

(1) US doing well ...

Afghanistan as well as by the US Special Envoy Zalmay Khalilzad, who said the US is seeking a "comprehensive peace agreement" not a "withdrawal agreement".

However, Trump mentioned in the interview with TIME that the US is doing fine in terms of Afghanistan. "We're down to half — we'll soon be down to about 8,000 soldiers," Trump said.

In a meeting with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau at the White House on Thursday Trump said that he wants to get out of America's "endless wars".

"I want to get out of these endless wars. I campaigned on that I want to get out. We've been in Afghanistan for 19 years, as you know, we've reduced very substantially in Afghanistan," he said.

The US chief negotiator Zalmay Khalilzad has held six rounds of talks with the Taliban, discussing on four key issues: counterterrorism efforts, troop withdrawal, a ceasefire and intra-Afghan talks.

Khalilzad this week reiterated that "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed". (Tolo news)

(2) US Envoy Chides...

of unifying to mobilize additional support for Afghan security forces in fighting for the people of this country

Bass called on the members of the elected parliament to fulfill the responsibilities of office for which in they there were elected.

"The Afghan people very much want to see engaged in doing the business of people of the country and the business of government." (Pajhwok)

(3) Afghanistan ...

of the team, has recover and will join us in the match against Japan. We all have a good morale," the national team's coach said.

Mamrak is coaching the U20 futsal team since 2013 and so far the team has scored 10 goals in the AFC U20 Championship.

The national futsal team member Sayed Hussain Musawi has scored six goals in the championship.

"We will appear better in the final match and we will be the champions," said Jawed Safari, the national team's member.

Kabul residents welcomed the victory of national team and said they will win against Japan as well.

"I request all the Afghan people not to forget the national [futsal] team in their prayers. Afghanistan should win the championship," said Humayun Danish, a Kabul resident. President Ashraf Ghani also appreciated the team's victory and had a telephonic conversation with the head coach on Thursday.

Ghani has sent a government delegation to Iran to support the national team in the final match.

The U20 futsal team has so far defeated Hong Kong, Thailand and Indonesia in the AFC Futsal Championship. (Tolo news)

(4) UN to Taliban...

plan and budget and launch of voter registration, he said significant operational and technical challenges needed to be overcome for a credible vote.

"After last year's highly controversial parliamentary elections and subsequent dismissals of all electoral commissioners, the most daunting task...is regaining public confidence", he remarked.

"The IEC needs to demonstrate that it can address the problems which marred the parliamentary elections and integrate the lessons learned into preparations for the upcoming vote," including by training electoral staff, more robust outreach and the timely rollout of electoral technology. (Pajhwok)

(5) Defense Minister...

Turkey decided in 2017 to purchase the S-400 system following protracted efforts to purchase air defense systems from the U.S. with no success.

However, U.S. officials have advised Turkey to buy the Patriot missile system rather than the S-400 system from Moscow, arguing the

Russian system would be incompatible with NATO systems and expose the F-35 to possible Russian subterfuge. (Agencies)

(6) Afghanistan...

with them, we'd improve.

"Of course we'd be losing or struggling initially, but one day Afghanistan will be different. It will be good for us if we play them. It would be a great experience for us."

The Afghanistan Cricket Board is exploring possibilities of bilateral series against top teams, the 28-year-old said.

"The board is trying to arrange series against them but the schedule of the top eight teams are very tight. "They don't have enough time for a series against us but our board is trying to arrange series against Pakistan and India."

England captain Eoin Morgan led from the front with a blistering 148, which included a record 17 sixes, as the hosts steamrolled Afghanistan by 150 runs in Manchester.

Nabi took heart from their improved batting performance against Morgan's men.

"If you look at our performance against England, who are a good side and one of the favourites to win the World Cup, we did well.

"I think we batted well in the match. We were focusing on batting 50 overs and put a better total and we played 50 overs."

They face another title contender on Saturday and Nabi admitted India, unbeaten in the tournament so far, would be a tough test for his team.

"Obviously India is not an easy side, they are one of the bests and ranked higher. We're just focusing on our cricket. India will come hard at us." (Reuters)

(7) Senior Afghan ...

Afghan officials have said that President Ghani will visit Islamabad on June 27.

Earlier this month, the Afghan politicians, who are attending the Pakistan meeting, attended an intra-Afghan dialogue in Moscow where they called on the Taliban to agree on a ceasefire but the group rejected the calls and said a ceasefire will "only benefit the foreigners". (Tolo news)

(8) Afghanistan Not ...

a large number of our people are also displaced due to insecurity and natural disasters and they are struggling with hardships," he said.

Abdullah said the government was committed to continuing its assistance with those affected by the war and natural incidents.

Despite latency in responding to migrants' problems, fundamental works in this have been done in recent past but those efforts were not enough compared to the high number of migrants and troubles they faced, he said.

Sayed Hussain Alami Balkhi, refugees and repatriation minister, said more than three million Afghan migrants and refugees returned to Afghanistan over the last four years.

