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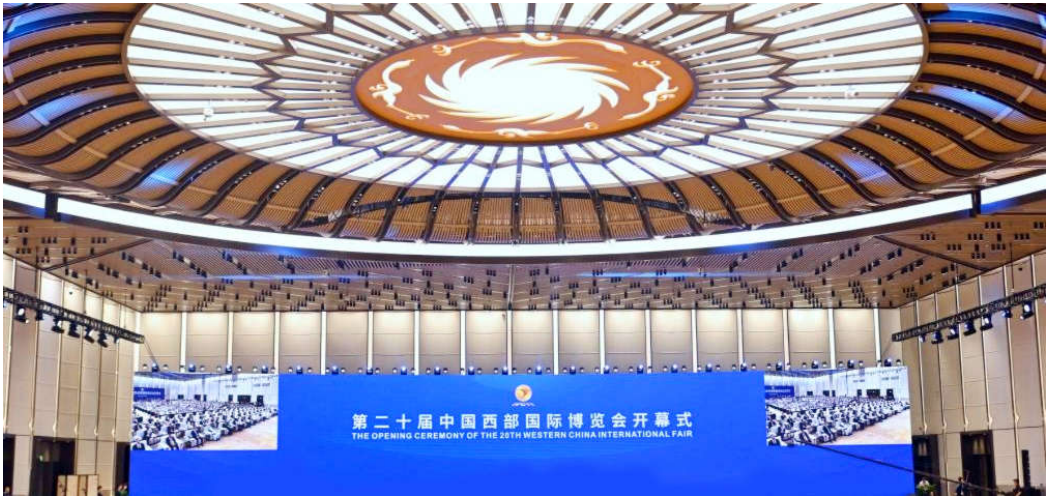
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# Afghanistan entered new chapter of stability, freedom, Muttaqi



KABUL: Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi, the country's acting Foreign Minister, addressing the 20th Western China International Fair (WCIF), in the

Chengdu of Sichuan province, said Monday that Afghanistan has entered a new chapter of stability, security, and freedom. Muttaqi said that the Afghan nation has begun efforts

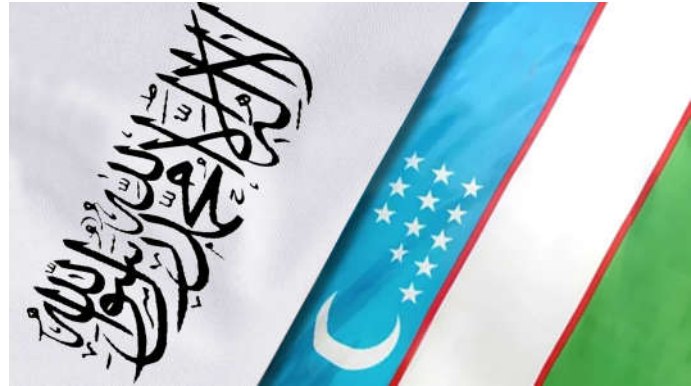
to foster economic cooperation with other countries, aiming to sustain peace, prosperity, and progress in their homeland, according to a statement from the ministry.

"To achieve its goals in the fields of development, peace and security, the Islamic Emirate has announced positive cooperation and economic engagement with all countries based on a balanced and economy-focused foreign policy," the statement quoted him as saying.

Participated by over 3,000 enterprises from 62 countries and regions as well as 27 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities), the 20th Western China International Fair (WCIF), themed "Deepen Reform for More Momentum, Expand Openness for Greater Growth," opened in Chengdu, Sichuan Province on May 25.

The Kabul Times

## Kabul, Tashkent seeking expansion of bilateral trade, transit cooperation



KABUL: Mohammad Naeem, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for Finance and Administration, met with Oybek Usmanov, the Ambassador of Uzbekistan in Kabul, discussing the expansion of bilateral trade and transit co-

operation, the ministry said in a statement Monday.

Dr. Naeem emphasized that facilitating transit and expanding trade could yield mutual benefits for both countries, according to the statement.

Meanwhile, Ambassador

Usmanov expressed gratitude for Naeem's active participation in the Termez meeting, viewing it as a sign of strengthening ties between the two nations, according to the statement. Both sides underscored the importance of expanding comprehensive cooperation and maintaining mutual understanding to foster regional stability and economic growth, the statement concluded.

Since the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) took power, Kabul and Tashkent have been actively working to expand bilateral relations across various fields, including trade, transit, infrastructure, and regional connectivity.

The Kabul Times

## Book Evolution Commission holds regular meeting



KABUL: The regular meeting of the Book Evaluation Commission was held with the Deputy Minister of Information and Culture for the Publications Affairs, Mawlawi Muhajer Farahi, on the chair, deciding to allow the publication of the books that have been written according to the Islamic and Afghan values, the min-

istry said in a statement on Monday.

At the beginning, the commission's secretary shared a report regarding the previous commission's meeting with the participants, the statement said.

