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Heart of Asia

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Germany, Iran Express Concern about Development of Insecurity in Afghanistan

Special representatives of the German and Iranian foreign ministers for Afghanistan's affairs in a meeting on Saturday voiced concern over development of insecurity in Afghanistan and stressed the need to reach a political agreement through negotiations.

Iranian Foreign Ministry's special assistant for Afghanistan affairs Mohammad Ebrahim Taherian and his German counterpart Marcus Putzel discussed latest developments in Afghanistan and explored avenues for boosting cooperation.

Taherian and Putzel expressed concern about the development ... **P2**



Pakistan Eyeing \$5b Trade with Afghanistan

Pakistan's Adviser to Prime Minister on Commerce and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood says the government has set a target of \$5 billion exports to Afghanistan in next three years.

In an interview with APP, he said trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan had three dimensions -- transit trade, bilateral trade and informal trade.

He said the informal trade needed to be documented as well as modernised with infrastructure development.

The advisor added the informal trade between the two countries was two billion dollars last year. Both sides have more prospects to enhance the bilateral trade volume.

He said the trade could also help further strengthen relations between the two brotherly countries and achieve the agenda of mutual interest.

The neighbours were negotiating with stakeholders to finalise the Afghanistan Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement, which would be reviewed in February next year. Dawood said both sides were in discussions on removing barriers and overcoming hurdles to bilateral trade.

Afghan Leaders Congratulate Biden, Expect More Focus on Peace



President Ghani congratulated U.S. President-elect Joe Biden and U.S. Vice President-elect Kamala Harris on winning the United States election and said Afghanistan looks forward to continuing and deepening its multilayered strategic partnership with the U.S. as a foundational partner for the country, including in counterterrorism and bringing

peace to Afghanistan. Abdullah Abdullah, the chairman of the High Council for National Reconciliation, also congratulated Biden for his "momentous win, and also the American people for their historic election turnout." Former Afghan president Hamid Karzai congratulated Biden and Harris and said, "President-elect

Joe Biden called for unity and healing, the right call for a noble cause." "We need the same in Afghanistan in a much deeper and more profound way," Karzai said. "We hope his administration's policy and relations with Afghanistan will focus entirely on bringing peace and stability."

On Saturday, the Afghan government said the strategic partnership between the United States and Afghanistan is based on mutual interests and that there will be no major shift in the U.S.'s Afghan policy after outcome of the U.S. election.

"The foundation of our partnership over the past nineteen years has always been based on the understanding that the two governments and the people have on their common interests. No doubt, we will remain as an ally whether there is any administration in the United States," presidential spokesman Sediq Sediqqi said.

There is a perception in Afghanistan that Joe Biden's victory in the U.S. election will bring changes in the U.S. policy towards the Afghan peace process and the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the country.

Critics said the continuation of the U.S. war in Afghanistan is one of the main commonalities that has led to a consensus among the American politicians on war and peace in the region. The critics said that it remains unclear whether there will really be a significant shift in the U.S. policy towards ... **P3**

Four Afghan Army Forces Killed in Taliban's Attack in Kunduz

At least four National Army Forces were killed and two more were wounded in Taliban's attack in Kunduz province, local officials said.

The spokesman of Kunduz governor, Esmatullah Muradi told Reporterly that the Taliban militants stormed the Ostaming village of Imam Saheb district on Saturday night.

According to Muradi, the Taliban group has also suffered casualties in the clashes and security forces seized a large number of arms and weapons. However, unidentified gunmen killed a prosecutor in Herat province on Sunday morning, officials said. ... **P2**



Afghan Govt Calls on Pakistan to Crack Down on Extremists

In response to a recent statement by a Pakistani extremist cleric Hamid-ul-Haq, the head of Pakistan-based Haqqania Madarassa, the Afghan government on Saturday called on the Pakistani government to swiftly crack down on those madrassas that are involved in promoting extremism and fundamentalism in the region. Hamid-ul-Haq is the son of Mawlana Sami-ul-Haq, a former cleric considered as the spiritual leader of the Taliban.