However, he said his ministry had been unable to achieve its goals due to security problems in the country. He said more than 6.5 million Afghan refugees were living abroad and the country's situation was not suitable for their return due to high security threats here.

Balkhi said 3.2 million Afghan migrants returned to the country between 2012 and 2018 while 2.2 million others left the country. In 2018, more than 867,000 Afghan refugees were deported or returned voluntarily to their country, he added.

"During the ongoing year, more than 11,000 Afghan migrants returned from foreign countries, 2,911 of them returned from Iran and Pakistan, 592 from Europe and 428 from other countries, 7,860 refugees returned from Iran and Pakistan based on a program by UNHCR this year," he said. (Pajhwok)

(9) Thousands of...

"We have not received any help," said Wazhma, an Afghan refugee in India. "We gathered here to share our problems. We urge the United Nation to assess our problems. None of the [European countries] has accepted us so far and the UN is

not helping us."

"No one hears our voices here. The UN office should help us and hear our voices. It is not clear that either our asylum will be accepted or rejected after five or 15 years. If we are rejected, we should pay fine to India government because we do not have a visa," another Afghan refugee, Sonia, said.

Another Afghan national, Aminullah, 40, said he is living in New Delhi with his family for the past four years, waiting for their asylum application to be accepted.

"There are hundreds of families like me who are living in India in an uncertain situation and the UN is not taking care of them," Aminullah said.

Afghan diplomats in India said the embassy of Afghanistan was not involved in holding the protest.

"This protest was launched by refugees in New Delhi. Afghanistan's embassy does not interfere in such affairs, but [the embassy] is always ready to provide consultancy services to them," said Humayun Nezami, the first secretary of the embassy.

Figures by Afghanistan's Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation show that almost six million Afghans have left the country over the past 17 years as the conflicts and violence continue in the country. (Tolo news)

(10) Afghan Investors ...

Afghan investors said they hope they will sign contracts with Indian companies during this event.

"The exhibition is effective for us. It helps us to introduce our products to the world," said Hayatullah Khan, an Afghan investor.

"Our goal of attending this exhibition is to achieve big contracts. Indian investors are going to visit the exhibition and we want to sign contracts with them and export Afghanistan's fruit to them, (Tolo news)

(11) Women from 27 ...

their strategies on Thursday evening, the UN official continued.

She promised the UN would implement the best peace proposal with the cooperation of civil society groups from Belgium, Finland, Denmark and Afghanistan.

Helmand resident Zehra, whose team won the contest, told Pajhwok: "Women can find a role for themselves in the peace process through a website and social media."

She said her group had proposed a strategy, whereby all Afghan women could have their say in the peace drive and share their views with the government and other stakeholders. (Pajhwok)

(12) Trump Says...

repeating his reluctance to see the dispute escalate to military conflict. That volatile situation came to a head this week when Iran shot down a large US surveillance drone. Tehran says the drone had entered its airspace, while Washington says it was in international waters.

On Friday, just hours before his aborted bombing strike, Trump warned that Iran had made "a big mistake" -- only to quickly add that he thought the drone downing may have been unintentional. (AFP)

(13) Putin Says...

Abbas Mousavi, was quoted by the semi-official Tasnim news agency as saying that Iran cannot condone the "illegal trespassing and invading of the country's skies by any kind of foreign flying object." (Fox News)

(14) Xi's DPRK Visit...

on multiple occasions conducted friendly, frank and in-depth exchanges, and have reached key consensus on writing new chapters for the China-DPRK friendship, and safeguarding peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula, said Song.

During the visit, Xi has engaged a series of exchanges with officials and ordinary people in the country, while hundreds of thousands of residents in Pyongyang lined up the streets to welcome and later see off the Chinese president. Xi also watched a large group callisthenics and art performance, which was specially prepared for him. Song said these have fully reflected

a deep and profound friendship of the party, government and people of the DPRK towards the party, government and people of China, and demonstrated the vitality of the friendship between the two sides.

He also said Xi's visit was a visit of friendship and peace, and has displayed China's determination to stay committed to consolidating the traditional China-DPRK friendship, supporting the implementation of DPRK's new strategic line and promoting a political solution to solving the nuclear issue in the peninsula.

The traditional friendship between the two countries has been forged and fostered by their elder generation of leaders, and the top leaders of the two sides have maintained a tradition to keep a close contact, said Song.

Xi's trip, said Song, has realized not only the historical exchange of visits by the top leaders of the two parties and countries in such an important year as the one that marks the 70th anniversary of the diplomatic ties between China and the DPRK, but also the 5th gathering between them in 15 months, adding that it will be a much-told story in the two countries' high-level exchanges.

During the visit, Xi and Kim have conducted in-depth exchanges on furthering the development of the China-DPRK relationship, and have reached extensive major consensus, which helps draw a blueprint for the future of bilateral ties, Song said.