Speaking about the commission's activities, Mawlawi Farahi praised its achievements, adding that those books

do not conflict with the principles of Sharia and national values are allowed to be published, according to the statement. The commission decided to allow the publication of those books that have been written according to Islamic and Afghan values, the statement added.

Also, a number of books that have been presented to the commission for assessment were distributed to the commission's members, and they were instructed to evaluate and share their findings in the next meeting, according to the statement.

The Book Evaluation Commission is held weekly to assess different books and grant publication approval to those that are written under Islamic and Afghan values, as well as the policies of the Islamic Emirate. The Kabul Times

## UNESCO pledges preservation of cultural heritage in Bamyan

KABUL: Patricia McPhillips, UNESCO's Director for Afghanistan, met with Mawlawi Abdullah Sarhadi, the Governor of Bamyan province, assuring the organization's commitment to restore and preserve the historical sites and cultur-

al heritage in the province, Bakhter News Agency reported the other day.

McPhillips outlined UNESCO's plans to implement sustainable projects aimed at restoring and maintaining historical sites, particularly in the

ancient cities of Gholghola and Zuhak, the agency said.

She emphasized the importance of these efforts in safeguarding Afghanistan's rich cultural heritage, according to the agency.

Highlighting the signifi-

cance of Bamyan's historical sites, Governor Sarhadi expressed concerns that current efforts may not be sufficient and urged UNESCO to enhance its supervision, safeguarding, and restoration initiatives for the historical monuments in the province, the agency added.

Meanwhile, McPhillips committed to sharing these suggestions with her colleagues at UNESCO headquarters to facilitate appropriate follow-up actions.

The meeting also discussed the handover and equipping of the Bamyan Cultural Heritage Center (BCC), which has been developed with financial assistance from South Korea, the agency concluded.

The Kabul Times



## Weapons, ammunition cache seized in Herat

KABUL: The Ministry of Interior Affairs said in a statement Monday that various light weapons and a huge amount of ammunition have been discovered and seized in Herat province over the past six months.

The contrabands, which included 20 pistols, four Kalashnikovs, eight hunting arms, a large quantity of cartridges and bullets and other illegally preserved military equipment, have been seized

during operations in different districts of the province over the past six months, the statement said, adding that the military tools had been handed over to the relevant authorities.

The relevant police personnel of the Islamic Emirate have so far rounded up thousands of arms and a huge quantity of ammunition as part of efforts to stabilize the security situation across the country. The Kabul Times



KABUL: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said in a statement the other day that it has assisted 3,065 Afghans who returned from Pakistan, Iran, Tajikistan, and other countries over the last one week.

According to the statement, more than 1,700 of them returned voluntarily, while the

rest were deported by the host countries.

The women headed 36 percent of the families who received assistance, the statement said.

UNHCR continues to advocate for voluntary, safe, and dignified returns, emphasizing the need for increased international support to address the

humanitarian challenges facing Afghan migrants, the statement added.

Recently, Iran and Pakistan have accelerated the deportation of Afghan migrants, leading to a significant increase in the number of returnees crossing back into Afghanistan.

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Kabul, Afghanistan**Food for thought***Today's generation guarantees our  
bright future***Bagram Air base never be used against  
certain countries**

Reports quoted a U.S. congressman as saying that Bagram was a key air base to be used against certain countries.

Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, U.S. Congressman Mike Bost, in an interview with media repeated Trump's words describing the Bagram Airfield as the country's "most forward air base" for countering adversaries, adding that there had been plans to keep it despite his country's forces withdrawal from Afghanistan as he criticized the chaotic US withdrawal from the country.

Bost said that during the U.S. forces withdrawal from Afghanistan under then-President Joe Biden, the president had received advice, suggesting that the Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan be retained, with approximately 3,500- 5,000 military personnel stationed there.

What is very important to say that why they are speaking about Bagram which a vital and strategic region of Afghanistan, which is now led by the Islamic Emirate. Why don't they realize the fact that the current Islamic system differs from those of the past puppet and leased regimes that had been working for the aliens.

The Islamic Emirate is not ready to deal even a small part of the country to others and will never allow others to even speak about regaining a span of the country's land as a launchpad against other nations. China, Russia, and other regional and world countries are now politically and economically interacting with Afghanistan under the leadership of the Islamic Emirate and so can do the U.S. It can come up with Afghanistan and engage with the Islamic Emirate based on bilateral interests, economic relations and a win/win approach in line with Islamic Sharia laws instead of resorting to erroneous and impossible ambition of invading or occupying other lands. Like other friendly nations, it can get closer to Afghanistan based mutual benefit unless it interferes militarily or politically in our internal affairs.

As per the foreign policy of the Islamic Emirate, Afghanistan will never be used against any country, nor others are allowed to use even a span of the country's soil as proxy warfield against their rivals.

