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Afghanistan Constitution

Article One Hundred Forty-Nine

The principles of adherence to the tenets of the Holy religion of Islam as well as Islamic Republicanism shall not be amended. Amending fundamental rights of the people shall be permitted only to improve them. Amending other articles of this Constitution, with due respect to new experiences and requirements of the time, as well as provisions of Articles Sixty-Seven and One Hundred Forty-Six of this Constitution, shall become effective with the proposal of the President and approval of the majority of National Assembly members.

Imran Khan and Taliban: An impending disaster

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Over 22,000 Afghan families move out from Kandahar in a month

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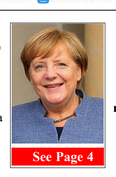

Merkel charges successor with modernizing Germany's economy

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Tokyo 2020 Olympics: Adam Peaty wins first gold for Team GB and defends 100m breaststroke title

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Death toll in India monsoon rises to at least 127

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Young Pakistanis' Taliban idealism end with death in Afghanistan

KABUL: Nangarhar Governor says that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has transferred death bodies of 39 Pakistanis killed in Afghanistan clashes, to the neighboring country via Torkham crossing. Zia-ul-Haq Amarkhail, as quoted by provincial press office the other day, added that these Pakistanis were fighting for Taliban militants. He also said that in addition to the official transfer of these bodies, dozens of other Pakistanis' death and injured bodies being transferred to the neighboring country through various unofficial routes. The governor of Nangarhar said Afghan forces are defending their country and if anyone comes to Afghanistan for war and looting, their dead bodies will be returned back. This comes as spokesman for Ministry of Defense, Rohullah Ahmadzai, in a Facebook post said yesterday that dozens of Punjabi dead bodies are being transferred to Pakistan on daily basis by ICRC. "The result of standing against Afghan forces. Dozens of Punjabi dead bodies, that have come to Afghanistan to fight Afghan forces, are being transferred to Pakistan via ICRC and

on daily basis," he wrote in a Facebook post.

This comes as videos of Pakistani citizens holding Taliban flags and chanting Islamist slogans at rallies to show support for the insurgents have been circulating on social media. Pakistani clerics in various parts of the neighboring country are also soliciting support for the Taliban and calling for donations. Many locals and witnesses in the city of Quetta and district of Pishin of Baluchistan province told DW last week that there had been an increased pro-Taliban activity in their areas.

"The Taliban enjoy local support in our area, but the rallies are not possible without support from state authorities," a resident told DW on condition of anonymity. "Initially, the clerics were asking for donations for the Taliban at mosques; now they are coming door-to-door to generate funds for the 'Afghan jihad,'" he said.

The last time Abdul Rasheed's family saw him alive was in May, when the young Pakistani left for Afghanistan to fight for the Taliban. He returned home last week in a cardboard coffin.

Pakistan's interior minister earlier this month publicly acknowledged that the families of Afghan Taliban fighters were living in the country's capital, while members of its rank-and-file were brought to the country for medical treatment or to be buried. Pakistan has a long, complicated history with the Taliban.

For decades, Pakistani madrassas have served as incubators for militancy, indoctrinating tens of thousands of refugees who have few other options for education than the fire-breathing lectures from hardline clerics. Rather than crack down on the institutions, successive governments in Islamabad — who rely on the support of Islamist parties in coalition governments — have largely given the madrassas a free hand. Rasheed's family do not know exactly when or where he died, only that it happened somewhere in eastern Nangarhar province, according to a report by AFP, quoting two police sources in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province that four dead bodies of Pakistani fighters had arrived from Afghanistan in recent weeks.

Meanwhile, Mohsin Dawar, a progressive opposition lawmaker from Pakistan's northwestern tribal areas, said that "the Taliban continue to roam freely in different parts of Pakistan, including Quetta."

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Civilian casualties in Afghanistan hit record levels: UN

KABUL: Resulting from a spike in violence in May that corresponded with the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan, the civilian casualties reported in the country for the first half of 2021 have reached record levels, the UN said in a report released on Monday.

The UN has warned that without significant de-escalation, 2021 will witness the highest ever number of documented civilian casualties in a single year since UNAMA recording began.

The UN report said that 1,659 civilians were killed and 3,254 others were wounded, which is a 47 percent increase compared to the same period in 2020.

Of serious concern is the acute rise in the number of civilians killed and injured in the period from May 1, with almost as many civilian casualties in the May-June period as recorded in the entire preceding four months, according to the report.

The number of civilian casualties during May and June –783 killed and 1,609 wounded—is the highest for those months since UNAMA began its systematic documentation in 2009.

The period January-April 2021 saw 2,791 civilian casualties (876 killed and 1,915 injured), said the UN.

