

(1) US Representative...

The latest push for peace comes after President Donald Trump wrote a letter to Prime Minister Khan, seeking Pakistan's help for the negotiated settlement of the Afghan conflict, Express Tribune reported.

Meanwhile, in response to the Taliban leader Mullah Hibatullah Akhundzada's annual message on Eid, Khalilzad also said that the statement provides "a desire to participate in dialogue with other Afghans and in a final political settlement that will require power sharing. "All good things," he added.

On Saturday, the Taliban leader stressed on his previous stance about an end to the presence of the US military in Afghanistan and said the group is open for talks but they expect "honesty" from the United States.

The leader said that "the Islamic emirate is not seeking to monopolize power but it wants all Afghans to have their real role in 'government.'"

Khalilzad continued to say in a tweet that the Taliban leader's statement suggests the US seeks violence. "We do not. The level of violence in Afghanistan is unacceptable and we have no desire to perpetuate it," he said.

"Let us find ways to work together to reduce or to immediately end the violence, as we continue negotiations to end the war. The killing of the Afghans must stop," the envoy added.

According to a press statement from the US Department of State, Khalilzad will travel to Afghanistan, Belgium, Germany, Pakistan, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates from May 31 to June 16, 2019.

The statement read, "He will work to build international support for the Afghan peace process and endeavour to ensure that any peace settlement reached will be sustainable. (ANI)

(2) Abdullah Reacts to...

"Welcome the news that President Ghani & PM Imran Khan met on the margins of OIC Summit. Improved Af-Pak ties are key to reaching, implementing & capitalizing on opportunities for regional connectivity, integration & development. The US stands ready to assist Afghan Peace Process," tweeted Khalilzad on Saturday.

Moreover, Senate Speaker stressed that Pakistan can help Afghanistan in the peace process.

"Our demand from the U.S and the international community is that they consider the Afghan people sacrifices and make real efforts. The influence of Pakistan is more on the Taliban and this effects the peace process," said Fazl Hadi Muslimyar, Speaker of the Senate House.

This comes as the government and Afghan people are expecting that the Taliban group announce a ceasefire during the Eid days for the goodwill of reaching to peace but the Taliban have not said anything on this. (ATN)

(3) IEC Asks Media...

these points, the press committee would take disciplinary measures, it would first release an order for correction of the media outlet, for the second time it would be warned, for third time it would be fined 50,000 to 100,000 afghanis and for the last time it would be introduced to judiciary organs," Seddiqi said.

In response to a question if the restriction would apply to the president and the CEO, both candidates, talking to government related programs, he said, "If leaders of the government participate in development programs, there would be no problem, the media should cover such events by explaining the original subject, not give it a campaign angle."

However, Fahim Dashti, ANJU head, said media outlets could interview presidential candidates. He said freedom of speech was the right of all the

people and it was against the law if IEC was restricting it.

He said there was no restriction on the issue and no one could limit freedom of expression. (Pajhwok)

(4) Children...

would abate during Ramadan, but instead it intensified and caused more civilian casualties.

CPAG once again called on the warring sides to be careful about civilian lives and put an end to the humanitarian tragedy in the country.

The group asked the UN and human rights organisations to press the warring sides to reduce the collateral damage. It also urges national and international media outlets to focus more on covering civilian deaths in Afghanistan.

CPAG once again asked international forces, Taliban and other militant groups to protect civilian lives during the conflict.

Comprised of 20 civil society institutions, the group publishes casualty figures every month and advocates for civilian protection. (Pajhwok)

(5) 2 Killed, 24...

people, including four women, had been shifted to hospitals.

According to a Pajhwok reporter, windowpanes of nearby houses and shops were shattered, a vehicle damaged while blood, books and pens of students were seen littered inside the bus.

Abdul Rahman, an eyewitness, said the first blast happened on students' bus in which many students were injured.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the bombing spree. (Pajhwok)

(6) IEC Finalizes...

the centers which were in the previous list and there is no change and it shows the commission's low capacity," said Marwa Amini, spokeswoman of FEFA.

Although the election law says that all the electoral process should be done by use of biometric system, but recently the election commission said biometric will not be used in voter registration process.

Fazl Rahman Oria, a political analyst, said having a transparent election without biometric system is difficult. "We cannot be hopeful over having a transparent election until President Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah are on power," Oria said.

The election commission has said that the presidential elections will cost \$135 million which will be paid by the international community. (Tolo news)

(7) Texas Army...

Operation Enduring Freedom in January 2015, according to the Army Times.