**A Shariah-based educational system:  
structure, objectives, and methods****Part V**

*The second major objective of Islamic education is to prepare Muslim youth to pursue higher and specialized knowledge in all areas of life. This includes both Islamic sciences—such as Fiqh (jurisprudence), Ijtihad (independent reasoning), and Qada (judiciary)—and empirical sciences like engineering, chemistry, and physics.*



In the Islamic worldview, education is not merely the transmission of information or the preparation of individuals for material success.

Rather, it is a divine mandate deeply rooted in the mission of the Prophets and the responsibility of the Ummah. As envisioned in a future Islamic Caliphate, the general aims of education must reflect the sacred objectives of Islamic law (Maqasid al-Sharia) and the long-term vision of cultivating a righteous, knowledgeable, and empowered Ummah. Two central goals define this vision: the nurturing of Islamic personality and the preparation of Muslim youth for advanced learning and specialization in all fields of life.

At the heart of Islamic education lies the goal of developing individuals whose thoughts, behaviors, and inner selves are shaped by Islamic values.

This process is not accidental—it is a purposeful endeavor aimed at instilling Islamic

culture (Thaqafah Islamiya) deeply into the hearts and minds of students.

By internalizing Islamic beliefs, values, and perspectives, students undergo a transformation: their worldview becomes Islamic, their moral compass aligns with divine guidance, and their behaviors reflect the prophetic model.

This shaping of personality begins with planting firm belief in Tawheed (the oneness of Allah), nurturing a connection with the Quran and Sunnah, and promoting the development of noble character traits such as sincerity, patience, humility, and justice. Moreover, education should serve as a means to awaken the Islamic intellect ('Aqliyah Islamiyah) and soul (Nafsiyah Islamiyah), ensuring that the next generation of Muslims thinks, feels, and acts as committed servants of Allah.

In this context, curriculum designers and educators in the Islamic system must prioritize this goal above all.

Educational materials and teaching methods must be developed with the deliberate intent of reinforcing Islamic beliefs, identity, and lifestyle. Subjects should not be taught in isolation from Islam; rather, every field of study—from language and history to mathematics and biology—should be integrated with Islamic thought, demonstrating the unity of knowledge under the sovereignty of Allah.

The second major objective of Islamic education is to prepare Muslim youth to pursue higher and specialized knowledge in all areas of life. This includes both Islamic sciences—such as Fiqh (jurisprudence), Ijtihad (independent reasoning), and Qada (judiciary)—and empirical sciences like engineering, chemistry, and physics.

The Islamic state must ensure that its youth are equipped with the intellectual tools, technical skills, and spiritual values required to serve the Ummah and lead it in all

dimensions of modern life.

The aim is to raise a generation of competent scholars, scientists, jurists, and leaders who can shoulder the responsibility of building, guiding, and defending the Islamic state.

These individuals will not only manage the internal affairs of the state with wisdom and justice but also represent Islam globally with confidence and authority.

The Islamic state should thus become a beacon of leadership among nations, a source of innovation and knowledge rather than a follower of others' ideologies or economic systems.

To realize this goal, educational institutions must provide rigorous academic training, foster critical thinking, and encourage creativity, all within an Islamic framework.

Investment in research, technological development, and academic excellence must go hand-in-hand with spiritual and ethical guidance.

The goal is not merely to compete with others but to lead the world by exemplifying an integrated model of progress rooted in divine revelation.

The general aims of education under an Islamic system are both spiritual and practical. On the one hand, they aim to shape believers who embody Islamic values in thought and action; on the other, they strive to prepare Muslim youth to master various sciences and lead the Ummah in a complex, modern world.

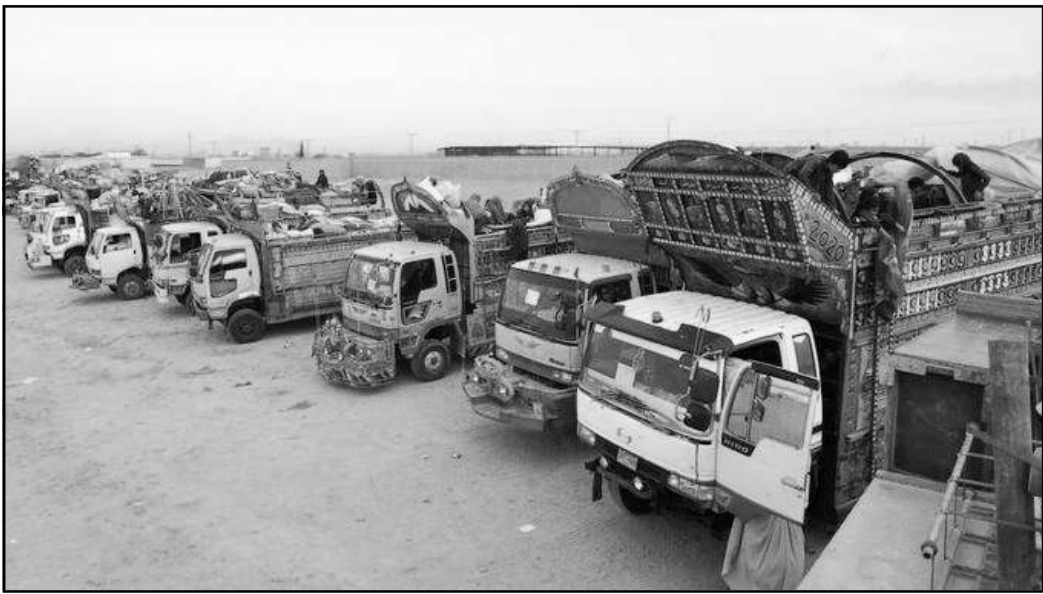
Together, these goals form the foundation for an educational system that not only preserves the identity of the Islamic Ummah but also empowers it to fulfill its role as a guiding light for all of humanity.

