of the situation."

Geng did not specify the exact steps Beijing would take. He had previously said that the country would cut ties with all US companies selling weapons to Taiwan and ban them from doing business in China.

US-Chinese relations have deteriorated amid the ongoing trade war and the large-scale anti-government protests in Hong Kong, China's self-governing territory. Some leading American politicians have openly backed the protest rallies. China responded by saying that such support serves as "powerful evidence of the country's involvement" in inciting riots in Hong Kong. Last week, China rejected the US Navy's request for two of its ships to dock at the port of Hong Kong. President Donald Trump, meanwhile, had offered Chinese leader Xi Jinping a "personal meeting" to discuss how to "quickly and humanely solve the Hong Kong problem." (RT)

(17) 'Prevent Anything...

prospect of stationing the US Navy along the 2,800km (1,700 miles) long Venezuelan coastline unfeasible and too costly to attempt, Trump has not given up on the idea, floating it again as recently as "several weeks ago," the officials said. Senior officials in the Trump administration also reportedly voiced concerns about the implications of the move from an international law perspective, as it appears to lack any legal justification.

Others warned that such a mammoth project would require an amount of resources that the navy does not yet possess, and could hurt the US' ability to deter China and Iran since the blockade would require diverting ships from other regions.

When he proposed a blockade of Venezuela, Trump apparently reminisced about the one imposed on Cuba during the Caribbean crisis of 1962, according to one official who spilled the beans to Axios. They noted that the president has been having a hard time grasping the geographical challenges posed by his plan.

Trump first publicly admitted that he was considering a blockade or a "quarantine" of Venezuela in early August. "Yes, I am," the president said back then, when asked by a reporter if he was weighing such an option, but provided no details. In the weeks that followed, he never touched on the subject again, at least publicly.

Trump's remark drew a strong rebuke from Caracas, with Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro saying that his country was "prepared for battle" if Washington delivers on its threat.

The US has been openly advocating regime change in Venezuela, rallying behind opposition leader Juan Guaido, who is struggling to regain momentum after a failed coup attempt on April 31, and hitting the nation with layers of sanctions intended to ruin its already crippled economy, all in the name of a "peaceful democratic transition." (RT)

(18) Awkward: Netanyahu...

troops gave the regulation response, "Glory to heroes." The exchange is new for the Ukrainian military, but relatively old in itself.

Originating in the early 20th century circles of nationalists who wanted to carve up parts of Imperial Russia and Poland and create an independent Ukraine, it saw its heyday as the call of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and its militant wing Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA). They pursued their vision of a nation state through allying with the Nazis and exterminating Poles and Jews.

The very same words Netanyahu heard on Monday, likely sounded over the killing fields of Baby Yar, a place that is on his Ukrainian trip program. Of course Kiev today approaches every historical figure or organization with an "independent Ukraine" agenda, wielding a magnifying glass in one hand and a big bucket of white paint in the other. As long as the mass-murdering Nazi collaborators were not as bad as the damned Moskal occupants, their slogan is perfectly fine today. All is fair in building national identity, right? (RT)