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10 Army Soldiers, 3 Civilians Killed in Sar-i-Pul Mine Explosion

At least 10 Afghan army soldiers and three civilians were killed in a roadside explosion in the Baghawi area of Sar-i-Pul on Saturday, media reports.

The explosion occurred when a military convoy was moving from Sozma Qala district toward the centre of Sar-i-Pul, crossing through the Baghawi area of Baghlan in the A Humvee hit a mine causing the explosion, media reported. Three security forces were also injured in the explosion.

Another media outlet claims that after the explosion, the convoy was attacked by the Taliban and several of the militants were also killed.

So far, no group or individual has claimed responsibility for the explosion.



Taliban Offensive Continues in Helmand with PD4 of Lashkar Gah Falling

As clashes continue in the cities and districts of Helmand, local officials in the province confirmed that PD4 of Lashkar Gah has fallen to the Taliban. Helman Provincial Council Member Abdul Majid Akhundzadah told Reportedly on Sunday, that the clashes had been ongoing for the past two days in the security belts of Lashkar Gah city and had intensified today.

Active fights were reported on Highway 601 and the Babaji area, with casualties still unknown, Akhundzadah said.

However, Omar Zwak, spokesperson for the Helmand governor, denied that Taliban had gained control over PD4 of Lashkar Gah and explained that two security checkpoints had retreated from the Babaji area. He said the security forces are countering to retake the checkpoints. ... **P2**

Andarabi Tells Police: If You See a Criminal, Shoot Him!



With an increase in robbery, murders and targeted assassinations in the capital, acting Interior Minister Masoud Andarabi instructed the police to crack down on criminals and those who resist the law. Andarabi, who visited PD5 of Kabul Police on Saturday night, directed

law enforcement that if they are facing armed resistance, they can take action. "[If] someone has a gun and is resisting the police, the police can confront them and shoot them. No one has the right to report the police to the prosecutor's office,"

he said. He said he had instructed the Department of Internal Security not to report any police officer to the prosecutor's office until he has not reported about his mission in person. Andarabi added that when they were

facing criminals, the police can hit them and take decisive action if they met resistance.

The government has implemented the Security Pact programme in Kabul in a bid to improve citizen's relations with the security forces and lower crime levels.

Before that, The Ministry of Interior (MoI) on Saturday confirmed to media outlets that nearly 800 thieves between the ages of 12 to 22 have been arrested in the capital, Kabul over the past month and a half; But Kabul residents are still complaining about the increase of insecurity.

Based on the reports, some of Kabul residents claim that the Police are incapable of arresting thieves and robbers and even they are involved in some cases.

MoI stresses that the police are working to reduce crime in the Kabul city and a national mobilization is needed to reduce crimes in the capital.

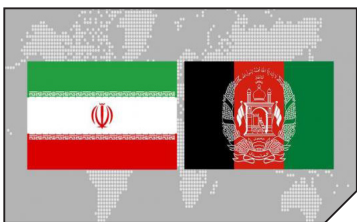
MoI officials say the process of arresting criminals is underway but the registration of a murder case causes people to ignore all the achievements of the police.

Afghanistan, Iran stress cooperation in economic projects

Kabul and Tehran have held talks on permanent electricity supply from Iran to Afghanistan, a media report said on Sunday.

Acting Foreign Minister Hanif Atmar and Iran's Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian conferred on cooperation in the power sector on Saturday night. Mehr News Agency reported preparations for holding a joint economic commission next month and joint economic programmes came up for discussion.

Power generation schemes within the framework of joint projects and a cut in tariffs on imported electricity also figured at the video conference. ... **P2**



Peace talks: Stanikzai to brief senators on Tuesday

The government peace negotiating team chief will address members of the upper house via a video conference on Tuesday to assuage their concerns about the ongoing parleys.

About a month ago, the intra-Afghan talks were inaugurated in Doha, the capital of Qatar, but both sides are yet to reach an agreement on negotiations' procedure.

The Meshrano Jirga or upper house discussed the peace talks and related issues in today's session.

Muhiuddin Munsif, a lawmaker from central Kapisa province, said no progress in the procedure had worried people and they must work to ensure that the opportunity was not lost.

Rahmatullah Achakzai from



Kandahar expressed his concern over the surge in violence, in which Afghans were killed, saying no renunciation of conflict, increase in violence and prolongation of work on procedure for talks had sparked people's concerns. Without going into details, he said both the teams must lead the negotiations in accordance to Islamic principles.