**Sayed Sharif**





# Returnees stand as strategic assets for economic development



After years of military conflict and political instability, Afghanistan now stands at a juncture where, despite economic challenges, it possesses significant untapped potential. If managed effectively, this potential could mark the beginning of a new phase of economic growth, job creation, and self-sufficiency.

One of the most critical aspects of this potential is the return of Afghan investors and migrants from abroad.

Over the past decades, thousands of Afghans have migrated to various countries, particularly Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, the UAE, and parts of Europe. Throughout this forced

migration, many of them became entrepreneurs, investors, and skilled professionals. Their return now presents a golden opportunity for Afghanistan's economic reconstruction.

Afghans living abroad often bring not only substantial financial capital but also managerial experience, industrial skills, international business networks, and familiarity with global technologies and standards.

These qualities make them one of the country's most valuable human and economic resources.

The experience of countries like Ethiopia, Vietnam, In-

dia, and even Rwanda has shown that governments capable of attracting diaspora investors have achieved rapid economic growth and significant increases in national production.

Afghanistan must also seize this opportunity and, instead of pursuing passive policies, implement a clear and structured plan to facilitate and encourage the return of Afghan investors.

In doing so, the government should focus on two main groups.

The first group includes Afghan investors residing in Western and Gulf countries, who are capable of investing

in large-scale industrial, agricultural, and construction projects.

The second group consists of returnees from Iran and Pakistan, many of whom were forced to return due to political and economic pressures in recent years.

Although this second group may not bring large sums of capital, they possess valuable hands-on experience in industrial, technical, construction, and agricultural fields, and can serve as a skilled labor force for national production.

Among them are also individuals who ran small and medium-sized businesses in their host countries and now wish to restart their ventures in Afghanistan but face legal, financial, and bureaucratic obstacles.

If Afghanistan truly wishes to benefit from the return of investors and skilled labor, it must implement a comprehensive, action-oriented plan.

First, establishing an independent and active institution called the "Investment Development Agency for Returnee Migrants" is essential. In collaboration with the Ministries of Finance, Commerce, Labor, and Refugees, this agency would identify, support, and

See P4

# How AI impacting media credibility and investigative journalism

Reporters Without Borders has recently released World Press Freedom Index found that the global state of press freedom has reached an unprecedented low point.

On average, RSF ranks the worldwide press freedom situation as "difficult" and conditions for journalism are now assessed as "poor" for half of all countries.

Amid this press turmoil, there's been a corresponding, paradigm-shifting technological development, as artificial intelligence, large language models, and predictive algorithms have appeared all across the media landscape.

This potentially breakthrough technology brings both promise and peril with it, however.

The smallest of newsrooms can now leverage AI tools for powerful new reporting capabilities, but this technology also threatens the traditional news business model while offering bad-faith actors and political extremists a dangerous new weapon for spreading misinformation and eroding trust in the press.

While AI has added exciting opportunities to investigative journalists' toolboxes, it also poses various challenges. Two years later, on this World

Press Freedom Day, the United Nations has likewise put a special emphasis on understanding the ongoing impact of AI in its report: "Reporting in the Brave World: The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Press Freedom and the Media."

"AI is transforming the fundamental right to seek, impart and receive information, as well as the journalistic profession," the report noted in its executive summary.

"It enhances access to information and processing of it, enabling journalists to handle and process vast amounts of data efficiently and create content more effectively."

"It also presents risks. It can be used to reproduce misinformation, spread disinformation, amplify online hate speech, and enable new forms of censorship," the report cautioned. "Some actors use AI for mass surveillance of journalists and citizens, creating a chilling effect on freedom of expression. Private platforms increasingly use AI to filter, moderate, and curate content, becoming gatekeepers of information."

Another more direct concern about AI's impact on media and journalism involves the technology being touted as a way to supercharge productivity while trimming editorial

staff. As the news industry experiences widespread financial difficulties and staff cutbacks, supplanting real reporters and editors with AI could further accelerate job losses among working journalists.

In a recent, extreme example, the news site Quartz fired almost all of its editorial staff after being acquired by a new owner, a move seen as the site fully embracing a strategy of AI-generated content.

