

(1) Afghan Peace...

the polls will be held on its scheduled time.

Mr. Bass said the Afghan election should be held on its scheduled time if there is a hurdle in the way of the peace process.

"Both are important for the United States. Peace is our highest priority because it is also the highest priority of the Afghan people. And every day, we have Afghans telling us that peace is their highest priority," Mr. Bass said. "So, we are working very hard to create that opportunity for Afghans to sit together, to negotiate, to work out their differences and to try to achieve a durable peace agreement which is accepted by most of the people of this country and is therefore implemented."

In response to a question about US forces withdrawal from Afghanistan, Mr. Bass said that the United States and its allies will have confidence that there will be no threat against other countries from Afghanistan.

"My government and other governments have a confidence that we will not face terrorist attacks from inside Afghanistan in the future and if the Talibs want to see intentional forces depart, then they are going to have to demonstrate how it is that they will help ensure that there are no future terrorist threats against the United States or our allies and partners from Afghanistan," he said.

Meanwhile, Balkh governor Mohammad Ishaq Rahguzar said that the peace talks, the election, and security were the main agenda of his meeting with the US ambassador.

"We discussed how to increase our operations against militants and undertake plans to prevent the militants from disrupting the elections or the security of the province," he said.

The US envoy's trip to Balkh comes as the residents of the province recently expressed their concerns over the security of the province and said it will not allow them to show a wide presence in the upcoming presidential election.

This comes as a former member of the Taliban says the agreement between the US and the Taliban will be finalized within the next few days as the ninth round of the negotiations began in Doha on Thursday.

Abdul Salam Zaeef, who served as Taliban's ambassador for Pakistan when the group ruled the country in the late 1990s, told TOLNews on Friday that the deputy leader of the group, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar will sign the peace agreement with the US.

Mr. Zaeef said the US negotiators want to mention in the agreement that the Taliban will not have any relations with terrorist groups after the peace agreement.

The two sides in Doha are expected to discuss ways to implement the peace agreement. A Taliban spokesman said that the US forces top commander Gen. Scott Miller was also present on the first day of the talks in Doha.

Mr. Zaeef said the US and the Taliban have agreed on a full withdrawal of foreign forces in 15 to 24 months and on counterterrorism assurances. (Tolo news)

(2) MoMP Poised ...

Herat Cement, Kandahari Cement and the establishment of Ghori Cement's third factory, adding that \$150 million investment each was being considered in the three projects.

He said the bidding process of these projects might take place in the near future.

He said 1,500 to 2,500 people would get direct work opportunity while thousands others would get indirect jobs opportunities from these projects.

Without going into details, the MoMP spokesman said over ten local and foreign companies had shown interest in investment in these projects.

Herat Cement

According to Pajhwok report, the Herat cement reservoir is among the largest in Zandajan area of Herat City.

The type of cement in the mine is called polyethylene cement which is ranked among top quality cements.

Mutfi said the factory to be established in Zandajan district would produce up to 3,000 tonnes of cement in initial stages but with the passage of time the production would be doubled.

The contract of Zandajan Cement factory was inked in 1977 during the government of Sardar Daud Khan with Czechoslovakia but due to the war and termination of Daud's government, the project could not be implemented.

In a fresh attempt, an Iranian Company Peshgaman Sunaat Mujid pledged to re-

vive the factory with \$150 million investment but after one year of signing the agreement, the company could not start work and thus the contract was revoked.

Ghori-III Cement Factory

The first Ghori Cement Factory was established in Pul-i-Khumri, the capital of northern Baghlan province, in 1960 and made functional in 1963.

The foundation stone of second Ghori Cement Factory was laid in 1977 but after one year work, the factory was stopped due to war. During the Taliban regime, the second Ghori Cement factory became dysfunctional but in 2003 it was made functional again.

The MoMP spokesman said looking to the capacity of Ghori I and Ghori II, it was decided to establish Ghori III factory as well.

Zarkashan Gold Mine

According to Pajhwok reports, the Zarkashan Gold Mine is situated 90 kilometres from Ghazni City in Muqar district and it is spread over 484 square kilometres area.