"I implore the Taliban and Afghan leaders to take heed of the conflict's grim and chilling trajectory and its devastating impact on civilians. The report provides a clear warning that unprecedented numbers of Afghan civilians will perish and be maimed this year if the increasing violence is not stemmed," said Deborah Lyons, the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan.

The UN envoy, who is also the head of UNAMA, called on the Taliban and Afghan leaders to "intensify your efforts at the negotiating table, stop the Afghan against Afghan fighting" and to "protect the Afghan people and give them hope for a better future."

"The pursuit of a military solution will only increase the suffering of the Afghan people," the report said. The UN urged the parties to follow their obligations under international law to protect civilians.

The report noted that what is "particularly shocking" and of "deep concern" is that women, boys and girls made up "close to half of all civilian casualties in the first half of 2021," it said.

"Comprising 46 percent of all civilian casualties, 32 percent were children – 1,682 in total (468 killed and 1,214 injured) and 14 percent were women – 727 in total (219 killed and 508 injured)," the report said, adding: "It is sickening to report that more women and more children were killed and wounded than ever before recorded by UNAMA for the first half of any calendar year."

"Anti-Government Elements (AGEs) were responsible for 64 percent of the total civilian casualties: 39 percent by Taliban, nearly nine percent by Daesh and 16 percent by undetermined AGEs," the report said.

"Pro-Government Forces (PGFs) were responsible for 25 percent of civilian casualties: 23 percent by Afghan national security forces, and two percent by pro-Government armed groups or undetermined PGFs," according to the report.

UNAMA attributed 11 percent of all civilian casualties to "crossfire" during ground engagements where the exact party responsible could not be determined and other incident types, including unattributable unexploded ordnance/explosive remnants of war.

UNAMA is also concerned about the "increasing number of reports of killing, ill-treatment, persecution and discrimination in communities affected by the current fighting and its aftermath," the report said, adding that it is "particularly important, especially during times of heightened conflict, that all parties respect the human rights and dignity of people and prevent such abuses and violations."

The Kabul Times

Republic will be preserved: President assures people

KABUL: The President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Mohammad Ashraf Ghani chaired the preparatory meeting for the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB) at the Presidential Palace, a statement said Monday.

Officials from the relevant departments attended the meeting during which they shared their reports about their works and achievements, the presidential palace statement said.

Dr. Fazel Mahmoud Fazly, Director General for the Administrative Office of the President, said that all relevant departments will share their reports on the follow-up and fulfillment of the Geneva Conference commitments with the nation, government and the international community.

The country's president praised the readiness of the departments for the JCMB meeting and said that despite facing drought, COVID-19 and war this year, inflation of 3% and one percent economic growth is good news for Afghanistan.

The president called reforms in the judiciary, the start of Afghanistan's digitalization process in coming week, and the acquisition of ownership of the reform process to fight corruption as the biggest steps, according to the statement.

"The environment has changed, we are facing an onslaught of the international terrorism, but the people are confident that the republic will be preserved and that the international community will stand by Afghanistan," the statement concluded as quoting.

The Kabul Times

Afghanistan welcomes documenting, follow up on Taliban's crimes by int'l agencies

KABUL: Ministry of Foreign Affairs Welcomed the recent Human Rights Watch and other verified independent sources' report on documenting the Taliban's violence and crimes, and strongly condemns these reprehensible crimes. "The reports by verified independent resources and media indicate that the Taliban forces perpetrate in areas under their control unpardonable and prosecutable crimes, including illegal arrests, arbitral killings, torturing civilians, forced marriages, and violation of basic human rights, particularly women's rights," a MoFA statement said.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan calls on the international community, human rights agencies, and the International Criminal Court (ICC) to cooperate with the Afghan Government in preventing the Taliban's organized atrocities and prosecution of the perpetrators to put an end to impunity in Afghanistan, the statement further added. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, while appreciating the independent verified international agencies' efforts in confirming the Taliban's non-compliance to their international commitments and the Doha Peace Agreement, stresses the need to convene an extraordinary meeting of the Human Rights Council and dispatching a fact-finding delegation to assess and follow up on the Taliban's violations and crimes against humanity. **The Kabul Times**

US general vows to continue airstrikes supporting Afghan troops fighting Taliban

KABUL: The US will continue airstrikes in support of Afghan forces fighting the Taliban, a top US general said Sunday.

Violence has surged across the country in recent months after the Taliban launched a sweeping assault just days after the US-led foreign forces began their final withdrawal.

Speaking to reporters Sunday in Kabul, Gen. Kenneth McKenzie, head of the US Army Central Command, said, "The United States has increased airstrikes in the support of Afghan forces over the last several days, and we are prepared to continue this heightened level of support in the coming weeks if the Taliban continue their attacks."

McKenzie acknowledged the Afghan government will face tough days ahead.

"The Taliban are attempting to create a sense of inevitability about their campaign. They are wrong," he said.

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