And just last month, the Italian newspaper Il Foglio said it published, as an experiment, the first-ever, completely AI-generated newspaper, which included writing the stories, headlines, and even the quotes (from people who don't exist).

Investigative journalism, however, stands apart as an antidote to the scourge of AI manipulation and misinformation. Reporting that involves systematic inquiry—multiple sources, data analysis, fact checking—simply can't be replicated by machine learning or a supercomputer.

Watchdog reporting offers readers a vital service that they cannot get elsewhere. And for that reason, protecting the independence of journalists to expose wrongdoing and hold the powerful to account is paramount. **Noori**

# Managing water-intensive crops in Afghanistan: A path to sustainability



Afghanistan's agricultural sector, a cornerstone of its economy, faces significant challenges due to inefficiencies in production, market access, and resource management.

Each year, the country experiences substantial losses of agricultural produce, particularly water-intensive crops like watermelons, melons, and tomatoes, due to an imbalance between supply and demand and limited export capabilities.

These crops, which require vast amounts of groundwater for cultivation, often go to waste when market prices plummet during harvest seasons. This not only undermines farmers' livelihoods but also exacerbates the depletion of Afghanistan's critical groundwater resources, threatening long-term environmental and economic sustainability.

The cultivation of water-intensive crops is particularly problematic. For instance, producing one kilogram of watermelon requires approximately 140 liters of water, while one

kilogram of tomatoes can consume up to 300 liters.

Despite this significant investment of resources, market prices for these crops are often dismally low, sometimes as little as 10 Afghanis per kilogram. If the cost of water is conservatively estimated at 1 Afghanis per liter, producing a single kilogram of tomatoes could cost up to 300 Afghanis in water alone, far exceeding the revenue generated.

This stark disparity highlights the unsustainability of current agricultural practices, which drain valuable groundwater reserves while yielding minimal financial returns for farmers.

The lack of proper market infrastructure exacerbates the issue.

During peak harvest seasons, an oversupply of water-intensive crops floods local markets, driving down prices and leaving farmers unable to cover production costs.

Without robust export channels or storage facilities,

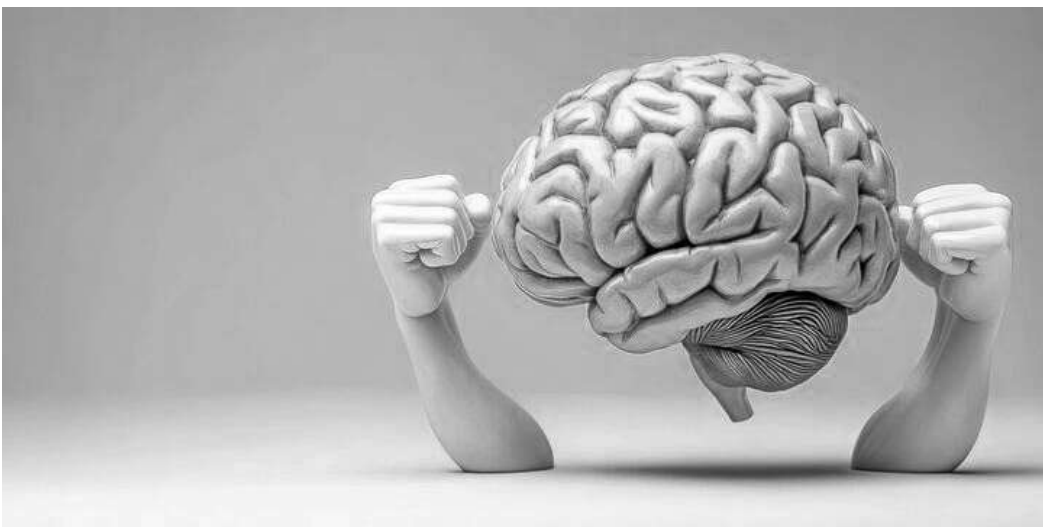
much of the harvest spoils, resulting in significant economic losses and wasted resources.

This cycle of overproduction and waste not only threatens farmers' livelihoods but also places immense pressure on Afghanistan's groundwater reserves, a critical resource for a country already grappling with water scarcity.

To address these challenges, a strategic and sustainable approach to managing water-intensive crop production is essential. One effective solution is to divide Afghanistan into agricultural zones and implement a rotational system for cultivating water-intensive crops.

Under this system, specific regions with positive water balances—such as areas near rivers or with abundant groundwater—would be designated for cultivation in a given year, while others would be restricted to prevent overproduction and conserve water resources. **See P4**

# The benefits of working out on physical and mental well-being



In our increasingly busy and demanding lives, prioritizing health has become crucial. One of the most effective and accessible ways to support overall health is through regular physical activity. Exercise not only helps maintain physical fitness but also contributes significantly to mental and emotional wellness.