A research conducted by German and US geologists in 1960 and 1973, showed that 7,500 kilograms of gold existed in the reservoir.

Nooraba and Samti Gold

Reports show this mine is situated in Nooraba and samti village 10 kilo meters north of Chah Ab district in northern Takhar province and was discovered by the Soviet Union experts back in 1987.

The exploration contract of this mine was inked between the MoMP and the West Land General Trading in 2009 and the work kicked off.

In 2013, Pajhwok learnt that this contract maintained some handicaps including lack of transparency, contradiction with the mining law, the element of friendship in awarding contract, and the transfer of gold outside the country for processing purpose.

The MoMP in 2018 revoked the contract based on the Procurement Commission decision following the fulfillment of obligation including the payment of liabilities, exploration and environmental responsibilities on contract holders side.

According to MoMP, the contracts of the Zarkashan, NoorabaSamti Gold mines would be open to bidding next months, adding that no company has so far showed interest in investing in these mining.

Talc Mine in Achin

Talc mine is situated in Achin district of Nangarhar province and was discovered by Afghan and Russian engineers some 50 years back. The deposit contains over 11 million tonnes of talc. This stone is used in over 200 different areas including medicine making, foods and cosmetics.

Mutfi said a number of companies had shown to invest up to \$15 million in the talc mine exploration.

He added Afghan Talc, Kord Releas, Karimzai Group, Sardar Mustafa, Habib Shahb and Nabi Afghan companies had so far offered to invest.

He said the Achin talc mine would generate 500 direct jobs and over 1,000 indirect jobs. Public welcoming reaction Some residents believe that investment in mining projects could leave positive impact on current situation and would generate jobs for hundreds of youth.

Mohammad Rahim Malakzai, a resident of Kabul City, said the creation of jobs would help peace and stability and therefore these projects in current circumstances would prove crucial.

Abdul Rauf Benawa, another resident, said the MoMP move to launch six mining project was admirable and added the ministry should consider the interest of people and government during the tender of these projects.

Mutfi said implementation of the projects would with consent of the Cabinet and the High Council of Economic Affairs. He added environmental protection, safety, health issues and social services were basic standards of the projects. (Pajhwok)

(3) Over 400 Families ...

force more families to leave their houses for safer places, he added.

The Afghan National Defense and Security Forces remain in control of most of Afghanistan's population centers and all of 34 provincial capitals, but Taliban insurgents control large portions of rural areas, staging coordinated large-scale attacks against Afghan cities and districts since early April when the militant group launched a yearly rebel offensive. (Xinhua)

(4) US-Taliban...

A ceasefire, which has been part of the discussions, would be decided. The

truce could be implemented in intra-Afghan talks, the source indicated, saying the Afghan government would not be kept out of the loop.

The source explained the deal would be implemented after an agreement was reached at intra-Afghan talks.

Taliban's Qatar office spokesman So-hail Shaheen also said the issues that could not be resolved in the previous meetings would be discussed. (Pajhwok)

(5) PRD Archive...

Mohammad Hassan Safa, technical advisor of Passport Department said that 5,000 passports were issued on daily basis and those who had paper ID cards should verify them in the new special center. (Pajhwok)

(6) Aloe Vera ...

The Agriculture Minister Nasir Ahmad Durani who visited Herat last week said aloe vera is cultivated in five provinces and that efforts are underway to increase it to 15 provinces.

Officials said aloe vera is also used in medicines.

"The aloe vera leaf is used for soaps and detergents and now it is used in energy drinks after the inauguration of the company," said Abdul Saboor Rahmani, the provincial director of agriculture. (Tolonews)

(7) Taliban's ...

On the other hand, Tasa said that Afghan forces and the Taliban clashed in Padkhab Shana area of Pul-i-Alam city and Mohammad Agha district last night.

He said seven Taliban militants were killed and two others were captured during the fight.

Jamil, a resident of Padkhab Shana area said that four Taliban fighters were killed during a battle with Afghan forces in their area last night.

Taliban did not comment yet on the incidents.