In a recent statement, Hamid-ul-Haq asked the Afghan government to surrender to the Taliban and let the group to establish Islamic government in the country. The government said that Kabul does not give importance to such "meaningless" statements,



stating that these madrassas in fact have been the main source of destruction of Afghanistan and expanding extremism in the region.

"Those madrassas that spread jihadism and destruction in Afghanistan must be stopped," presidential spokesman Sediq Sediqqi said.

The Ministry of Hajj and Religious

Affairs said that Hamid-ul-Haq's statements have roots in the Pakistan's intelligence agencies and that it "clearly indicates Pakistan's support to terrorism." The extremist Pakistani cleric Hamid-ul-Haq said that the Taliban has won the war in Afghanistan.

"You must surrender to the Taliban and lay down your arms," ... **P2**

Pakistan...

of expression is 'intolerable'. French President Emmanuel Macron has been facing criticism from various Muslim-majority countries after he took a tough stand on radical Islam and defended cartoons of Prophet Muhammad. Macron's remarks did not go well with Pakistan Prime Minister Khan who slammed the French President, saying that he has "chosen to deliberately provoke Muslims". In a reply to Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's remark 'Blasphemy in the garb of freedom of expression is intolerable', the UN watch said: "Your presence on the U.N. Human Rights Council is intolerable."

Four Afghan...

The spokesman of Herat Attorney General Office, Sayed Naeem Sahab said the prosecutor named Abdul Wasi was assassinated in Babaji area of Herat city when he was on his way to work. This comes as at least 13 people have been assassinated by gunmen in the city of Herat over the past month, raising concerns among Herat residents.

Germany, Iran...

of insecurity in Afghanistan and stressed the need to reach a political agreement through negotiations. Last Monday, three armed assailants stormed Kabul University after a bomb blast killed a number of students at the university, killing and injuring dozens of students.

By Lyse Doucet & Mahfouz Zubaide

Afghanistan conflict: Fighting for a future in a war without end

On a day when autumn's golden light bathed the tree-lined campus of Kabul University, its warm rays slanting through classrooms' open windows, the first day of a course on peace and conflict resolution began. In this kind of moment, so full of possibilities, you could almost forget it was just another day in a country steeped in war.

"You are starting the fifth semester in your bachelor's degree so behave accordingly," Professor Sayed Rateb Mozzafari counselled his class packed with some 50 young Afghan students. "Try not to get hit by a car," he warned in a teasing tone.

Freshta Hashimi, 20, leaned across her desk and whispered with a wink to her classmate, "He has forgotten about suicide attacks".

By the end of that day, at least 22 were dead, including university students and professors, and dozens more injured during a brutal six-hour siege that began with a suicide bomber blowing himself up at a campus gate. Security forces battled to end this bloody assault on 2 November, claimed by Islamic State militants, on Afghanistan's largest and oldest university, a leafy compound which has educated and inspired rich and poor, from across the country, for decades.

"I shouted 'jump out of the window or you will die,'" Freshta, a member of the university's student council, recalled shouting as gunfire ricocheted along the corridors and into classrooms, and grenades were lobbed into rows of desks by gunmen prowling the halls.

In the frenzied rush to flee, two of Freshta's closest friends were the last to jump from the first floor windows. They didn't make it.

Ziba Ashgari drew her last breath as she clung to life, her body slumped over the window ledge. Haseena Hamdad died of a heart attack.

"Ziba had just got engaged and she was always saying, 'One day I will be a diplomat,'" Freshta said. "And Haseena was the most intelligent girl in our class."

We spoke a few days after the attack, which sent shock waves across Afghanistan and beyond - even at a time when Afghans are living and dying in everyday violence. Every story of a life taken that day is a chronicle of a dream destroyed, a passion and potential killed.

Generation of hope targeted

The story of the victims is the story of the Afghan twenty-somethings, the generation which came of age



after the US-led invasion of 2001, whose memories of Afghanistan's civil war of the early 1990s, or the harsh Taliban rule which followed, are only anecdotes told and retold by parents and grandparents.