Whether it's jogging, swimming, lifting weights, or simply walking, staying active yields numerous scientifically supported benefits.

Exercise plays a key role in sustaining a healthy body. It assists in weight management, enhances muscle strength, and builds strong bones. Cardiovascular activities such as running or cycling promote heart health by improving blood flow and reducing the risk of conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and hypertension.

Additionally, regular physical activity improves lung function and ensures better circulation of oxygen and nutrients throughout the body. It supports healthy digestion, helps regulate blood sugar, and fortifies the immune system,

making the body more capable of fighting off infections and diseases.

As people age, staying active becomes even more critical. Exercises tailored for older adults can preserve mobility, improve balance, and prevent falls.

Moreover, maintaining bone density through low-impact exercises like yoga or stretching helps reduce the risk of developing age-related conditions such as osteoporosis or arthritis.

Beyond the physical aspects, exercise has profound effects on mental health. Physical movement encourages the release of neurotransmitters like endorphins, dopamine, and serotonin.

These brain chemicals are closely associated with improved mood, lower stress levels, and reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression.

One of the lesser-known but valuable effects of exercise is its role in enhancing sleep quality. People who exercise regularly tend to fall asleep more quickly and enjoy deeper, more restorative sleep.

Good sleep is essential for memory retention, decision-making, and emotional stability.

Furthermore, engaging in physical activity often boosts self-confidence and fosters a sense of achievement.

Reaching fitness goals or even completing a simple walk can improve self-esteem and promote a healthier body image.

Socially, exercise can also create opportunities for connection and community. Group workouts, sports teams, or exercise classes can combat loneliness and contribute to a sense of belonging, which is important for emotional resilience.

Emerging research indicates that physical activity can positively influence brain structure. It has been shown to enlarge the hippocampus—a part of the brain linked to memory and learning.

This has implications for preventing cognitive decline and reducing the risk of diseases such as Alzheimer's.

Additionally, movement can stimulate creativity and improve problem-solving

skills.

After exercising, many individuals report feeling more alert and focused, making it easier to tackle demanding tasks.

A common misconception is that exercise must involve intense workouts or gym memberships.

However, everyday activities like walking, gardening, biking to work, or even dancing at home can provide substantial health benefits if done consistently.

Experts emphasize that regularity is more important than intensity when it comes to long-term results.

Health authorities recommend at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity weekly or 75 minutes of more vigorous exercise, in addition to strength-training exercises twice a week.

Starting with manageable goals and gradually increasing effort can make adopting an active lifestyle more sustainable.

Exercise offers a wide range of physical, mental, and emotional benefits.

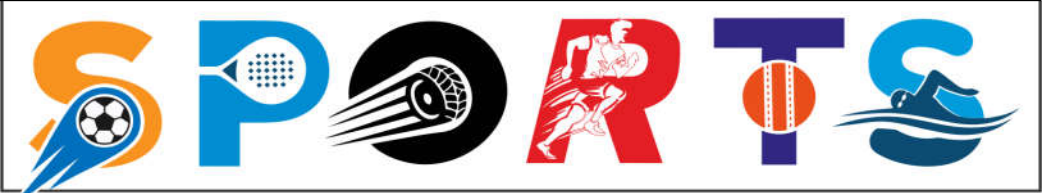
It strengthens the heart, sharpens the mind, lifts the mood, and improves overall quality of life. In an era dominated by stress and sedentary habits, regular physical activity emerges as a natural, powerful tool to counter health problems.

Incorporating exercise into daily routines is not only achievable but also one of the most valuable steps a person can take toward lasting well-being.

Mashal Noori



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68.90	93.19	809	235	78.28	0.82	18.74



## Afghan boxer Milad Azizi triumphs over Pakistani opponent in Peshawar

In a thrilling display of skill and determination, Afghan boxer Milad Azizi emerged victorious against his Pakistani opponent in a highly anticipated boxing match held in Peshawar, Pakistan, on May 26, 2025. The event, hosted by a prominent Pakistani sports

Azizi, representing Afghanistan, demonstrated remarkable technique and resilience throughout the bout. The match, held in the vibrant city of Peshawar, drew significant attention from local sports enthusiasts and marked a notable moment in re-

This win underscores Azizi's growing reputation as a formidable athlete in the Afghan sports scene and highlights the increasing prominence of Afghan boxers on the regional stage.

Competing in an away match against a home favorite, Azizi faced not only his opponent but also the pressure of performing in a foreign arena. His ability to maintain composure and execute his game plan effectively speaks volumes about his training and mental fortitude.

The event also reflects the spirit of sportsmanship and cross-border camaraderie, fostering a sense of camaraderie despite the intense rivalry.

Azizi's triumph is a proud moment for Afghanistan, inspiring young athletes in the country to pursue excellence in sports.

As Afghan athletes continue to make their mark internationally, Milad Azizi's victory in Peshawar serves as a testament to their dedication and potential, paving the way for future successes in the global sporting arena.