Two months back, the Ministry of Defense had told media that the Taliban's governor for Logar, Haji Lala was killed in Charkh district of the province. (Pajhwok)

(8) G-7 Summit...

televised speech timed for the moment Trump touched down in Biarritz, Macron repeatedly used the word "disagreements" to describe the expected atmosphere. Later, as the two faced each other across a dining table, he used the softer word "divergences" regarding climate change.

Macron described Trump as a "very special guest" and Trump fondly recalled the dinner they shared at the Eiffel Tower.

But Macron was firm that leaders owed it to the world to come up with solutions.

"We have disagreements, and at times there are caricatures. But I think that the great challenges that we have: Climate, biodiversity, the technological transformation, the fight against inequality, this global insecurity, we will only resolve them by acting together, by reconciling," he said.

Macron threatened to block an EU trade deal with several South American states, including Brazil. Ireland joined in the threat. German Chancellor Angela Merkel disagreed, with her office saying Saturday that blocking the Mercosur deal won't reduce the destruction of rainforest in Brazil, although she backed Macron's proposal to discuss the fires at the summit.

At last year's summit in Charlevoix, Canada, Trump left early and repudiated the final statement in a tweet from Air Force One. This year, Macron said, there will be no final statement.

Instead, diplomats say Macron could issue his own summary of the discussions.

Lowered expectations are nothing new for the G-7, but this year's intent seems to be just to avoid diplomatic catastrophe, salvage the possible, and show voters that their leaders have a role on the world stage. One force that could push leaders together is their joint vulnerability to an economic slowdown, especially the ones who, like Trump, are facing elections in the next year or two.

Disputes on trade have unsettled the global economy because businesses don't know where tariffs will be imposed or what the trading system will look like in a world that has become dependent on supplies of materials, parts and goods flowing through intricate cross-border supply chains.

Given lowered expectations the most important summit outcome would be "to do no harm," said Holger Schmieding, chief economist at Berenberg Bank

in London. "Have a discussion without a bust-up, no repeat of Charlevoix, please."

A "dream result" would be the EU, U.S. and Japan agreeing to jointly tackle their trade issues with China, but "with America-First Trump that seems too much to hope for," he said.

All eyes will be on the dynamic between Trump and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, two figures who relish the unpredictability they have sown. Johnson is under intense pressure to pull Britain out of the EU and many see his relationship with the United States as key.

"My message to G7 leaders this week is this: the Britain I lead will be an international, outward-looking, self-confident nation," he said.

Merkel is in her last term of office. Canadian leader Justin Trudeau, up for re-election this fall, is at the center of a political scandal. Macron himself is deeply unpopular at home, and the yellow vest protesters who have plagued him since last year have followed him to Biarritz.

Even this beautiful resort town was in a subdued mood after being locked down during the final week of the summer break for most of France. The appropriately named Bellevue congress center where the leaders will gather Saturday night overlooks the carefully raked sandy beach beloved by surfers and swimmers alike. It was empty. (AP)

(9) North Korea...

The current test is the seventh missile launch by the regime since they resumed testing in July after historic denuclearization talks between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and President Trump in May stalled.

The South Korean military has been the first to report on North Korea launches, and the newest launch could indicate whether Seoul and Tokyo continue to share intelligence information with each other despite fraying relations, according to reports by The Japan Times. Not many details about the tests were immediately known, including the distance and maximum altitude it reached as well as where it landed. The Japanese government said North Korea appears to have fired missiles, but they caused no damage and did not land in Japanese territorial waters. (Fox News)

(10) 75 Years Later...

from Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, landed in Normandy in 1944 and moved into eastern France, where his division fought through a brutal winter. He saved a piece of a bullet that hit his helmet, and keeps it with a wartime photo of himself and a letter he wrote home to his mother, describing his scrape with death. Steve Melnikoff, 99, of Cockeysville, Maryland, came ashore on Omaha Beach on D-Day, June 6, 1944 with the 29th Infantry Division. It was one of the most pivotal days in the war — but to him, just one of many life-and-death experiences infantrymen faced on the front lines of history's deadliest conflict.

"What we went through, to do what we did, people don't realize," he said. He still has pictures in his head of a fellow soldier falling beside him, and another. Of the muddy holes he called home. Of the German machine guns, each capable of firing thousands of rounds.