"They're the generation of builders and change makers who can help heal our society if peace ever comes, because they didn't live through those times," said Shaharazad Akbar, who heads Afghanistan's Independent Human Rights Commission.

"They talk about artificial intelligence, they talk about life on Mars, they talk about climate change. They have the potential to elevate our discourse, to move it beyond sensitive political issues, to discussions about being part of the global family," he said.

In a country where some 70% of the population is under the age of 25, this demographic is the future. Even families of little means invest in higher education. The day after the Kabul attack, protests erupted on provincial university campuses. Even in conservative districts, young men and women brandished placards emblazoned with slogans: "Killing Students Kills the Future;" "Attacks on Students are un-Islamic."

No one sees this raw potential more clearly than teachers, including Sami Mahdi, a lecturer in Kabul University's Department of Policy and Public Administration, which bore the brunt of the assault. He paid emotional tribute to 16 of his pupils, one after another, in poignant pen portraits on his Twitter account.

There was 24-year-old Ahmad Ali with dark piercing eyes, the book lover who "almost every day after class used to come after me and ask his sharp questions".

Roqia was remembered for her "calm face and gentle

smile," the fourth-year student who also taught at a primary school to support her "humble working family".

Sohaila was the student whose question in the last class had to be cut short to save time for his lecture. "I wish I had never stopped you talking," wrote Mr Mahdi, who also heads the Kabul bureau of Azadi Radio. "The opportunity to listen to you is taken from us for ever."

That post included a snapshot of Sohaila in pitch black headscarf and bright white tunic, peering intensely through her round dark spectacles.

But the photograph which electrified Afghan social media that day showed Sohaila, sprawled face down on the floor in her stark black and white apparel, a crimson red book about Simon Bolivar, the South American revolutionary, splattered with blood.

It was one of many searing images which juxtaposed a passion to learn alongside a potent killing machine: a cracked pen alongside an empty bullet casing; an open book smeared with blood; a smashed clock on a classroom wall peppered with bullet holes.

"Every time I had gone to class, I felt challenged by their courage, talent and dedication for their country and their education," Sami Mahdi told me in a conversation punctuated by emotional pauses.

"This generation is very, very different from any other generation in our history. From day one, they've grown up in a very different environment, when there was freedom of expression, elections, social media, and the ability to speak openly about politics and any other social and cultural issues."

One of his posts which touched the deepest ... **P3**

By M. Ashraf Haidari

Afghanistan Calls for Stronger Ties with Sri Lanka

President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani was one of the first leaders in the region to send a message of congratulations to President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, following his recent electoral victory and assumption of official duties as the seventh executive president of Sri Lanka. President Ghani told his new counterpart, "your democratic election demonstrates the strong confidence of the people of Sri Lanka in your leadership, vision, and programs of action for the betterment of your nation and country."

He added that "Afghanistan and Sri Lanka have had notable achievements in developing friendly, bilateral relations. However, more potential exists to be realized in bolstering ties between our two nations. Indeed, our presence in a common region with many shared challenges and opportunities, which must be addressed and taken advantage of jointly, can help deepen our bilateral relationship."

Afghanistan and Sri Lanka first established diplomatic relations on November 1, 1958. For decades, the two countries maintained indirect bilateral relations through their diplomatic missions in neighboring

countries. But this changed under former President Mahinda Rajapaksa in 2013 when Afghanistan opened in an embassy in Colombo and Sri Lanka reciprocated in the following year. In his congratulatory message to his new Sri Lankan counterpart, President Ghani noted that "while we remain satisfied with the pace of our bilateral cooperation, we look forward to working with the new Government of Sri Lanka to further expand our ties within the frameworks of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, including at the regional and international organizations."