The Kabul Times



organization, showcased Azizi's prowess as he outclassed his rival over four intense three-minute rounds, ultimately securing the win through a judges' points decision.

gional boxing competitions. Azizi's strategic approach and precise strikes allowed him to dominate key moments, earning him a well-deserved victory over the Pakistani contender.

## Preliminary round of Champions League kicks off in Sar-e Pul

The preliminary stage of the Champions League commenced in Sar-e Pol, organized by the local representation of the Afghanistan Football Federation. Five teams from the northern zone are participating in this highly anticipated tournament, which began in the provincial capital and will run for five days.

The competing teams include Imamzadeh Yahya Sar-e Pol, Kud wa Barq Balkh, Modern Club Jawzjan, Ittihad Firoz Nakhchir Samangan, and Istiqlal Faryab.

The tournament features intense competition, with each

team vying for the coveted title of northern zone champion. The winning team will earn a prestigious spot in the Afghanistan Champions League, marking a significant achievement in their football journey. The event not only showcases the talent and determination of local athletes but also fosters unity and sportsmanship across the northern provinces.

The opening matches have already drawn enthusiastic crowds, with fans rallying behind their respective teams. The Sar-e Pul Football Federation has ensured smooth organization, with matches sched-

uled to maximize excitement and engagement. This tournament serves as a platform for young players to shine and for communities to come together in celebration of football.

As the competition progresses, all eyes are on which team will emerge victorious and represent the northern zone on the national stage. The outcome of these matches will determine the region's representative in the Afghanistan Champions League, making every goal and save crucial in this thrilling five-day event.

The Kabul Times

## Xabi Alonso appointed as Real Madrid's new head coach

Real Madrid has officially announced the appointment of former player Xabi Alonso as their new head coach, effective

Alonso, who played for Real Madrid from 2009 to 2014, was a key figure in the club's midfield, contributing to their

verkusen in 2022. Under his leadership, Leverkusen achieved unprecedented success, including a Bundesliga title in the 2023-24 season and a Europa League final appearance, showcasing his tactical acumen and ability to nurture young talent.

The appointment comes as Real Madrid seeks to maintain their dominance in Spanish and European football. Alonso's possession-based, high-pressing style is expected to align with the club's attacking tradition while introducing fresh ideas. Fans and analysts alike are optimistic about his potential to blend the club's experienced stars with emerging talents like Vinicius Jr. and Rodrygo.

Alonso's return to Real Madrid is a homecoming that carries high expectations. His three-year contract signals the club's confidence in his vision to build on their storied legacy. The Kabul Times



from June 1, 2025. Alonso, a club legend, will take the helm until June 2028, marking a significant return to the Santiago Bernabéu. The 43-year-old Spaniard, renowned for his illustrious playing career and recent managerial success, steps into the role following his remarkable tenure at Bayer Le-

2014 UEFA Champions League triumph and multiple domestic titles. His deep understanding of the club's culture and philosophy makes him a fitting choice to lead the team into a new era. After retiring in 2017, Alonso transitioned into coaching, starting with Real Madrid's youth teams before taking charge of Bayer Le-

## Gaza Humanitarian Foundation says will deliver aid to Gaza after head resigns

A private humanitarian organization backed by the US and Israel and tasked with distributing humanitarian aid in Gaza will begin delivering aid to the besieged enclave on Monday, it said.

"Our trucks are loaded and ready to go," it said, adding that GHF would begin direct aid delivery in Gaza from Monday to reach more than one million Palestinians by the end of the week.

"We plan to scale rapidly to serve the full population in the weeks ahead."

The head of the organization resigned on Sunday, saying he could not abandon principles of humanity, impartiality and independence.

Jake Wood, executive director of the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation for the past two months, said he resigned because it could not adhere "to the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence, which I will not abandon."

Wood's statement did not provide more details and the former US Marine did not immediately



respond to a request for comment.

In a statement, the Foundation's board said it was "disappointed" by Wood's departure, but vowed not to be deterred from efforts to reach the enclave's entire population in coming weeks.

A spokesperson for the US State Department said it remained supportive of the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation's plans to begin to deliver aid soon and underscored that US President Donald Trump had said the Palestinians badly needed help.

Israeli, Palestinian, US and UN officials did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Humanitarian assistance began trickling into Gaza in recent days after Israel relented to international pressure after having enforced a blockade since early March.

A global hunger monitor has warned that starvation faces half a million people, a quarter of the population in Gaza, where Israel and Palestinian militant group Hamas have been at war since October 2023.

Israel has accused Hamas of stealing aid, which the group denies, and is blocking humanitarian deliveries to Gaza until Hamas releases all remaining hostages taken in its attack on Israel.

The Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, set up in February, has been highly criticized by the United Nations, whose officials have said its aid distribution plans would only foment forced relocation of Palestinians and more violence.

