

(1) US, NATO to...

The Indian foreign secretary Vijay Gokhale who was in Washington last week met Khalilzad during which both sides discussed the Afghan peace process with New Delhi saying that once America withdraws from the landlocked south Asian country, an elected political structure should remain there. The political structure should not be an interim administration since it is not constitutionally mandated nor it has the public endorsement and called the structure should be an elected political structure in Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(2) Ex-Police...

punished severely. The court had decided to issue the arrest warrant of Qureshi if he declined to appear in the court in coming days. The court indicted Qureshi for illegally possessing a Humvee vehicle, forgery of documents and misuse of authority and subsequently sentenced him up to two, three and five years in jail which is accounted for a total 10 years imprisonment. In addition the former police commander is punished 8.6 million afghanis as cash fine by the court. Qureshi was fined 7.1 for leaving the country, 200,000 Afghani over his role in a political party, 20,000 on the misuse of his power to appoint personnel for his personal affairs. (Pajhwok)

(3) Ghani Condoles...

our help in any way possible," President Ghani tweeted. A 'right-wing extremist' killed 49 worshippers and wounded dozens more at two mosques On Friday in New Zealand city of Christchurch using semi-automatic weapons. The dead were said to include women and children. Around 48 people were treated for gunshot wounds at Christchurch Hospital, including young children. A 28-year-old Australian-born man has been arrested and charged with murder. Two other men remain in custody, although their link to the attack is unknown. The Australian man, identified by international media as Brenton Tarrant, live-streamed footage of himself going room-to-room, victim to victim, shooting the wounded from close range as they struggled to crawl away. (Pajhwok)

(4) Former Peace...

He also tweeted: "An inclusive and agreeable national negotiation team can make us to take the ownership of this process. An inclusive Intra-Afghan dialogue is the key to solution." (Pajhwok)

(5) Afghan and Indian...

"The private health sector is an integral part of Afghanistan's health system and plays a crucial role in meeting the demands of Afghans for healthcare. The partnerships between the Afghan health businesses and Indian organizations that we witness today will help fill the gap in service delivery in the country". Dr. Feroz also invited other international investors and organizations to consider investing in the most needed areas in Afghanistan. USAID Mission Director Peter Natiello stated: "Increased investment in the health sector not only improves the health of the population, but also spurs economic growth through job creation, improved local skills, and additional resources for development." His Excellency Dr. Mustafa Masoor, Minister of Economy, expressed his commitment for fostering an enabling environment to expand private sector investment in the country.

Representatives of the MoPH, other government ministries, stakeholders, and the private sector participated in the event. (PR)

(6) Khan Takes...

Balbirnie made 82 and O'Brien 56 before a 10th-wicket 58-run partnership between James Cameron-Dow and Tim Murtagh set up a potentially tricky chase for the Afghans.

Cameron-Dow was left unbeaten on 32 after number 11 Murtagh, who hit 54 not out in Ireland's first innings score of 172, was the last man out on 27.

"I am not surprised, if you have seen Test cricket even tailenders have records," said Khan.

"Plan was to bowl as many good deliveries as possible. But they chose the right deliveries to score and that's how they made runs." - 'Ebbd and flowed' -

Earlier Balbirnie put on 104 runs for the third wicket with James McCollum, who made 39, to frustrate the Afghanistan bowlers in the first session.

An umpiring howler cost Ireland their first wicket of the day with Paul Stirling adjudged lbw off paceman Yamin Ahmadzai for 14 after the opener got a thick edge onto his pad.

Balbirnie, who resumed the day on 14, stood firm to register his maiden Test half-century with a boundary off Mohammad Nabi.

Ireland took lunch at 124-2 but a batting collapse in the second session saw them slip to 157-6, with Khan and Salamkheil sharing the spoils.

Balbirnie was caught behind off Salamkheil after his 149-ball stay at the wicket, and Khan trapped McCollum lbw in the very next over as Afghanistan regained control.

"It ebbed and flowed. We had a good first session and we could have batted for a good part of the day and build a substantial lead," said Balbirnie.

"So from my point of view it was really frustrating, because I was a set batsman and it was a lapse of concentration (my dismissal). But the 10th wicket partnership gives us a fight."

O'Brien, who took Ireland past their 142-run deficit and into a lead, then put on 63 runs with George Dockrell, who made 25, to take the attack to the opposition bowlers.