As two democracies, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka share many development needs and challenges. This underpins our growing ties, which enjoy the support of leadership in both countries. We are grateful to former President Rajapaksa for having helped elevate Afghanistan-Sri Lanka bilateral ties in 2013. This subsequently enabled both sides to further enhance our two countries' cooperation within the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and other intergovernmental organizations where Afghanistan and Sri Lanka have advanced our shared interests, including regional stability,

environmental security, as well as connectivity for trade and stronger people-to-people ties across South Asia. Since 2013, many senior officials and technical delegations from Afghanistan have visited Sri Lanka. This includes the state visit to Sri Lanka by the former president of Afghanistan in 2014, while our two governments have signed eight agreements and MOUs. They encompass such issues of bilateral interest as economy, education, science, and technology; labor; air services; sports; higher education; technical capacity building; as well as cooperation between the University of Colombo and Kabul University - among others.

As President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa are going to focus on security and sustainable development at home and in the region, the Afghan government looks forward to initiating bilateral security and defense cooperation, knowing from the shared experiences of Afghanistan and Sri Lanka that most security threats transcend borders and are no longer limited to just landlocked or littoral states separately. It would be beneficial to both countries to explore maritime security cooperation ... **P3**

Afghan Govt...

said Hamid-ul-Haq.

"He is a puppet of Pakistan's intelligence agencies and he frequently make such statements about Kashmir and Afghanistan. Also his father was brutally killed by (Pakistani) intelligence agency and his destiny will be the same," said Mohammad Jan Rasoulyar, former deputy governor of Helmand.

"They have committed the most grave treason for Afghanistan and Muslim

nations," said Bilqis Rooha, an MP.

Afghanistan and many other countries have persistently said that Pakistani madrassas are prompting terrorism and extremism.

In 2018, Hamid-ul-Haq's father Maulana Sami ul Haq, the chief of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Pakistan, was killed in an attack in Pakistan's Rawalpindi city.

Sami-ul-Haq was known as the spiritual father of the Taliban.

Putin talks...

Azeri oil and gas pipelines. Erdogan has previously said Turkey and Russia could work together to solve the conflict.

In a separate statement, the Kremlin said Putin had informed Erdogan about his phone calls with the leaders of Azerbaijan and Armenia, adding "these exchanges were focused on finding options for a swift cessation of hostilities and a political and diplomatic settlement." "A mutual readiness to

cooperate in order to achieve a peaceful resolution to the conflict was confirmed," it said.

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu also held a phone call with Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov to discuss the issue, the Turkish foreign ministry said.

Three ceasefires have failed to halt the bloodiest fighting in the South Caucasus for more than 25 years. Both sides accused each other of launching attacks within hours of the agreements.

Afghan Government Announces \$5.8 Billion Budget for Next fiscal Year

The Ministry of Finance (MoF) on Thursday announced allocating 452.6 billion afghanis for 2021 budget and collecting 141 billion afghani in revenue despite challenges posed by coronavirus.

Addressing reporters here, Finance Minister Abdul Hadi Arghandiwal said 296 billion afs had been set aside for general expenses and 156b afs for development activities in the next year budget.

He said the Cabinet approved the budget plan in its Wednesday's meeting and the bill would land in the Wolesi Jirga next week.

He said the World Bank and the Finance Ministry inked support fund of \$600 million and \$400 million of it had reached the state treasury while until Nov 15 another 200 million would arrive.

"Despite the spread of coronavirus, the government managed to collect revenue of 141 billion afs and spent 55 percent of the development fund."



He hoped that revenue target for current year would be achieved until the end of this year.

Arghandiwal also hoped that vacant posts in MoF would be announced for open competition and that the recruitment process of 220 posts had been completed.

Deputy Finance Minister Abdul Habib Zadran said that water management, exploitation of mines

and petroleum reserves, regional connectivity projects, judicial issues and distribution of computerized Identity Card were government priorities in allocation of funds in the budget.

He said three billion afghanis fund had been set aside for development projects in provinces and would be implemented in line with people's needs and population.

The Ministry of Finance (MoF) on Sunday dispatched draft budget for 2021 to Meshrano Jirga or upper house of the parliament and said that less than half of the budget was supported by national revenue.

