

(1) U.S. General Says...

has said that we, the United States, are ready to talk to the Taliban and discuss the role of international forces," he said. "We hope that they realize this and that this will help to move forward the peace process."

The remarks come amid growing speculation about moves to open talks with the Taliban following an unprecedented three-day ceasefire during last month's Eid holiday.

Last month, Pompeo said the United States was ready to "support, facilitate and participate" in discussions with the Taliban over the role of international forces in Afghanistan but that the peace process would be Afghan-led. (Reuters)

(2) UNPF, Afghan...

can weaken economies and sabotage progress towards the number one sustainable development goal - eliminating poverty.

UNFPA State of the World Population Report in 2017 warned unless inequality was urgently tackled and the poorest women were empowered to make their own decisions, countries could face unrest and threats to peace. "Investments in family planning in Afghanistan are critical not only to reduce maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality, but also to reduce fertility and the dependency ratio," said Dr. Bannet Ndyabangi, UNFPA representative.

The poorest Afghan women have the fewest options for family planning, the least access to antenatal care, and are most likely to give birth without the assistance of a doctor or midwife. These issues increase the risks of maternal and neonatal mortality and morbidity.

According to the Afghanistan Demographic and Health Survey, only 23 per cent of married women use a method of contraceptive, while there is evidence that 25% of married women have an unmet need for family planning.

Early and child marriage, high fertility rates with little birth spacing contribute to the high maternal mortality in Afghanistan, that is currently the highest in the region and is estimated at about 661 per 100,000 live births. (Pajhwok)

(3) Pakistan, Iran...

visit for talks with the country's officials.

The visit is being carried out on the invitation of his Pakistani counterpart General Qamar Javed Bajwa.

Pakistan Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa has emphasized the need to further enhance military to military cooperation between armed forces of Iran and Pakistan. (IRNA)

(4) In Parched...

Afghan officials say their country, which has one of the lowest levels of water storage capacity in the world, needs the extra dams to feed its agriculture sector, the mainstay of the \$20 billion economy, which has been brutally hit by drought.

"Iran is supporting the Taliban to disrupt developmental projects in Afghanistan, including water dams," said GulNabi Ahmadzai, the former Afghan border police chief.

"They benefit from keeping Afghanistan unstable and want to control our resources," he said. Iranian diplomats in Kabul declined to comment. Tehran has repeatedly denied helping the

Taliban.

"The dialogue between the two governments for resolving water issues is being pursued through diplomatic channels and linking this issue with Afghanistan's internal issues has no logical, accurate or rational basis," Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said in May, after the Farah attacks, according to a report from the Iranian Students' News Agency.

"We want to resolve a dispute with Iran but there are some security issues, our country is under tremendous stress and Iran must understand," said Naseer Ahmad Durrani, deputy minister for agriculture, irrigation and livestock. (Reuters)

(5) Ministry for Foreign...

expressed hope for the assistance of Uzbekistan in restoration and development of textile industry, namely in exchange of experience in this field and in personnel training. (Agencies)

(6) Memorial Service...

Religious Freedom Sam Brownback.

"The Sikh and Hindu communities have a long and distinguished heritage, and this horrific attack will not diminish that.

"Our office will continue to monitor the conditions faced by religious minorities in Afghanistan. I stand with you and will work toward an Afghanistan that is peaceful and secure for all its people," he said. PuneetKundal, deputy chief of mission at the Indian Embassy here, expressed condolences for the loss of life.

"The very fact that you are organizing this event here today is a representation of the sentiments that the government of Afghanistan feels for these communities," he said.

A packed hall of mourners from the Hindu and Sikh communities sat alongside officials from the Afghan and Indian embassies and the State Department facing a mural depicting the ancient relics of the Buddhas of Bamiyan.