The Chinese president pointed out that the China-DPRK relationship has entered a new historical era, adding that the CPC and the Chinese government will stay firmly committed to maintaining, consolidating and nurturing the bilateral ties, and China is willing to work with the DPRK in creating a bright future for the relationship.

Song said the visit is a huge political support and encouragement for the party, government and people of the DPRK and has shown the world the unbreakable China-DPRK friendship, adding that both sides have agreed that they will step up high-level exchanges and strategic communication so as to promote an even greater achievement in the traditional friendship and the relations between the two parties and countries. (Xinhua)

(15) EU Leaders...

personnel decisions in London, but nothing has changed when it comes to our position," Tusk told reporters.

He said that all remaining 27 EU leaders were adamant there could be no changes to the legal accord struck in November last year.

"We are open for talks when it comes to the declaration on the future UK-EU relations if the position of the UK were to evolve, but the withdrawal agreement is not open for renegotiation," Tusk said.

Jean-Claude Juncker, the head of the European Commission, which led Brexit talks for the EU side, said leaders "repeated unanimously there will be no renegotiation of the withdrawal agreement". (AFP)

(16) Georgia Parliament ...

Police said they arrested 305 people. The use of force in the pro-Western ex-Soviet country has sparked an international outcry, while the Kremlin condemned the protests as "Rusophobic provocation".

The presence of Russian MP Sergei Gavrilov in parliament brought a backlash in Georgia, which in 2008 fought and lost a brief but bloody war with Moscow over the break-away regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Ahead of planned parliamentary polls next year, opposition groups also seek to capitalise on discontent with the ruling Georgian Dream party and its oligarch leader Bidzina Ivanishvili over the failure to kick-start a stagnant economy.

"Ivanishvili's regime must cede power," former president Mikheil Saakashvili said in a video address to supporters Friday.

The United Opposition alliance has demanded snap parliamentary polls and the resignation of the interior minister.

"Peaceful mass protest will continue until these demands are met," its leader Grigol Vashadze told AFP, adding that a fresh rally would start at 7 pm (GMT 1500) on Friday. (AFP)

(17) Nuclear Waste...

something that we know is not going to happen," she said.

"We know that we're not going to be able to change his mind in 30 minutes about climate change."

The Marshall Islands, comprising 31 tropical atolls between Australia and Hawaii, risks being underwater in 10-20 years.

"If that's not scary enough, I don't know what is. For us, it's of course an existential issue," said Heine, who was in Geneva to open a diplomatic mission, address the International Labour Organization and press her country's case for a seat on the U.N. Human Rights Council. The scene of massive U.S. nuclear tests in the 1950s, it is also at risk of disaster from radioactive debris the U.S. military left behind.

Her government has put a line item in its budget to cope with environmental costs, with about 5% of spending set aside to fund sea walls to save at least its two most populated areas.

On climate change, Heine said she had a simple message for the world: "Get real. Climate change is here. It's not anything to just talk about and think, that is going to happen. It's happening."

The official statement from the White House meeting cited "the region's most pressing issues, including responding to natural disasters", but not climate change or rising sea levels.

The main topic was renewal of U.S. financial grants and the rollover of a Cold War-era defense and security agreement. The Marshall Islands was occupied by Allied forces in 1944 and placed under U.S. administration in 1947. Between 1946 and 1958, the United States detonated 23 atomic and hydrogen bombs on Bikini and Eniwetok atolls, debris from which was left buried under a shallow concrete dome on Eniwetok.

"We're told it's seeping into the lagoon," Heine said, adding that the government wanted help to assess the damage and impact on marine life and potential costs of making it safe. Asked if it was potentially a nuclear disaster on top of a climate emergency, she said: "It could be." (Reuters)

(18) India Uses...

event for diplomats in New Delhi featuring India's foreign minister, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, Israel's ambassador Ron Malka said Modi's use of yoga as a tool of diplomacy is "working quite well" to strengthen ties between the two countries.

Walter Lindner, the German ambassador to India, described Modi's yoga bid at the U.N. a "clever move."

"Yoga is a product which you can sell everywhere in the world," Lindner said, adding that 4 million people were participating in International Yoga Day events in Germany. Modi has also used yoga to bolster his image at home.

Modi and his Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party won a resounding victory in India's recently concluded weeklong general elections by promoting a "New India" that pairs rapid economic growth with the trappings of the country's ancient roots.

After the final day of polling, Modi, who casts himself as a Hindu ascetic who closely follows the religion's strictures on vegetarianism and yoga, retreated to a Himalayan mountain cave to meditate — with a camera crew in tow. Modi last year released a 2-minute video showing him practicing yoga on his lawn at the prime minister's residence. Some online commentators used the opportunity to compare Modi with India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. Many shared pictures of Nehru doing a headstand, an advanced yoga posture. Of the benefits, Nehru wrote in his autobiography, "The slightly comic position increased my good humor and made me a little more tolerant of life's vagaries." (AP)