



DROPS

ORGANIZATION FOR POLICY RESEARCH
& DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

نهاد پژوهش و توسعه


Newsletter

March

2020

Our Activities:

- DROPS conducted two sessions of its 7-Month Public Policy Training at Kardan University.
- DROPS went into Lockdown in response to COVID-19 on 21 March.



Organization for Policy Research and Development Studies (DROPS) is an independent and multidisciplinary policy-oriented research organization based in Kabul, Afghanistan.

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DROPS NEWS

Public Policy Training at the Kardan University

As part of its 7-month Public Policy Training program, DROPS completed the last two sessions of its program in cooperation with Kardan University in Kabul. By joining efforts with academic institutions, DROPS ensures its trainings are inclusive of more students in addition to civil servants, CSO members, media and the private sector.

As part of these sessions, participants were given the space to apply the research methodology and policy research tools they acquired by selecting a timely and relevant policy issue as the focus of a policy brief trainees will be developing jointly. Thus, upon an assessment of various national issues, participants selected the issue of “traffic congestion in Kabul” as the focus of their policy brief. As part of this policy brief, over 20 respondents from the Kabul Traffic Department, Kabul Municipality, Ministry of Interior, Kabul Taxi Drivers, and residents of Kabul were interviewed. The policy brief will be published in July 2020.

DROPS went to Lockdown on 21 March, 2020

Upon the identification of COVID-19 positive cases among residents in Kabul, on 21 March DROPS leadership took the precautionary step to go into lockdown to prioritize the safety and protection of its staff and community. From the mentioned date onwards, DROPS staff have been working remotely. The Afghan Government announced its lockdown measures on 29 March. As the COVID 19 outbreak is increasing at high pace, and more and more cases are being confirmed, the lockdown will be observed by DROPS until the further notice by public health authorizes.

DEVELOPMENTS IN AFGHAN PEACE-PROCESS

What Do Afghans Want? Peace, But Not 'at Any Cost'

By Karl F. Inderfurth

The recently signed agreement between the United States and the Taliban represents a milestone in a war that began with the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan following 9/11. But the agreement is not actually a peace deal; it is a chance to get one. Now comes the hard part. The agreement stipulates that it will be followed by a much more difficult intra-Afghan negotiation on a permanent ceasefire and future political arrangements. [Read](#)



[more...](#)

Via Video Conference, Afghan Government and Taliban Discuss Prisoner Releases

By Catherine Putz

Despite setbacks and assuredly more challenges ahead, the Afghan government and the Taliban are making incremental progress on a prisoner exchange — a first step in intra-Afghan discussions — via video conferencing. The U.S.-Taliban deal, settled on February 29, mentioned the release of up to 5,000 Taliban prisoners held by the Afghan



government and the release of 1,000 prisoners held by the Taliban. [Read more...](#)

The Afghan Peace Process: Where do we go from here?

By Harris Samad

The negotiations excluded the Afghan government, though elements of the peace deal—the bilateral prisoner swap in particular—required Kabul's action. Afghan President Ashraf Ghani initially rejected the United States and the Taliban's agreement to swap prisoners, stating that "it is not in the authority of the United States to decide, they are only a facilitator." [Read more...](#)



Afghanistan's peace process is in danger of unravelling

By Sultan Barakat

The crisis could be compounded by an early withdrawal of US and NATO troops. Four NATO service members who recently arrived in Afghanistan have tested positive for coronavirus; and given fears of a major outbreak in the country, Western allies may decide to pull their troops out



ahead of the schedule set by the US-Taliban agreement. [Read more...](#)

Taliban refuses to talk to newly-formed Afghan government team

The Taliban has refused to negotiate with a team announced by the Afghan government, the armed group's spokesman has said, in a potential setback to the next steps in the United States-brokered peace process.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said on Saturday the group will not negotiate with the 21-member team as it was not selected in a way that included "all Afghan factions". [Read more...](#)



US-Taliban deal raises hopes for Afghan prisoners

By Shereena Qazi & Sami Yousafzai

"This failure to investigate has created a major problem for potential prisoner releases. Officials trying to ascertain whether convicted Taliban identified for possible release may have committed war crimes won't get any guidance from the vague charges under which many are held." The statement also said the government is imprisoning many people under the "overly broad



terrorism laws" that may make it difficult to determine serious crimes committed by a prisoner.

[Read more...](#)

US Strikes Taliban Forces Days After 'Historic' Deal

By Catherine Putz

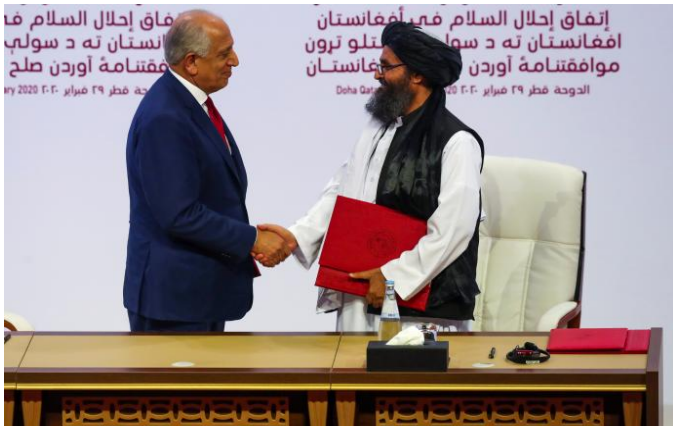
In a tweet on Tuesday, U.S. military spokesman Col. Sonny Leggett said that the United States conducted an airstrike against Taliban fighters in Helmand who were actively attacking an Afghan National Security and Defense Forces (ANDSF) checkpoint. It was the United States' first strike against the Taliban in 11 days. He categorized the strike as "defensive" to disrupt the Taliban's attack on Afghan government forces. [Read more...](#)



Peace Hasn't Broken Out in Afghanistan

By James Dobbins

On February 29, the United States and the Taliban signed a preliminary peace deal aimed at ending nearly 19 years of war in Afghanistan. The agreement calls for the United States to gradually withdraw its troops from the country over the next 14 months and for the Taliban and the Afghan



government (which was not a party to the deal) to open direct talks. The Taliban further promise in the deal to prevent terrorist groups, such as al Qaeda or the Islamic State. [Read more...](#)

Afghanistan: Can This Be a Real Peace Process?