"We at the Hindu American Foundation pledge to be with you every step of the way as Hindu and Sikhs seek full enfranchisement in Afghan society," said Jay Kansara, of the Hindu American Foundation. (Pajhwok)

(7) USAID, the...

support USAID and technical support from USWDP, the Ministry of Higher Education undertook many initiatives" said Dr. Najibullah KhwajaOmary, Minister of Higher Education. "We successfully reformed the national university entrance examination--Kanokor, established attendance at MoHE, established and enhance 31 academic degree programs including 9 Master's Degree programs," he added.

Through the University Support and Workforce Program, USAID supports efforts to improve the administrative capacity of the Ministry of Higher Education and universities and provides technical assistance to establish new market-oriented degree programs. (PR)

(8) US Envoy...

However, the political parties' statements drew harsh reaction from President Ashraf Ghani.

Few days earlier, Noor in Mazar-i-Sharif told reporters that he personally would run for presidency or would support another candidate who should have the support of US in the next presidential elections. (Pajhwok)

(9) 2nd Phase...

I'm proud the UK, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and USAID, is playing such a big role in ensuring every girl in Afghanistan receives the education they deserve"

Allowing girls to access education is a global priority for the UK. The Girls Education Challenge is the largest global fund, investing £500m to allow over 1.5m girls to access high quality schooling around the world. (Pajhwok)

(10) Islamic State...

of the main areas of Islamic State activity in Afghanistan as the movement has spread beyond its original base in the eastern province of Nangarhar, where it remains strong.

However establishing a clear picture of the group remains difficult in a remote and often mountainous region, with diverse bands of fighters and militiamen often switching sides between the Taliban, Islamic State and even the pro-government camp.

In Nangarhar, a local commander known variously as Saba Gul or Mohammad Khorasani was killed by a drone strike on Monday afternoon, the Nangarhar governor's spokesman Attaullah Khogyani, said.

A former Taliban commander, he moved to Islamic State after the group first appeared in Nangarhar in late 2014 and was responsible for hundreds of deaths, Khogyani said.

Elsewhere in Afghanistan, troops raided a Taliban prison in the southern province of Helmand late on Monday, releasing 58 prisoners, officials said.

The Taliban prisoners, including both civilians and members of the security forces, were released following an army raid on a prison in Musa Qala district of Helmand province, according to a statement from the 215 Maiwand army corps.

Separately, Taliban fighters attacked three checkpoints of the Afghan border forces in the southern province of Kandahar, killing nine members of the security forces and suffering 25 killed themselves, Kandahar police spokesman Zia Durani said. (Rueters)

Amazon Workers Strike in Europe to Coincide with Prime Day

MADRID - Amazon workers in Spain and Germany called for strikes Tuesday over salary and working conditions to coincide with the online retailer's global sales event, Prime Day.

The CCOO and CGT workers' unions in Spain said that nearly 80 percent of the workers walked off their positions at Amazon's largest packing and distribution center in the country, located in the outskirts of Madrid. It reported similar numbers on Monday, the first of three days of strike action.

Amazon said the Spanish unions' figures were not accurate because "the majority of the employees had worked and processed clients' petitions."

In a statement, the company says salaries for its more than 2,000 employees in Spain with permanent jobs were competitive and accompanied by benefits.

German union ver.di also called for walkouts Tuesday at several sites in the country, with further strikes expected on Wednesday. Amazon said the majority of employees at its logistics centers was working normally. (AP)

German Health Minister Plans to Increase Minimum Income for Old Patients' Nurses

BERLIN - Germany is trying to combat an ever-growing demand of carers by increasing minimum income for nurses and professional carers, Federal Minister of Health Jens Spahn said on German national television "ZDF" on Monday.

While admitting the change would be difficult in implementation on a legal level, the minister said it is important to introduce monetary incentives to attract more people to caring jobs.

The high share of temporary job contracts in caring professions, according to Spahn, also needs to be lowered and he would like to see more permanent employment.

The announcement came after German Chancellor Angela Merkel paid a visit to FerdiCebi, a carer for the elderly, who had invited Merkel during a television show.

