



Russia opposes possible US base in Central Asia



Future of Afghanistan cannot be its past: Ishankumar at SCO meet



UK retail sector records fastest quarterly growth on record



Johanna Konta withdraws from Tokyo Olympics after positive Covid-19 test leaves her unable to train



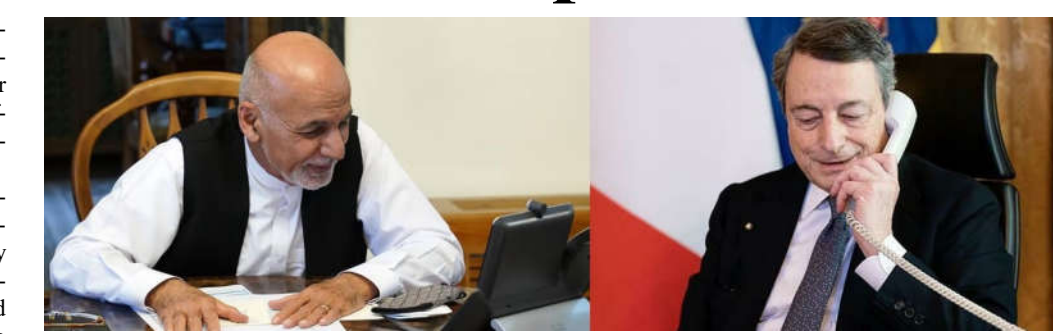
India's Covid vaccine rollout hit by hesitancy and supply snags

Italy reiterates continued support for Afghanistan after troop withdrawal

KABUL: Italian President Mohammad Abdul Ghani spoke via telephone with Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi last yesterday afternoon, a presidential statement said.

During the phone call, the president praised the Italian government and people for their security and development assistance, especially to their province, and said that the country's assistance to Afghanistan's emergency humanitarian work over the past 20 years has been very effective, the statement said.

The president, as quoted in the statement, also expressed hope that in the new chapter of Afghanistan's relations with the international community, bilateral cooperation between the two countries will be further expanded.



On the other hand, Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi thanked President Ghani and said that Italy was proud of the Afghan people, adding that their forces have withdrawn, but the commitment of the Italian government and people to remain in Afghanistan is unchanged.

He also called for strong bilateral cooperation between Italy and Afghanistan, the statement further said.

FM Atmar asks Pakistan to close shelters, cease funding sources of Taliban

KABUL: Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Mohammad Hafeez Atmar, on the sidelines of the fourth meeting of the Afghanistan Contact Group within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, met with Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi to discuss strengthening regional cooperation for the success of the Afghan Peace Process.

Pakistan's practical engagement on the joint fight against terrorism, and ensuring lasting peace and stability in the Afghanistan and the region, a Maf Ambassador said yesterday.

Minister Atmar elaborated on the latest political and security developments in Afghanistan, including the consolidation of regional cooperation along with the international community support to Afghanistan's efforts to ensure the success of the peace process.

FM Atmar, as quoted in the statement, stressed the importance of reducing violence and establishing ceasefire in Afghanistan and reiterated Pakistan's commitment to working to persuade the Taliban to negotiate and find a political settlement, the statement added.

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UN denounces 'serious human rights abuses' in Afghanistan

KABUL: The United Nations in Afghanistan said in a statement on Wednesday that it is "increasingly concerned" with the number of reported serious human rights abuses and violations alleged by the community most affected by the ongoing military offensive across the country.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) said. The reports of killing, ill-treatment, persecution and discrimination on widespread and disturbing, causing fear and insecurity. It said, adding that "those who carry out any such acts must be held accountable."

The statement specifically mentioned the reported harm to women and girls. "UN reiterates that parties are obliged to respect the human rights and dignity of all Afghans, especially those of women and girls who have in the past been subjected to particularly acute forms of discrimination."

It also expressed concern over the impact of the military offensive on the civilian population, including the destruction of infrastructure, the displacement of people, and the loss of livelihoods.

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Nation to soon witness retaking of lost districts: Shinwari



KABUL: Taliban officials on July 14 said that the Taliban's warnings against India regarding Turkey's presence in Afghanistan are "symbolic."

Speaking to the BBC's Turkish service, the officials said that the Taliban would have no aggressive stance against Turkey and that the group is working to restore recognition. The officials also stated that the Taliban was to give the message that they're "the boss" in the country.

"It's nice that the group perceives the U.S. troops as occupiers," the ambassador added.

He also stressed the importance of reducing violence and establishing ceasefire in Afghanistan and reiterated Pakistan's commitment to working to persuade the Taliban to negotiate and find a political settlement, the statement added.

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Ankara brands Taliban's warnings against Turkey as 'symbolic'

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French Ambassador asks Taliban to end military offensive, destruction of vital infrastructures

KABUL: In a message on the occasion of National Day of France, the French Ambassador in Kabul, David Marion, asked Taliban to put an end to their ongoing military offensives and avoid destruction of vital infrastructures.

"We call the Taliban to put an end to their ongoing military offensives, their continued targeted killings taking place throughout Afghanistan, the destruction of vital infrastructures, and threats and actions against political and social gains. Afghans have made over the last twenty years with our support," the ambassador added.

"Taliban were looting and burning buildings, roads, bridges, destroying vital infrastructures, and disrupting communication networks. They are detaining and killing people."

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Ministry reports 1,210 new COVID-19 cases, 60 deaths in Afghanistan

KABUL: The Ministry of Public Health on Wednesday reported 1,210 new positive cases of COVID-19 out of 3,068 samples tested in the last 24 hours. The ministry also reported 60 deaths and 77 recoveries from COVID-19 in the same period.

Data by the Public Health Ministry indicates that the total reported number of cases is 17,453, and total death count is 5,981.

The Ministry of Public Health said that vaccinations had resumed on Sunday in the country's health centers.

On Last Friday, Afghanistan received 1.48 million doses of Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine provided by the US.

The total confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the world stand at 187,809,938 and the total death count is 4,088,422, according to figures by John Hopkins University.

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