BY: Sharif Shah Safi

As Afghanistan moves toward intra-Afghan peace talks, I see that the discussions so far—involving the U.S. and Afghan governments and the Taliban leadership—are attempting to make a peace from the top of these power structures that will then filter down to Afghan society. Yet these Afghan power structures are historically dominated by old men, while almost two-thirds of Afghans are roughly my age (I am 25) or younger. [Read more...](#)



U.S. vows to cut \$1 billion in aid to Afghanistan as political crisis threatens peace deal

By Pamela Constable and John Hudson

The official said Pompeo's "authority" as the top U.S. diplomat and a close adviser to President Trump gives him more potential influence than other intermediaries on Ghani and Abdullah, who are bitterly estranged after co-governing for five years. In recent weeks, both Zalmay Khalilzad, the



U.S. diplomat spearheading the peace talks, and senior Afghan political and religious leaders have tried to find a compromise — to no avail.

[Read more...](#)

ادامه‌ی خشونت‌ها در کشور؛ طالبان با جنگ در پی چیست؟

لطف‌علی سلطانی

گروه طالبان بر خلاف گذشته که آمار تلفات نیروهای دولتی را بیش‌تر نشان می‌دادند، در حدود یک هفته‌ی گذشته اما سعی کرده است که شمار حملات‌شان بر نیروهای دولتی را کم جلوه دهند. براساس اطلاعاتی که ذبیح‌الله مجاهد، سخنگوی این گروه در صفحه‌ی تویتش نوشته است، جنگ‌جویان طالب از اول تا ششم حمل امسال در ولایت‌های جوزجان، پکتیا، بلخ و میدان وردک فقط پنج حمله انجام داده‌اند. این حملات شامل، حملات تهاجمی بر پاسگاه‌های پولیس و اردو و انفجار ماین کنارجاده‌ای بوده است. براساس اطلاعات سخنگوی طالبان، در این حملات نه تن از نیروهای دولتی جان باخته‌اند.

[بیشتر بخوانید...](#)



حضور ایالات متحده در جنگ افغانستان و بازی‌های سیاسی پاکستان

خالده محمدی

افغانستان بیش از هر کشور دیگر در معرض رقابت سنگین قدرت‌های بزرگ از جمله ایالات متحده قرار گرفته است. افغانستان در گذشته نیز همواره میدان رقابت دو ابرقدرت (روس و انگلیس) قرار داشت. پس از پایان جنگ جهانی دوم، وارد فاز جدید شد و حادثه ۱۱ سپتامبر سرآغاز تحول عمیق در مناسبات افغانستان گردید. پاکستان و افغانستان در محور سیاست‌های ایالات متحده و



ناتو قرار گرفتند. پاکستان و افغانستان در محور سیاست‌های ایالات متحده و ناتو قرار گرفتند. از این‌که افغانستان و پاکستان میزبان گروه القاعده عنوان شده بودند. [بیشتر بخوانید...](#)

بارنت روبین زنگ خطر را نواخت

فردوس کاوش

بارنت روبین افغانستان‌شناس امریکایی در مقاله‌ای که در یکی از رسانه‌های امریکایی منتشر کرد، بحران اقتصادی ناشی از گسترش ویروس کرونا در ایالات متحده با مرگ اتحاد شوروی مقایسه کرده و آورده است که این بحران خطر فروپاشی دولت افغانستان را افزایش داده است. به نوشته‌ی بارنت، اتحاد شوروی که در سپتامبر سال ۱۹۹۱ در حال مرگ بود، پایان کمک‌های نظامی و مالی را به حکومت داکتر نجیب اعلام کرد. به نوشته‌ی روبین گسترش ویروس کرونا در ایالات متحده سبب تشدید بحران اقتصادی در امریکا شده است و این امر احتمال توقف کمک‌های مالی و نظامی واشنگتن را به افغانستان افزایش داده است. [بیشتر بخوانید...](#)

یک هیأت سه نفری گروه طالبان وارد کابل شد

ذبیح‌الله مجاهد، سخنگوی گروه طالبان گفته است که هیأت سه



نفری این گروه امروز سه‌شنبه، دوازدهم حمل، برای انتقال زندانیان طالبان به کابل آمده است. او در توییتی نوشته است: «آن‌ها جریان خلاصی زندانیان را تعقیب خواهند کرد و در بخش تخریبی اقدامات مورد نیاز را انجام خواهند داد.» حکومت افغانستان تاکنون به صورت رسمی در مورد رسیدن این هیأت به کابل چیزی نگفته است.

بیش‌تر قرار بود این هیأت که اعضای آن ده نفر گفته شده بود، به تاریخ هشتم حمل به کابل سفر کند، اما بعدتر گفته شد که به دلیل مشکلات فنی به تاخیر افتاده است. [بیشتر بخوانید...](#)