But Khan got the two dangermen back in the pavilion after tea to get into the Ireland tail that once again waggled.

The left-handed batting duo of Cameron-Dow and Murtagh put on another defiant stand for Ireland, who had posted an 87-run last-wicket partnership in their first innings.

Both sides are playing their second Test after making their debuts in the five-day format last year.

Afghanistan lost to India inside two days in Bangalore while Ireland went down to Pakistan in Dublin. (AFP)

(7) Battles Intensify...

adding that Taliban also suffered heavy fatalities.

Zmarai Faizi, Commander of 207 Zafar Military Corps, said at least 50 Taliban fighters were killed in airstrikes carried out by the Afghan Air Force.

Footage released by Ministry of Defense shows Afghan Air Force targeting a Taliban hideout in Bala Murghab district on Friday night. The Ministry of Interior Affairs said comprehensive plans are underway to address security challenges.

"The new leadership of the Interior Ministry has effective and comprehensive plans on law enforce-

ment, fighting crimes, fighting intoxicants and fighting terror," said Nusrat Rahimi, a spokesman for Ministry of Interior Affairs.

Civilian Casualties

Some residents of Zurmat district in Paktia province, who took bodies of five civilians to the provincial capital on Saturday, said the civilians were killed on in an Afghan forces operation in the district on Friday night.

"Last night at around 10 pm, they came and conducted the attack," said Timor, a resident of Zurmat. "The victims were working on their agricultural lands and everyone knows this," said Rasul Khan, a Zurmat resident.

In the northern Kunduz province, some people gathered in Kunduz city and called on warring parties to announce a ceasefire.

Kunduz city has fallen to militants twice in the last four years.

"We want both sides to announce a ceasefire," said Sayed Parwiz, a Kunduz resident.

"We are tired of war. We do not want to people to be killed, and we do not want our sons to become orphans or wives to become widows," said Shirzai, a Kunduz resident.

This comes as President Ashraf Ghani last week ordered strict measures to Afghan forces for preventing civilian casualties in their operations. (Tolo news)

(8) Officials Reject...

Mullah Abdul Salam Zaief." He said the security forces were on a patrol in the area and were chasing a suspected person with a weapon, but later they found the person to be the bodyguard of Zaief.

He rejected security forces encircled the house of Zaief or injured someone.

Interior Ministry spokesman Nusrat Rahimi also said the Afghan forces on Saturday night raided the house of Mullah Toti who he described as a land grabber in Bagrami area.

He said Afghan forces discovered two weapons and other ammunition from Toti's house. "Afghan forces had earlier recovered eight illegal weapons from Daud, Toti's brother," he said.

Rahimi also rejected if the house of Mullah Abdul Salam Zaief was surrounded by security forces. (Pajhwok)

(9) 22 Security...

According to Qaisari, Taliban insurgents also suffered casualties, but he had no exact figures.

Syed Abdul Baqi Hasimi, a member of provincial council, criticized the government over negligence and said about 50 security men suffered casualties and were missing.

A security source, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said the bodies of soldiers were still lying in the site of clash but a number of additional forces had been arrived in the morning. He said the clash was still underway.

A Taliban commander claimed killing 22 security personnel, injuring 17 others and capturing four during the overnight attack. He added the rebels seized a military tank and 23 various weapons. He said one rebel was killed and another one wounded in the clash. (Pajhwok)

(10) Price of Liberty...

However, the wrongdoers didn't escape punishment as each of them was slapped with a fine of a whole €400 (around \$454) before being let go.

Understanding that the Latvian public may find the penalty insufficient, Defense Ministry spokesman Kaspars Galkins promised

that the soldiers will also face sanctions from the US Army, which "will probably be much harsher." However, there has been no confirmation to that so far.

The Freedom Monument was erected in Riga in 1935 to honor the troops who died in the Latvian War of Independence between 1918 and 1920. It's one of the most important monuments in the country and a traditional venue for official ceremonies and public gatherings in the capital. (RT)

(11) If New Gene...

Imagine if instead of showcasing their new car at a launch, Tesla said instead that someone was already driving an unmarked model, perhaps without knowing they were doing so. After all, the location where the oil is being used, "a restaurant somewhere in the Midwest," doesn't have to inform their customers about bioengineered foods.

Of course, it is possible that Calyxt is trying to keep competitors away from the scent of its healthy-formula fried cheese curds, much as it is unusual to hide a product that is supposedly commercially-available.