Fazel Hadi Muslimyar, chairman of the house, called lawmakers' concerns as appropriate, saying that chief negotiator Mohammad Massoum Stanikzai would provide details of the last one month to the house through a video conference. He said the senators could ask Stanikzai questions about the peace process.

However, Formal ... **P3**

Afghanistan,...

The report said preferential tariffs on Afghan agricultural exports to Iran were also discussed by the ministers. Ardakanian reaffirmed Iran's cooperation with Afghanistan, especially in the field of power production and transmission. Energy-deficient Afghanistan is currently reliant on electricity imports from Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

Taliban Offensive...

Clashes in Helmand
The Helmand governor's office said on Sunday, that the Taliban had attacked Nahr-e-Siraj, Nad Ali, Nawa and Highway 601 of the province. The Afghan security forces launched a combined air and ground attack killing 26 Taliban fighters and wounding 4, the provincial officials said. Media has also reported that four Afghan security forces were killed and eight were wounded in the clashes.

Kyrgyzstan...

The protests started on Monday, with people breaking into parliament and other buildings and clashing with police, demanding a new vote. They also freed several politicians, including Atambayev, from prison. Atambayev has since participated in rallies against the government and demanded President Jeenbekov's resignation. The unrest forced Prime Minister Kubatbek Boronov and Parliament Speaker Dastan Jumabekov to step down earlier this week. Boronov was replaced by Sadyr Japarov, who was also released from jail by protesters.

By Susannah George and Aziz Tassal

With U.S. troops gone, Taliban expands influence in one Afghan province

Months after the Americans withdrew from this province in southeast Afghanistan, what little they left behind still lies scattered across the small military base: rations packaging for chicken pesto pasta, Rice Krispies cereal boxes, instant chocolate milk packets. Inside trailers, the floors are littered with Christmas decorations and letters from schoolchildren addressed "Dear soldier."

The U.S. military vacated Forward Operating Base Lightning in March, less than a month after American and Taliban leaders signed a peace deal that set in motion a complete withdrawal of U.S. forces.

On a recent day this month, only trash, splintered plywood, crushed metal trailers and mounds of twisted wire remained where hundreds of American troops once trained Afghan forces, launched joint operations and conducted surveillance missions.

But outside the base, Afghan officials say, the U.S. withdrawal has had an outsized impact. Targeted killings are on the rise, school attendance is down, and Taliban fighters are expanding their areas of influence, according to residents and officials.

What has happened in Paktia province, just a few hours' drive from Kabul, in the months since the departure of U.S. forces in March provides a glimpse into what might await other parts of the country as the Trump administration looks to pull out thousands more troops in the coming weeks — and possibly to withdraw completely by Christmas.

The U.S. facility in Gardez was part of a larger Afghan base that is still in operation. Afghan security forces stationed here said they began to suspect something was changing when helicopters began carrying away containers full of equipment from the installation, at times making five trips a day, Afghan Army Maj. Jan Aga Safi said.

"All they left for us was garbage," he said, walking through the debris. "This is their legacy."

Resolute Support, the U.S. military command in Afghanistan, said in a statement that the decision to close the base was part of the "U.S.-Taliban agreement."

"The 203rd Corps [the Afghan army unit in Paktia] has demonstrated they are fully capable of executing operations independent of U.S./coalition forces," said the statement from the U.S. military command's media office.

The Afghan unit's "professionalism and ability to



provide security for the Afghan people allowed us" to hand over the base, the statement added.

The U.S.-Taliban agreement inked in Doha in February called for the complete withdrawal of U.S. forces and a halt to U.S. offensive operations if certain conditions were met. In keeping with the agreement, U.S. troop numbers dropped from 12,000 in February to 8,600 in July — including the base closure in Paktia province — and further reductions would come if the Taliban abided by its commitment to cut ties with al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups.

The future of the counterterrorism fight in Afghanistan has been a chief concern of U.S. officials for years as diplomats struggled to hammer out a peace deal with the Taliban. Al-Qaeda used Afghanistan as a base to plan and execute the Sept. 11 attacks that ultimately drew the United States into nearly two decades of war. Now, many current and former U.S. officials fear a complete U.S. withdrawal could create a power vacuum, allowing similar groups to use Afghan territory to carry out terrorism abroad.

President Trump on Wednesday appeared to undercut the "conditions-based" aspect of the deal. He tweeted that the "small remaining number" of U.S. troops in Afghanistan should be home by Christmas, generating confusion among U.S. officials who said no such orders had been given. Trump's tweet contradicted White

House national security adviser Robert C. O'Brien, who said earlier Wednesday that troops levels are "under 5,000" and will drop to 2,500 by early next year.

