

**International Daily**  
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 ● Graphic designers: Edress Akbery, Bakhtash Shahbani and Ali Ahmad  
 ● Distribution: 2500537 - 0785551515 - 07824560 - 076788447  
 ● Printed at: Azadi printing press  
 ● Address: 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Liberty Printing Press Building  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Microrayon, Kabul, Afghanistan  
 ● twitter.com/thekabultimes ● www.facebook.com/thekabultimes

## Observing Intl Children's Day aims to defend their rights



International Children's Day is observed in some countries on June 1st. The origin of this day goes back to 1925 when representatives from 36 different countries met in Geneva, Switzerland to convene the first "World Conference for the Wellbeing of Children".

After the conference, some governments around the world designated a day as Children's Day to highlight children's issues. There was no specific date recommended, so countries used whatever date was most relevant to their culture.

The date of June 1st is used by many countries as International Children's Day. This day was established by the United Nations in 1954 and aims to promote the welfare of children around the world.

In Afghanistan, the day is marked amid of continued war and violence increasing poverty and depriving children from going to school.

Based on statistics of UNICEF, currently 12 million Afghan children are deprived from going to school. Moreover, inadequate food, medical care, free education, protection against all forms of exploitation and poverty are caused by COVID-19.

Many countries have established a Children's Day but this is commonly not observed as a public holiday. For instance, some countries observe Children's Day on November 20th as Universal Children's Day. This day was established by the United Nations in 1954 and aims to promote the welfare of children around the world.

In Afghanistan, the day is marked amid of continued war and violence increasing poverty and depriving children from going to school.

## Editorial

### Afghanistan turning as main trade and transit hub for region

Afghanistan enjoys a unique geo-strategic, geo-economic and geopolitical location in the region and its position in the ancient Silk Route, South Asia, being strategic and long borders with important countries like China, Iran, Pakistan and south Asian countries are the vital factors which can both serve as an advantage for the country.

Realizing this potential, the Afghan Government has initiated many efforts not to develop an Afghan regional strategic economic engagement strategy. Establishing the railway links with Iran, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan as well as transiting the major economic projects, like CASA-1000, TAPI and TUTA Plus has turned Afghanistan into major trade and transit hub in the region, connecting central Asia with south Asia.

On Monday, Iran's Parliament passed Iran-Afghanistan Rail Cooperation Agreement that allows rail connection between the neighboring countries. Iran and Afghanistan agreed to make direct connection through railroad to transfer passengers and goods.

According to the agreement, the two sides have agreed to provide rail vehicles and services and implement sanitary supervision in accordance with international rules, while domestic rules are valid where an issue occurs outside of international conventions. Meanwhile another railway to connect Central Asia with South Asia via Afghanistan. The railway will start from Uzbekistan and would pass through Mazari-Shareef city and would end in Peshawar.

Indeed, the Afghan government has created an enabling environment for private sector development and support it strategically. One of the other vital prerequisites to enable Afghanistan to realize its economic goal is developing its transit and transport infrastructure.

Upgrading economy, strengthening trade and transit, and enhancing import and export with regional countries will make great contribution to poverty alleviation in Afghanistan. The country needs to address trade deficit and boost connectivity with its neighboring countries and beyond through an and land to give the economy momentum.

In the current globalized world, transportation construction is an essential prerequisite for economic development. A Chinese proverb says, "If you want to be rich, you must build roads first". This saying stresses the significance of transportation and connectivity.

As the "center of Asian crossroads", Afghanistan has revitalized its historical status through expanding trade and transit with the region and paving the ground for domestic and foreign investment.

Afghanistan is known as "the heart of Asia" for its unique geographical location, which is able to connect South Asia to Central Asia and East Asia to West Asia. Meanwhile, Afghanistan has huge untapped deposits and mineral resources, which will enable the country to stand on its own feet economically.

The country has also huge human capital. The abundant workforce without labor market will necessarily lead the country to poverty. Therefore, if Afghanistan struggles to manage its resources, capitalize on its geographical location and use its human capital appropriately, it will regain its former status as "Asian transit and trade roundabout".

To realize such a goal, the regional countries should do more to support economic projects rather than supporting terror and proxy groups. Joint projects bring welfare to the people in the region, however, terrorism brings fear and devastation and deprive the nations in the region from development and other essential means of life.

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 Contact No: 0202301675-0700163568