That plan, originally set to begin by the end of May, was initiated by Israel and involves private companies, instead of the UN and aid groups which have handled Palestinian aid for decades, transporting aid into Gaza to a limited number of so-called secure distribution sites, which Israel said would be in Gaza's south.

This month wood told Israeli authorities in a letter the foundation would not share any personally identifiable information of aid recipients.

Alarabiya

From P3

## Managing water-intensive crops...

For example, in the northern zone, districts near the Kunduz River or the Amu Darya in Kunduz province could be permitted to grow water-intensive crops one year, while the following year, the privilege could shift to another province like Takhar. Similarly, in the western, south-western, and eastern zones, only districts with access to rivers or sustainable water sources would be allowed to cultivate these crops.

This rotational zoning approach offers multiple benefits. First, it prevents overproduction by limiting the areas where water-intensive crops can be grown, ensuring that supply aligns more closely with market demand.

This would help stabilize prices, allowing farmers to sell

their produce at fair rates and reduce financial losses.

Second, by restricting cultivation to areas with positive water balances, the system would significantly reduce the strain on groundwater reserves, preserving this vital resource for future generations.

Finally, by preventing oversupply, the approach would minimize post-harvest spoilage, ensuring that farmers' efforts yield tangible economic returns.

Without such interventions, Afghanistan risks depleting its groundwater reserves entirely within a few years. Groundwater is a critical source of fresh water for both agricultural and domestic use, and its loss would have catastrophic consequences for the

country's food security, economy, and environment.

The current trajectory of unchecked water-intensive crop production is unsustainable, threatening to exhaust this precious resource and undermine the agricultural sector's long-term viability.

Implementing a zoning and rotational system requires coordinated efforts from the government, local authorities, and agricultural communities. Policymakers must conduct thorough assessments to identify regions with sustainable water resources and establish clear guidelines for crop rotation. Investments in infrastructure, such as irrigation systems and storage facilities, could further support farmers in optimizing production and preserving harvests.

Additionally, public awareness campaigns and training programs can educate farmers about sustainable practices and the importance of water conservation.

By adopting a managed approach to water-intensive crop production, Afghanistan can achieve a balance between agricultural productivity and environmental sustainability.

This strategy would empower farmers to earn fair incomes, reduce waste, and protect the country's groundwater reserves.

Through careful planning and collective action, Afghanistan can safeguard its agricultural heritage and build a resilient, sustainable future for its people.

Fida Mohammad

From P3

## Returnees stand as strategic...

guide Afghan investors abroad. Its core responsibilities should include the creation of a comprehensive database of skilled and wealthy Afghans, facilitating direct engagement with government structures, and providing legal and procedural support to returnees.

Second, the government must introduce well-defined incentive packages for investors.

These packages should include tax exemptions for a period of three to five years in productive and industrial sectors, reductions in import tariffs for machinery and raw materials, the allocation of industrial land within designated economic zones, and firm legal protections for property rights and business ownership.

Legal guarantees must also ensure the free transfer of capital, profits, and raw materials across borders.

For larger industrial projects, offering bank loans backed by government guarantees can significantly reduce the risk for financial institu-

tions and promote long-term investment.

Third, to support the returnees from Iran and Pakistan who may lack substantial capital but have marketable skills and work experience, the government should initiate programs focused on vocational retraining and small business support.

This includes establishing home-based job parks in different provinces, providing interest-free loans to support the launch of small-scale workshops and local enterprises, and organizing short-term technical and business training courses. Additionally, in collaboration with international organizations, the government should design targeted employment and entrepreneurship initiatives to create jobs and improve the economic resilience of returning families, especially in rural areas.

Fourth, efforts must be made to connect returning investors with domestic and international markets more efficiently.

The activation of export bazaars, the development of logistics hubs, and the organization of trade exhibitions both within Afghanistan and abroad are essential measures to enable entrepreneurs to access consumers and supply chains. Simplifying business registration procedures, enhancing legal protections for returnee-owned companies, and tackling bureaucratic corruption will further improve the investment climate.

Fifth, Afghanistan's embassies and diplomatic missions in host countries should be actively involved in outreach efforts.

The government should establish investment service desks within these embassies, organize business forums and diaspora meetings in countries such as the UAE, Turkey, Germany, and the United States, and invite prominent Afghan economic figures to visit national development projects.

Developing multilingual investment opportunity guides and leveraging digital plat-

forms to connect diaspora investors with government support services can also greatly improve outreach and engagement.

In conclusion, this emerging opportunity must not be missed. Afghanistan must either utilize this vast human, financial, and technical potential to rebuild its national development path through the return of migrants, or it will once again face capital flight, brain drain, and deepening public distrust.

The experience of countries like Vietnam and Ethiopia proves that no nation can achieve sustainable development without relying on its own human resources.

Today, Afghanistan is at a critical turning point, and the return of migrants — both investors and skilled laborers — could mark the beginning of a new chapter in the economic history of the country, provided the government responds with clear planning and determined action.

Aburagheb Amani