The German National Health Insurance (GKV) welcomed the planned changes. "If you want good care, you have to pay well for it," Florian Lanz, spokesperson for the GKV, said. He stressed that a nationwide collective wage for all professional carers would be a major and important step.

Patients' associations also lauded the plans but cautioned against an additional financial burden on those in need of care. EugenBrysch, member of the board of directors of a patients' foundation, told the German Press Agency (dpa) on Monday that "50 percent of the residents are already on welfare. Merkel and Spahn must therefore make a binding declaration that the necessary money for appropriate wages will be borne by the nursing care insurance and from tax revenues." (Xinhua)

Foreign Investors to Obtain Residence Permit When Buying Real Estate in Uzbekistan

TASHKENT - Foreign citizens and stateless persons who buy real estate in Uzbekistan for \$200,000 or more will be able to obtain a residence permit in a simplified procedure, "Podrobnosti.uz" reported, referring to the draft decree of the head of state.

In addition, investors who acquire stock and shares of economic companies, and also create a foreign enterprise with an investment of not less than \$200,000, will be able to receive a multiple entry visa for up to three years with the possibility of an unlimited number of renewals, without the need to leave the territory of Uzbekistan. Another innovation is that the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Uzbekistan has been instructed to make proposals on implementation of the procedure for awarding the status of "Honorary Citizen" to foreign persons who make significant investments in priority areas of the country's economy.

The document also provides for the development of proposals for the making and implementation of the openness principle in all branches of the authorities and participation in the activities of the international organization "Open Government Partnership".

The Open Government Partnership is an international organi-

zation officially established on September 20, 2011 with the goal of establishing the ideals of an open state: the development of administrative professionalism which is open to civilian control. Eight countries are involved in the creation of the organization: the United States, the UK, Brazil, Norway, Indonesia, Mexico, the Philippines, South Africa. The requirement for joining the organization is the adoption of the "Open Government" declaration. To date, over 70 states have done so. (Trend)

British Caver Says He Approached by U.S., British Lawyers Over Musk's Comments

MAE SAI, Thailand - A British caver who helped rescue 12 boys from a Thai cave said on Tuesday that he has been approached by British and American lawyers and will seek legal advice after Tesla CEO Elon Musk directed abuse at him on Twitter.

"I've been approached by British lawyers, American lawyers. I haven't decided what to do next yet," Vern Unsworth told Reuters in Mae Sai town in Chiang Rai province, about 3 km (2 miles) from the cave where the boys and their coach were trapped for 18 days.

However, Unsworth has said he is considering legal action against the billionaire entrepreneur, who is chief executive of the electric car maker Tesla Inc.

"I can't let it go. There's too much out there already," Unsworth told Reuters in an interview. Asked which law firm he would hire, he said: "I don't know yet. I have to take advice."

Unsworth declined to identify who had approached him.

Tesla spokespeople did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Musk could not be reached for comment.

Musk's spat with Unsworth started last week, after rescue teams rejected Musk's offer of a mini-submarine created by his rocket company SpaceX to help extract the youth soccer team and the coach from the labyrinth of partly flooded passages.

"It just has absolutely no chance of working," CNN quoted Unsworth as saying about the submarine. Musk responded on Twitter on Sunday saying: "We will make one (video) of the mini-sub/pod going all the way to Cave 5 no problem. Sorry pedo guy, you really did ask for it."

Unsworth said he hadn't flatly denied Musk's accusation because he was waiting for legal advice.

Asked why he thought Musk would make such a comment about him, he said: "I don't know."

A police officer in the Chiang Rai, where Unsworth has lived for seven years, said that no charges or complaints had ever been filed against Unsworth. The officer declined to be named because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

Unsworth, 63, said he hadn't actually met Musk face to face when Musk visited the cave during the rescue.

He said he felt sorry that the squabble with Musk had detracted from the successful end to the rescue mission.

"It's taken a bit of the pleasure out of what's happened, what we've achieved, for me anyway," he said, adding that it had upset his ex-wife and daughter back in Britain. "It's very much upset my daughter," the caver said, his voice breaking. (Reuters)