In Paktia, the absence of U.S. presence has meant intelligence sharing with local security forces is slower and less frequent, air support for surveillance is in shorter supply, and morale is low, according to provincial Gov. Halim Fidai. The Afghan forces left at the base just southeast of the city center say they feel abandoned and more exposed.

The province is not heavily contested by the Taliban, and while the militants have stepped up the number of low-level attacks in the months since the U.S. base closure, they have not attempted to push into urban areas. Instead, the fighters have consolidated the territory they have held for years and broadened intimidation campaigns into rural areas both contested and government-held, Fidai said. Taliban forces control or contest roughly half of Afghanistan.

Brig. Gen. Gada Muhammad Dust, the deputy Afghan army commander of the country's southeast region, downplayed the impact of the U.S. base closing. But he acknowledged that for his forces to return to the offensive, they would need close U.S. support.

Following the signing of the U.S.-Taliban deal, Afghan security forces halted most offensive operations, taking up an "active defense" posture ...

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Interview by: Suhasini Haidar

Didn't discuss troops for peacekeeping or for New Delhi to engage Taliban directly: Dr. Abdullah Abdullah

Afghanistan's Chairman of the High Council for National Reconciliation has been in Delhi this week to brief the government on the Doha peace talks with the Taliban. Speaking to The Hindu, he said he received India's full support for the peace process in talks with PM Narendra Modi, NSA Ajit Doval and External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar.

You said you are on a mission to build regional consensus for the reconciliation process. Were there specific assurances you were hoping for during your visit to New Delhi? Well, it wasn't like we were expecting something specific — more like we were exchanging our views. India has been supportive of the people of Afghanistan, supportive of the peace process and we wanted to share the details of what is going on and see how best each country can contribute to that was the aim of the visit. I found very friendly audience like always. All the leaders that I met were supportive of the people of Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, a unified Afghanistan, and also a peaceful Afghanistan, and supportive of an Afghan-led, Afghan-

owned peace process. It's a common view between us and India.

India has taken one step by attending the inauguration of the Doha talks, the first time an Indian official has actually addressed a gathering including the Taliban. Did you discuss whether India would engage the Taliban more directly now?

The participation of India in the inaugural session of the negotiations was welcomed by the people of Afghanistan and also the rest of the international community. All the countries of the region, in the neighbourhood, are being affected because of the continuation of the war in Afghanistan. A peaceful Afghanistan will be an opportunity, so India will be further engaged there. I didn't have a specific recommendation as far as engagement with the Taliban is concerned, but I will say India will be playing an important role, active role with the rest of the partners of the international community from the region [in the process] and beyond. India has at times been cut out of the process. Like for example when the six plus two plus one regional discussions were held, it did not

include India. Do you think India will be included in all future regional conversations?

I think so. We should bear in mind that these negotiations only really started in September, and prior to that those were discussions in different quarters and countries. But talks have started now between the Afghans. India's stand is that so long as the outcome is acceptable for the people of Afghanistan, and is not a threat to anybody, through harbouring terrorism or other means, that will be acceptable for India. That is a very principled position which is welcomed.

One of the outstanding issues has been the lack of a ceasefire announcement by the Taliban. And a large part of the Taliban leadership does live in Pakistan. Did you receive any assurances on Pakistan's support when it comes to announcing a ceasefire, during your visit there last week?

[We are still hopeful of] a ceasefire or significant reduction in violence. [Pakistani officials] were supportive of that idea and they also promised that they will communicate this and

they will try to use their own influence to achieve that. We had extensive discussions on that as well as other aspects of the situation, for a peaceful Afghanistan. And thereby, I was assured that they will make efforts. Even so, are you at all hopeful? I'm just looking at the figures — 1,300 civilian casualties in the first half of this year, a 60% rise in attacks on Afghan forces from this quarter compared to the previous quarter.... If you speak of the expectations of the people of Afghanistan, they were expecting that as the talks start, we will have a ceasefire or a significant reduction in violence. Our negotiating team was ready from day one to start discussions on a ceasefire. But these are complicated situations and we are only meeting the Taliban for talks now, rather than in the battle zones as we have for the past three decades. We are not under any illusions about the challenges that we are faced with. The progress so far has been slow. Hopefully, with the help of different players and also with the patience that we will show, the civility we will show there will be a transition to less violence.

But will talks continue regardless of whether that violence continues?

