China signals Veto in Standoff with U.S. Over Afghan U.N. Mission

China and the United States are deadlocked over a U.N. resolution to extend a mission in Afghanistan, with Beijing signaling it will cast a veto because there is no reference to its Belt and Road project, diplomats said.

KABUL - The Taliban group claimed responsibility for the explosions in Kabul city and Parwan province.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said in a statement that a suicide bomber detonated his explosives close to the Personnel Department of the Ministry of Defense in Kabul city this afternoon.

Mujahid further added that another suicide bomber of the group detonated his explosives close to an election rally in Charakar city.

Furthermore, Mujahid said that the two attacks inflicted heavy casualties on security personnel.

However, the officials in Parwan are saying that the attack close to election rally of Asadullah Ghanil killed more than 24 people and wounded over 30 others,

The officials have not commented regarding the casualties of Kabul explosions so far.

Turkey Condemns Kabul explosion

ANKARA - Turkey on Tuesday condemned the deadly bomb attack on Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's election campaign rally in central Parwan province.

The explosion killed more than 40 people and wounded over 40 others near the site of the blast.

He said: "Most of the victims, including women and children, seem to be civilians." He estimated the number of casualties could rise to several efforts were still ongoing.

Eyewitness told Pajhwok Afghan News the blast happened near a military base in the city, where the campaign rally was underway at around 11:45.

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25 Dead, 42 Wounded in Blast near Ghani Rally

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A Turkish Foreign Ministry statement said the ministry had hoped the presidential election process takes place in a peaceful and secure atmosphere.

Earlier on Tuesday, at least 26 people were killed in Afghanistan in a Taliban-claimed bomb attack on a campaign rally by President Ashraf Ghani.

Officials at the Ministry of Interior confirmed that the explosion near Massoud Square was caused by a suicide attacker and that it detonated close to one of the Ministry of Defense’s buildings in Pichak District 19 (PD19) in the city of Kabul.

KABUL - As the country is moving towards the presidential election – the third in Afghanistan’s history after 2001 – a survey by US analytics and advisory company Gallup shows high levels of suffering among Afghans who “remain hopeless” about their future.

The survey, which covers Afghanistan’s situation in 2018, shows a “dramatic” drop in Afghans’ average ratings of their current lives, and predicted ratings of their lives in five years, matched or fell below previous record lows for any country worldwide.

On a scale where “0” represents their worst possible life and “10” their best possible life, Afghanistan gave an average rating of 2.7 in 2018 – tied for the lowest in any country since Gallup began this survey.

Asked to predict where their lives would be in five years on the same scale, Afghanistan’s average response was 2.5, a new low for any country in any year.

Afghanistan’s 2018 life ratings were remarkably not much lower than the lowest average, but because this was the first time in more than a decade of data collection around the world that people’s predicted ratings for their future lives was lower than their current average, “(based on the population average)”, the survey shows that for the second consecutive year, no Afghans rated their current average life positivity positively enough to be considered “thriving” (a rating of 7 or higher).

As the percentage of those rated their lives so poorly that they are considered “suffering” (a rating of 0 to 6) has increased.

This is a new record not only for Afghanistan, but also for the world. The country also had the highest ratings of suffering in 2013, 2014 and 2015.

The survey asked specific questions about day-to-day experiences and emotions: Just over 1 in 3 Afghans (36%) said they smiled or laughed a lot the previous day, which was down.

Nearly nine in 10 Afghans are Suffering: Gallup

FEAR OF TERRORISM

The percentage who rated their lives so poorly that they are considered “suffering” (a rating of 0 to 6) was 77% in 2018, down from 87% in 2017.

The portion of Afghans who reported they felt “safe” (some 21%) was tied with Pakistan for the lowest among 140 countries.

The percentage of people who said their lives would be in the same scale, Afghanistan’s average response