In line with the law, the draft budget first land in Meshrano Jirga for approval and then sent to the Wolesi Jirga for endorsement. Afghanistan's fiscal year begins from December 22.

Afghan Leaders...

Afghanistan after the announcement of the winner of the U.S. presidential election.

U.S. and Taliban agreement

Following eighteen months of negotiations in Doha, the U.S. and the Taliban officially signed a peace deal on February 29 this year that pave the way for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan in exchange for a number of solid assurances by the Taliban to the U.S. and its allies. The agreement states that the U.S. will fully withdraw its forces over the next 14 months, and that the current force of about 13,000 troops will be reduced to 8,600 within 135 days. Non-U.S. NATO and other coalition forces will also be reduced proportionally over that time.

The agreement was also urged the release of 5,000 Taliban prisoners, Intra Afghan talks, and Taliban will cut its relation with Al-Qaeda.

The Afghan government has released 5,600 Taliban prisoners as part of conditions ahead of the peace negotiations.

The negotiators from the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Taliban are in Doha where they are trying to bridge gaps on some contested topics and procedural rules intended for the formal talks.

The two sides have held over 10 meetings at the contact groups level over the last nearly two months, but have not reached an agreement on the disputed points to begin the direct talks, which have been called a historic opportunity for Afghanistan to end the decades of war and bloodshed. The two sides have agreed on 18 out of 20 articles for the procedural rules, but two main articles—the religious basis for the talks and connection of the U.S.-Taliban deal with the negotiations—remain unsolved.

The peace negotiations between teams from the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Taliban started on September 12.

Afghanistan...

chord was a short video by a charismatic student with twinkling eyes and a warm, wide smile. "We have to live no matter what life brings," Mohammad Rahid urged fellow students in his rousing pep talk. "Don't forget to smile."

But a generation which surged from the starting blocks now finds itself being pulled back from the finishing line.

Who's to blame for the attack? "When I listened to that video about living with a smile, I thought he's not just talking about something fancy but something basic - the right to life," said Shaharзад Akbar of Afghanistan's Independent Human Rights Commission.

In a reminder that a new generation is not immune from the incendiary politics of the past, a vitriolic blame game is now eclipsing the grief.

Young twenty-something Afghans backing the Taliban, some living in Taliban-controlled districts, have wielded their social media accounts to point an accusing finger at the government they accuse of working with "evil elements".

"The attack on Kabul University is the work of the enemies of Islam, peace and the light of knowledge," tweeted 26-year old Anas Haqqani, the youngest son of the late Jalaluddin Haqqani whose Haqqani network, which now forms part of the Taliban, has been blamed for some of the worst attacks on civilians.

"IT IS THE WORK OF THE TALIBAN," Afghan Vice President Amrullah Saleh posted in emphatic capital letters on social media, dismissing claims

of responsibility by the Islamic State (IS) group, and depicting the assault as a tactic similar to those used by the Haqqani network.

"This war has to stop," insisted Sami Mahdi. "That can be the only justifiable condemnation of this brutality."

"All sides in this war are failing in their responsibility to protect civilians who should never, ever be a target in war - never."

For now, speculation runs rife. Was it the extremist IS, which has boasted of attacking schools in the past, including a tuition centre in the capital just last month? Four years ago, it was suspected Taliban attackers who stormed the Kabul campus of the American University of Afghanistan. Or could this have been an insider attack, aided by Islamists from inside the university itself?

Afghans are struggling to comprehend how, even in such a merciless war, innocent university students could be killed in cold blood.

"They're afraid of education, they're afraid of us because we are learning," insisted fourth-year economics student Jamshid Roshangar. "We will keep fighting with our pens and books and new ideas."

'I will never feel the same' But the growing numbers of young Afghans turning to smugglers to find a way out also attests to their fear and despair. On a trip to Greece in September, the BBC documented how young Afghan men now dominate the wave of young migrants determined to take what is known as the Balkan route to reach a European country which

can offer another chance in life.

"My friends at Kabul University told me it was good I left," one young Afghan we met in September on a southern Greek island told us this week in a WhatsApp message. He's now in northern Greece, close to his next destination, the North Macedonian border.