There are roughly 15,000 U.S. troops supporting combat against the Taliban and Islamic State (Daesh) militants in Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(8) Afghan Forces...

during the same operation, the military sources added.

Taliban militants and other terrorists frequently use improvised explosive devices as the weapon of their choice to target the security forces.

However, in majority of such attacks ordinary civilians are targeted.

Meanwhile, numerous incidents have also taken place in the past involving premature IED

The premature IED explosions have also inflicted casualties on Taliban militants who were manufacturing or planting bombs. (KP)

(9) Chinese Defense...

over the Pacific, Wei stressed that China and Washington are fully aware that war would spell "disaster" for both. Beijing is firmly committed to regional peace and stability and will never pursue expansionist policies, he said.

To alleviate the possibility of con-

flict, the US and Chinese militaries have agreed to engage in dialogue, while the door is always open for the US to discuss trade relations. However, if the US chooses to fight - China will "fight to the end," Wei said.

A similar message was personally delivered to acting US Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan when the two held brief talks on Friday in Singapore on the sidelines of the summit. That, however, did not stop the Pentagon chief from blasting China as a regional threat during his speech on Saturday. (RT)

(10) Pompeo, Swiss...

a four-nation European tour in which he is seeking to assure leaders that the Trump administration does not want war with Iran. Still he is also stressing that the U.S. will defend itself and will not relent in raising pressure on Iran with economic sanctions.

Despite that stance, President Donald Trump has signaled willingness to talk with Iran's leadership. Iranian officials have hinted at the possibility but have also insisted they will not be bullied.

Pompeo has been coy about the possibility of communicating with Iran through Switzerland.

"I'm not going to talk about how we're communicating or not communicating with (Iran)," Pompeo told reporters. Asked why he was spending three days in the Swiss capital of Bern - a city last visited by a U.S. secretary of state more than two decades ago - he replied only that he's a "big cheese and chocolate fan."

Still, Trump has made clear he would like to speak with Iran.

"If they want to talk, I'm available," he said, even as Pompeo and hawkish national security adviser John Bolton were stepping up warnings that any attack on American interests by Iran or its proxies will draw a rapid and significant U.S. response. The U.S. is sending hundreds of additional troops to the region after blaming Iran and Iranian proxies for recent sabotage to tankers in the Gulf and drone attacks on Saudi Arabia's oil infrastructure.

Pompeo and Cassis were meeting at Castelgrande, a medieval castle in Cassis' home canton of Ticino, an Italian-speaking area of Switzerland near Italy's lakes region.

From Switzerland, Pompeo will head to the Netherlands on Monday before flying on to London to join Trump's state visit to Britain. (AP)

(11) Israeli Jets...

eastern Quneitra countryside, even though the Syrian air defenses allegedly managed to intercept most of the missiles.

Syrian air defense forces have engaged IAF warplanes on numerous occasions throughout the course of the years-long conflict. Earlier this week, the Israeli military said it attacked a Syrian anti-aircraft position after an Israeli warplane came under fire. Damascus views Israeli cross border intrusions as direct violations of its sovereignty and has repeatedly asked the UN to step in and intervene to stop the attacks.

Typically, Tel Aviv justifies its raids as a necessary measure to contain Iran's presence inside Syria, as well as that of militia groups like Hezbollah, who both fight alongside the Syrian government. This time, however, the IDF made no mention of the 'Iranian threat' and openly admitted to striking Syrian Arab Army targets. (RT)

(12) 'Unlimited Reach...

global spying operations by the National Security Agency, argued that, armed with modern technology and with the help of social media and tech giants, governments are becoming "all-powerful" in their abil-

ity to monitor, analyze, and influence behavior.

It's through the use of new platforms and algorithms that are built on and around these capabilities that they are able to shift our behavior. In some cases, they are able to predict our decisions and also nudge them to different outcomes.

The natural human need for "belonging" is being exploited and users voluntarily consent to surrender virtually all of their data by signing carefully drafted user agreements that no one bothers to read. "Everything has hundreds and hundreds of pages of legal jargon that we're not qualified to read and assess and yet they are considered binding upon us," Snowden said.

And now these institutions, which are both commercial and governmental... have structuralized and entrenched it to where it has become now the most effective means of social control in the history of our species. (RT)

(13) Iraq Condemns...

AFP journalist at the trial.

He was one of 11 French citizens and a Tunisian handed over to Iraqi authorities early this year by a US-backed force in Syria which expelled the jihadist group from its last bastion.