Yet the suspicion remains that the precaution is aimed at placard-waving protesters and more importantly, paying customers who might be alarmed at taking part in what effectively constitutes a post-launch trial.

This might seem like paranoia, but there are other signs of reticence from Calyxt. In its actual press release, where it said that its oil will also be sold as a "premium feed ingredient with added benefit for livestock," it mentions on three separate occasions that its soybean oil is "non-GMO." (RT)

(12) Swedish Right...

Adding insult to injury, he complained that there are no incentives to stay even for immigrants who settled there amid the 2015 refugee crisis. "They left as well, and I don't blame them," Collins stated, adding that "very cosmopolitan" immigrants "don't want to sit in a cabin watching snowflakes fall."

The Sweden Democrats, which distanced itself from its white nationalist roots in the early 1990s, strongly rejects multiculturalism and advocates a major overhaul of their country's refugee and immigration policy. SD has always demanded that the government severely limit immigration, but that seems to make little sense for Collins.

"Who else is going to come up here?" he asked. Enterprising immigrants will turn Kramfors into a thriving place, he said, "because there are opportunities galore up here, but there's just not enough people."

The enthusiastic proposal, however, was met with little praise from SD leaders. A local party office said it has no clue about the mosque-building project, while Henrik Gustafsson, an SD spokesperson, called Collins' reasoning "distressing."

"He did not take a minute to either read our program or double-check with fellow party members on the matter, which is strange," he told Swedish media.

Collins himself is an immigrant - he moved to Sweden from the United States in 1974. He joined the SD because it was the only party "that I felt was honest to me during the great immigration rush." (RT)

(13) At Ethiopia Flight...

At least the crash had taken place in Ethiopia - the holy land - he said, prompting "amens" from the

crowd.

In faraway Paris, investigators are examining black box recorders to determine why the aircraft plunged into a field shortly after take off from Addis Ababa, searching for similarities to an October Lion Air crash that killed 189 people.

Both crashes involved the same model of plane - a Boeing 737 MAX 8 - causing aviation authorities to ground the model around the world after last week's accident.

But in the Ethiopian capital, families and airline staff were focused on honoring their dead. (Reuters)

(14) As Xi Heads...

Beijing cut diplomatic ties with the Vatican in 1951 and has remained concerned that an independent Church in China could threaten its authority.

"The Holy See (nurtures) no distrust or hostility toward any country," Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin writes in the introduction of a new book on China to be published on Tuesday. An advance copy of Parolin's comments in the book, "The Church in China - A Future Yet to be Written" - were made available to Reuters.

Parolin, second only to the pope in the Vatican hierarchy, said the Catholic Church's work in China "cannot be separated from a stance of respect, esteem, and trust toward the Chinese people and their legitimate state authorities."

This appeared to be another attempt by the Vatican to allay Beijing's concerns.

While the historic September agreement initiated an unprecedented direct dialogue between the Vatican and China, Beijing and the Holy See have not resumed diplomatic relations.

Parolin wrote that the previously "inextricable knots" in relations between China and the Vatican could be untied through a new, unified approach involving a mix of "theology, law, pastoral work, and even diplomacy." (Reuters)

(15) Over 60,000...

the last shred of territory held by the jihadists who have been driven from roughly one third of Iraq and Syria over the past four years, Gabriel said.

Former residents from the region say many of the civilians who came out of the Baghouz area in recent weeks were Iraqi Sunnis with close tribal ties on the other side of the border in Deir al-Zor, a Sunni heartland.

They sought sanctuary in Syria for fear of revenge attacks by the Iraqi Hashd al Shaabi, the Iranian-backed Shi'ite militias in Iraq who swept through their areas when the militants lost control.

Another SDF spokesman Mustafa Bali told Reuters only around a hundred militants and their families had surrendered overnight in the remaining spot where hard-line insurgents have been mounting a desperate last-stand defense. "We had expected the surrender of a large number of terrorists and their families but only a small group came out," Bali said.

A Reuters witness spotted U.S.-led coalition jets flying overhead but there was no renewed bombing raids in a lull in fighting as the SDF expected more fighters and their families to surrender in the course of the day.

The group said that 1,306 "terrorists" had been killed alongside many who were injured in the military campaign that began on Jan. 9 while 82 SDF fighters had been killed and 61 injured. (Reuters)