Borders are shut, and barriers are now multiplying, on every step of the way, but young Afghans keep trying.

"No one is safe here in Afghanistan, not even in the classroom," Jamshid Roshangar admitted.

"I want to go abroad to continue my education but I also want to come back to help make Afghanistan great." He added, "not great again, as President Trump would say, because we've never been great and that's why we must continue our education."

"Education is the weapon that can change the world," declares Kabul University's website. But a generation armed with knowledge is now facing its toughest test.

Jamshid still can't sleep at night because his mind is still full of his friend Mohammad Ali Danish, who was shot dead during his law class while Jamshid was able to run for his life from his economics lesson. "Ali and I had the same dream and I still can't believe I won't see him again," he said. Freshra Hashimi also wakes in the middle of the night. "I've seen things I never thought I would see and I will never feel the same when I go to the university," she said. "Now we are the wood in the fire of this war."

Afghanistan Calls...

opportunities in the areas of counterterrorism, counternarcotics, and counter-human trafficking.

Moreover, Afghanistan will seek to learn from Sri Lanka's successful war-to-peace transition experience, including from the country's reintegration

and reconciliation initiatives and programs that have delivered tangible results.

In the political and economic arenas, both sides look forward to signing MOUs on regular political consultations and on trade and investment promotion and protection. The latter together with the

air services agreement should facilitate the establishment of a direct passenger and cargo flight between Kabul and Colombo. When this happens, Afghans and Sri Lankans should be able to reconnect with their shared heritage through tourism, trade and investment, education, and cultural exchange.

Exchange Rates

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Dehbori Crossroads in
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Heart of Asia

Chief Editor: M. Hamid Hamdard

Reporters: Safiullah Nasary, Shafiq Amirzay,

Jawad Temori & Hameedullah Hamidi

Graphic & Design: Arman

Phone: +93-202502100 - +93-777989696

Website: www.heartofasia.af

Email: heartofasiadaily@gmail.com

Address: Behind Rahman Baba High School

- Opposite to 3rd District,

Kabul - Afghanistan

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Biden pledges in his speech to combat coronavirus, racism, climate change

The Democratic nominee Joe Biden who won the US presidential election according to projections of the country's leading media outlets, addressed viewers and supporters in Wilmington, Delaware, late on Saturday. The politician who is already referred to as president-elect by US media, urged Americans to put away the harsh rhetoric after the election race, as well as outlined the main tasks he sets for himself as head of the country. "We've won with the most votes ever cast for a presidential ticket in the history of the nation. Seventy-four million," Biden said. "I sought this office to restore the soul of America, to rebuild the backbone of this nation, the middle class, and to make America respected around the world again. And to unite us here at home," he added.

Biden urged to stop treating his opponents as enemies. "They are not enemies. They are Americans," he noted, adding that "it's time to put away the harsh rhetoric" and "lower the temperature" of confrontation. Biden's administration is facing "the battle to achieve racial justice and root out systemic racism in this country," and "the battle to save our planet by getting climate under control," he said. Speaking about the coronavirus spread, Biden said that he would name "a group of leading scientists and experts as transition advisors to help take the Biden-Harris COVID plan and convert it into an action blueprint that will start on January 20, 2021," on Monday. "That plan will be built on bedrock science," he emphasized. On November 3, American citizens headed to the polls to elect 435 representatives to the



House, 35 senators out of 100 to the Senate, and the President and Vice President of the United States. Though the vote counting is still underway, the leading US media outlets project that the Democratic nominee has won the presidential election. According to

the figures provided by Fox News and the Associated Press agency, the sitting president Donald Trump garnered 214 electoral votes, whereas Biden - 290 (270 are required to win). Trump has claimed he would state his case on the voting results in court.

A look at the world

Pakistan Presence in Rights Council 'Intolerable', says UN-accredited NGO

Pakistan's presence in the United Nations Human Rights Council is "intolerable" given its rights record, said Geneva-based NGO UN Watch, adding that religious minorities in the south Asian country suffer from discrimination, sectarian violence and forced conversions.

