



# India, hosting Taliban, for Afghan aid



Russian presidential envoy to Afghanistan Zamir Kabulov shakes hands with a representative of the Taliban delegation Mawlawi Shahabuddin Dilawar before the beginning of international talks on Afghanistan in Moscow, Russia



Officials, including representatives of the Taliban delegation

about the risk of instability in Central Asia, and possible migrant flows and Islamist militant activity directed from Afghanistan.

“We call on the Taliban movement – and we discussed this with their distinguished delegation – to prevent the use of Afghanistan’s

territory against third countries, most importantly neighbours,” Lavrov said.

Russia fought its own disastrous war in Afghanistan in the 1980s and has close military and political ties with former Soviet Central Asian states that border Afghanistan.

### FRIENDLY TONE

In his speech, Lavrov struck a noticeably conciliatory tone towards the Taliban government, which is still seeking international diplomatic legitimacy that would bolster its calls to unfreeze assets held in the West and let aid flow.

“We note the efforts undertaken by them to stabilise the military and political situation, to set up state institutions,” Lavrov said. Moscow was satisfied with cooperation from the Afghan authorities to ensure the safety of Russians in Afghanistan and the smooth working of its embassy, he said.

Lavrov did not put figures on how much aid Afghanistan might need or how much Russia was willing to provide.

Lavrov said on the eve of the talks that Moscow was withholding recognition from the Taliban while waiting for them

to fulfil promises they made when they took power, including on

the political and ethnic inclusivity of the new government.

The Taliban have promised to safeguard the rights of women and minorities, but their interim cabinet includes only men, nearly all from the Pashtun ethnic group which makes up less than half the population, from which they draw most of their support.

## s; 46 dead



stranded people following heavy rains at Lakhand, India

flash on Monday. In neighbouring Nepal, at least 43 people died and 30 were missing after three days of heavy rain, police state said on Wednesday.

India’s annual monsoon rains usually run from June to September.

## Taliban praise suicide bombers, offer families cash and land

Reuters | Kabul

The Taliban praised suicide bombers who died during the war against the former government and its Western allies and offered their families sums of cash and promises of land, the movement’s interior ministry said in a statement.

Sirajuddin Haqqani, the acting interior ministry who has a \$10 million US bounty on his head as a “specially designated global terrorist”, met the families at a ceremony at the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul, which was itself targeted by suicide bombers in 2018.

Official photographs of the meeting on Tuesday obscured his face.

“In his speech, the minister praised the Jihad and sacrifices of the martyrs and Mujahidin and called them heroes of Islam and the country,” the ministry said in a statement on Twitter.

Families of the suicide bombers were given clothing, 10,000 afghani (\$111) and



Smoke rises from the Intercontinental Hotel during an attack in Kabul, Afghanistan

promised plots of land, spokesman Qari Sayeed Khosti said. Haqqani took over from his father Jalaluddin Haqqani as head of the Haqqani network, a militant group affiliated with the Taliban that was blamed by Western intelligence services for some of the bloodiest suicide attacks of the war.

He is wanted for questioning by the FBI in connection with an attack on another hotel in Kabul in 2008 in which six people including an American citizen were killed.

## Arriving in fighter jet, Moon urges defence industry growth



South Korean President Moon Jae-in sits inside a FA-50 Fighting Eagle upon his arrival at the Seoul Military Airport during Seoul International Aerospace and Defence Exhibition 2021 (ADEX) in Seongnam

Reuters | Seongnam, South Korea

South Korea should redouble its efforts to become a global defence industry leader, President Moon Jae-in told a military expo in the outskirts of Seoul yesterday, after landing at the site in an air force fighter jet.

Clad in a flight suit, Moon arrived at the biennial Seoul International Aerospace & Defense Exhibition (ADEX) in the back seat of an FA-50 jet fighter, South Korea’s first indigenous supersonic aircraft and a major defence export.

The military display came a day after North Korea test fired a ballistic missile from a submarine. Last week North Korea opened a defence exhibition of its own, where leader Kim Jong Un said his country’s military developments were for self-defence and accused South Korea of destabilising the peninsula with an arms build up.

In his speech yesterday, Moon defended the South’s increasingly sophisticated military as necessary for peace.

“The goal of building strong defence power is always to foster peace,” he said.

Amid glittering displays of drones, sniper rifles, helicopters, missiles, and other weapons, crowds of company representatives, diplomats, and South Korean troops mixed with military delegations in an array of foreign uniforms.

At least 440 companies from 28 countries are participating in what organisers said was the largest ADEX ever. About 300 government, military and defence acquisition officials from 45 countries were expected to attend the event, which lasts through Saturday.

Moon said it was time for South Korea’s arms industry to become a global leader.

## A royal rest: Queen Elizabeth told by doctors to take a break

● Queen cancels trip to Northern Ireland

● Doctors tell queen to rest

● Queen, 95, to rest for next few days

● Queen in ‘good spirits’ - Palace

Reuters | London



Britain’s Queen Elizabeth

ly accepted medical advice to rest for the next few days,” the palace said.

“Her Majesty is in good spirits and is disappointed that she will no longer be able to visit Northern Ireland, where she had been due to undertake a series of engagements today and tomorrow.”

The queen has reigned for almost seven decades. She was 25 when she became Queen Elizabeth II on Feb. 6, 1952 on the death of her father.

Elizabeth, who acceded to the throne as Britain was shedding its imperial power, has symbolised stability for generations of British people, building the popularity of the monarchy despite seismic political, social and cultural change which threatened to make it an anachronism.

“The queen has reluctant-



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TWEETS

01



If we’re going to end the acute phase of the pandemic, life-saving drugs like molnupiravir must be available to everyone who needs them.

@BillGates

02



For the better part of the 20th century, America led the world in investments in ourselves, in our people, in our country. But now, we risk losing our edge as a nation. Passing the Build Back Better Agenda will help us regain the momentum that we’ve lost.

@JoeBiden

03



Three-quarters of the infrastructure we need by 2050 has yet to be built. Our choices today will play a defining role in the battle against the climate crisis and the achievement of the #GlobalGoals. <http://bit.ly/2zzjv1b>

@antonioguterres

04



As we get close to winter, make sure you get a booster jab when offered to maintain your protection against COVID and keep your loved ones safe

@BorisJohnson

Disclaimer: (Views expressed by columnists are personal and need not necessarily reflect our editorial stances)