War, he says, is "nasty, smelly, terrible." But he maintains, "it was important for someone to do this," to stop Hitler from taking over more of the world.

Donald Cobb of Evansville, Indiana, took part in the invasions of Normandy and of southern France from aboard ship, operating high-frequency antennae to detect German submarines and helping load ammunition. He's back in peaceful Paris this week with the Greatest Generations Foundation, which organizes trips for veterans. He sometimes feels "survivor guilt," and has one fundamental message for younger generations: "Learn history, and don't repeat mistakes." (AP)

(11) Former Indian...

hospital in the United States for cancer treatment.

The lawyer-turned-politician also had triple heart bypass surgery when he was 52.

Jaitley's urbane and articulate manner helped him win friends across party lines and industry.

The BJP lost another veteran party leader and former minister of external affairs when Sushma Swaraj died after a cardiac arrest earlier this month.

During his tenure as finance minister,

Jaitley led the enactment of a bankruptcy code and a national goods and services tax law that had languished for almost 20 years.

The implementation of the GST resulted in job losses for thousands of workers in small businesses, adding to his mixed record on economic management.

The Indian economy has been under a cloud for months, with latest government estimates showing it had slowed to a five-year low of 5.8% in January-March as a result of sluggish domestic and global demand and little growth in private investment. (Reuters)

(12) NASA Astronaut...

keep anything private," she said. Worden filed a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission and a family member also filed a complaint with NASA's internal Office of Inspector General. The complaint accused McClain of identity theft and improper access to Worden's private financial records, the New York Times is reporting. A lawyer for McClain told the newspaper that the astronaut was merely tending the couple's still-connected finances.

The drama unfolded as McClain was set to conduct the first all-female spacewalk in history, alongside colleague Christina Koch. That spacewalk was reassigned, in a move that garnered a lot of criticism, with astronaut Nick Hague replacing McClain. NASA said at the time that the decision was McClain's choice as there were not enough space suits in McClain and Koch's sizes.

Anne McClain remains an active astronaut and NASA said it does not comment on personal or personnel matters. The divorce case is set to be finalized in October. (RT)

(13) Kazakhstan...

interaction of technology and medicine has already begun. In our center, we can now conduct all the high-tech surgeries that are available to citizens in developed countries such as European countries, the US, Canada and Southeast Asian countries," said Pya. (Trend)

(14) Iraqi Forces Launch...

by the JOC, it added.

In July, Iraqi forces, backed by the Iraqi and U.S.-led coalition aircraft, conducted the first and second phases of the "Victory Will," aimed at securing areas in the north of Baghdad and the provinces of Anbar, Salahudin and Nineveh.

The troops concluded the third phase of the major offensive in the provinces of Nineveh and Diyala on Aug. 5.

The security situation in Iraq was dramatically improved after Iraqi security forces fully defeated the extremist IS militants across the country late in 2017.

IS remnants, however, have since melted in urban areas or resorted to deserts and rugged areas as safe havens, carrying out frequent guerilla attacks against security forces and civilians. (Xinhua)

(15) Does Johnson...

after the United Kingdom voted to leave the EU, the outcome of the tortuous Brexit crisis remains unclear, with options ranging from an acrimonious rupture on Oct. 31 to a smooth, amicable exit or even another referendum.

The bloc and its leaders have repeatedly refused to reopen a Withdrawal Agreement, which includes a protocol on an Irish border insurance policy that then-prime minister Theresa May agreed in November.

Johnson is hoping that the threat of a disorderly 'no-deal' exit will convince the EU to grant him the divorce deal he wants. However, on his first foreign trip as prime minister last week, the response from EU heavyweights Germany and France was firm: the Withdrawal Agreement will not be changed much.

Brexit is expected to come up at a meeting of the leaders of the European G7 nations - France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom - and Tusk later on Saturday.

Johnson's key demand is that the EU remove the Irish border backstop, which would keep the United Kingdom in a customs union with the EU unless a better solution is found to keep open Ireland's 500-km (300-mile) land border with the British province of Northern Ireland.

He has vowed to lead the United Kingdom out of the EU on Oct. 31 with or without a deal. (Reuters)