A Baghdad court had already handed capital punishments to seven of the French jihadists and the Tunisian over the past week and Aouidate will now join them on death row.

Interrogated for four months, Aouidate alleged he was beaten to "confess" to the charges levelled against him.

During his first hearing he showed marks on his back to the judge, who requested a medical examination and report.

Human Rights Watch on Friday accused Iraqi interrogators of "using a range of torture techniques" and condemned France's "outsourcing" of trials of IS suspects to "abusive justice systems".

France has long insisted its adult citizens captured in Iraq or Syria must face trial before local courts, while stressing its opposition to capital punishment.

Iraqi law provides for the death penalty for anyone joining a "terrorist group" -- even those who did not take up arms.

Aouidate first went to Syria in 2013 and returned in 2014 with 22 members of his family to join IS, according to the French judiciary.

Authorities also linked him to Belgium's Salafist movement including Abdelhamid Abaoud, the presumed mastermind of the 2015 Paris attacks.

France convicted two of Aouidate's sisters for "financing terrorism" for sending 15,000 euros to relatives in Syria. (AFP)

(14) Mexican President...

politicians and some Republican lawmakers. It sent global markets slumping on Friday.

Trump appeared to have no regrets about the move, tweeting on Saturday: "When you are the 'Piggy Bank' Nation that foreign countries have been robbing and deceiving for years, the word TARIFF is a beautiful word indeed!"

"Others must treat the United States fairly and with respect - We are no longer the 'fools' of the past!" he wrote.

Lopez Obrador said a Mexican delegation led by Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard will meet Wednesday in Washington with Pompeo to discuss the tariffs.

- 'Doing our job' -

Trump said Thursday that tariffs starting at five percent and gradually increasing to 25 percent will be applied to all Mexican imports beginning June 10, unless Mexico does

more to halt the flow of undocumented migrants.

"Mexico has taken advantage of the United States for decades," Trump said in a tweet.

Lopez Obrador said Friday that his country was "doing our job" to stem the flow of undocumented migrants -- many of them fleeing poverty and violence in Central America -- and he warned Trump that new tariffs would be a lose-lose game.

From January to April, Mexican authorities detained 51,607 migrants, a 17 percent increase from the same period in 2018, according to official figures.

On Saturday, Lopez Obrador voiced confidence on the upcoming talks.

"The results are going to be good because there is an atmosphere that is favorable to dialogue both in this country and in the United States," the Mexican president said, adding that he doubted the tariffs would ultimately take effect.

"It is in everyone's interest to reach an agreement," he said.

Hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrants have been crossing into the US -- more than 100,000 a month in recent months -- causing temporary shelters to overflow and judges unable to keep up with asylum applications.

Trump, who has often demonized the migrants as criminals and gang members, has declared the situation an emergency.

The US tariffs would be devastating for Mexico, which sends 80 percent of its exports to the US.

Analysts said Trump's shock move jeopardized the chances for ratifying a new trade agreement with Canada and Mexico, known as the USMCA. His announcement came the same day Trump began the process of ratifying the new pact.

"The move is seen as a further disruption for US manufacturing supply chains, adding to consumer costs, with the uncertainty undermining business investment," chief economist Scott Brown of Raymond James said on the investment firm's website.

It might also undercut chances for resolving the continuing US trade conflict with China, analysts said, by raising questions about whether US negotiators can be trusted.

In a tit-for-tat competition, the US and China have imposed billions of dollars in tariffs on goods imported from the other.

Beijing on Saturday increased tariffs on \$60 billion worth of US goods, retaliating for Washington having raised duties on \$200 billion in Chinese goods.

But trade with Mexico is, in some ways, more deeply intertwined with US jobs and manufacturing.

Many products, like cars, appliances and computers, are partially produced on one side of the border and then finished on the other. (AFP)

(15) Where There Are...

"It is the legitimate right of a sovereign state to carry out construction on its own territory. China built limited defense facilities on the islands and reefs for self-defense," he said.

"Where there are threats, there are defenses. In the face of heavily armed warships and military aircraft, how can we stay impervious and not build some defense facilities?" he asked.

He also refuted the saying of "militarization" of China's defensive construction on its South China Sea islands and reefs at the Q&A session. "Anyone who has some military sense would know it's not militarization," he said. Wei is here to attend the 18th Shangri-La Dialogue from Friday to Sunday, and he gave a keynote speech on Sunday morning at a plenary session entitled "China and International Security Cooperation." (Xinhua)