The NGO's, that monitors the performance of the United Nations, condemnation comes after Pakistan government defended the beheading of a French teacher in Paris by an Islamic terrorist by claiming that the blasphemy in the garb of freedom of expression is 'intolerable'.

French President Emmanuel Macron has been facing criticism from various Muslim-



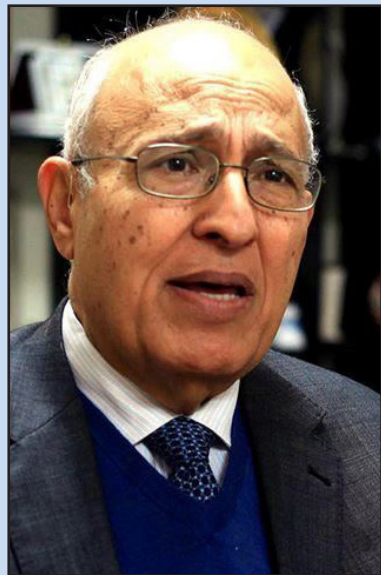
majority countries after he took a tough stand on radical Islam and defended cartoons of Prophet Muhammad.

Macron's remarks did not go well with Pakistan Prime Minister Khan who slammed the French President, saying that he has "chosen to deliberately provoke Muslims". In a reply to Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's remark 'Blasphemy in the garb of freedom of expression is intolerable', the UN watch said: "Your presence on the U.N. Human Rights Council is intolerable."

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Palestinians happy with Trump's election loss



U.S. President Donald Trump's departure from the White House will be a relief for Palestinians under Israeli occupation, the nation's leaders said Sunday.

Nabil Shaath, Palestine President Mahmoud Abbas' special envoy, told Anadolu Agency that the Trump administration was the worst for Palestinians.

"For us, it is a gain to get rid of Trump. However, we don't expect an essential strategic change in America's stance towards the Palestinian cause," he said.

Hanan Ashrawi, a senior member of the Palestine Liberation Organization's Executive Committee, called for a re-adjustment of balances in and out of the US.

Mustafa Barghouti, General Secretary of Palestinian National Initiative, expressed happiness about US election results and said Trump was the worst American president civilization encountered in modern times.

"Trump shattered international relations and politics. The so-called 'Deal of the Century' was the worst thing he did for Palestinians," he said.

Mujahideen Movement, part of the Palestinian resistance, also commented on election results and said Trump's downfall was tantamount to the collapse of all systems that have betrayed their own people and Palestine.

Israel occupied Palestinian territories, including the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip in 1967. Palestinians want the territories for the establishment of a future Palestinian state.

Putin talks to Macron, Erdogan over large-scale Nagorno-Karabakh clashes

Russian President Vladimir Putin discussed the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh in a telephone call with his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron, the Kremlin said on Saturday.

The two leaders expressed serious concern over the large-scale clashes between ethnic Armenian and Azeri forces in the region and the involvement of fighters from Syria and Libya in the conflict. Putin informed Macron of the steps Russia had taken towards implementing a ceasefire and ensuring the sides negotiate a solution to the crisis. He also expressed the desire to continue coordinated mediation efforts, including through the OSCE Minsk



Group, set up in 1992 to mediate a peaceful resolution.

Meanwhile, Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan told Vladimir Putin on Saturday that Armenia must be convinced to negotiate in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with Azerbaijan and called for a peaceful resolution. In a statement, the presidency said Erdogan told Putin that Armenia must withdraw from Azeri lands it is occupying and "stated the Armenian leadership must be convinced to sit down at the negotiating table."

At least 1,000 people have died in nearly six weeks of fighting in and around Nagorno-Karabakh, a mountainous enclave internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan but populated and controlled by ethnic Armenians.

The conflict has underlined the influence of Turkey, an ally of Azerbaijan, in a former Soviet region long dominated by Moscow, which has a defense pact with Armenia. It also threatens the security of ... **P2**



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