The talks should continue. But it's not as if the violence can continue forever and the talks will continue forever. Without progress in the talks that's not viable, that's not sustainable and we do want to get to the other parts of the agenda.

What else is part of the talks? While the government has said the political structure of Afghanistan is not negotiable, from the Taliban side, the understanding seems to be that everything is on the table. So, is there a bottom line that says democracy is non-negotiable, the rights of women and minorities are non-negotiable? Taliban will raise their own ideas and we will raise our own ideas. Can we agree on a common stand which accommodates the different views? The question is can we agree that while maintaining different views, we live in one system and compete and contest for the realisation of those ideas peacefully, through civil and peaceful means? That's the bottom line.

Are you on the same page as the Afghan government? Just 10 ...

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Kandahar Produces Five Tons of Pistachios This Year

Kandahar's Department of Agriculture expect pistachio production in the province to reach five tons this year.

"Farmers here are fond of growing pistachios, and we've made sure to implement programs that strengthening gardening in the province," said Hafiz Rasidi, Head of Kandahar's Department of Agriculture.

According to the officials, pistachio seedlings have been planted in 4,500 acres of land in six districts of Kandahar province.

As many as 450,000 hectares of

pistachios have been registered in Afghanistan, many of which have been damaged. In recent years, the government has made efforts to prevent the destruction of pistachio woodlands and to expand and revitalize them in various provinces. Meanwhile, the government is focusing on the construction of pistachio orchards in Herat and Badghis, where most of the pistachio woodlands are destroyed due to the recklessness of the people and the government over the past few years. The Taliban and other gunmen also use parts of the forests' produce.



Didn't discuss troops...

months ago, you were in a legal battle with President Ghani contesting the presidential elections you both fought. Do you feel that the differences that you and President Ghani have had are an impediment to the peace process?

That's democracy. Given the fact that we contested elections [against each other] means that we were not on the same page on some issues. But when it is in the interest of the country, in the interest of peaceful Afghanistan, democratic Afghanistan, an Afghanistan which respects the rights of its citizens, men, women, minorities and others, on that we are on the same page.

President Trump has already said that by Christmas, he hopes to have U.S. troops return. Other officials have said maybe 2,500 troops will remain in Afghanistan. Are you also considering the possible need for a regional peacekeeping force if the Americans do pull out completely?

First of all, on the recent announcement by President Trump, the details are not yet available to us. They already had announced according to their agreement, to keep 4,500 troops and to pull-out the rest of it, which will be completed by November. So, we are not sure what these announcements refer to. But eventually, Afghanistan needs to stand on its own feet and support from the region for a peaceful, inclusive settlement in Afghanistan is important. Hopefully, we will get to an agreement that that will not require security forces from other countries to keep us safe. But have you discussed that possibility in India?

No, no, that was not part of our discussions.

As part of the Northern Alliance you fought with the Taliban for years. In government you were targeted, suffered attacks. Have you reconciled with a process that will bring the same people into the mainstream, perhaps into a place of power in government, that you have fought for so much of your life?

The point is that I have fought for certain principles in my life — the independence of Afghanistan, certain liberties, the rights of the people and those values. And that will not change. What type of shape that fighting will take, whether we can fight for it through peaceful means and without resorting to violence, that can change? What happened to me, and I survived several attacks, some very close calls. But look at the suffering of the people: sometimes as many as 50-100 people are killed in one day, sometimes, that needs to come to an end. That's much more than these emotions or feelings and certainly when it comes to my experience in Afghanistan, I believe that there are no winners in a war, there are no losers in an inclusive, peaceful settlement. Are you saying peace at any cost?

An acceptable, dignified, sustainable peace.

With U.S. troops...

that the Afghan president describes as a gesture of goodwill.

Without U.S. troops alongside his men in Gardez, Dust said joint patrols have been suspended, and ground operations against militant groups other than the Taliban have nearly come to a halt. Paktia is home to several local armed groups that are not formally aligned with the Taliban or any other large militant organization, such as the Islamic State.

"One hundred percent it is more difficult now," he said of maintaining security in Paktia. For the residents of Paktia, targeted killings — small attacks carried out on specific individuals or groups — have sown the most unease in the months following the U.S. base closure. The trend is not specific to this province; in the months since the signing of the U.S.-Taliban deal, such killings have increased nationwide in Afghanistan.

In districts under Taliban control, the militants' checkpoints have multiplied. No longer under constant threat of air and drone strikes, many of those checkpoints have become permanent, and their bases are being visibly fortified, according to local security officials.

At the edge of one Taliban-controlled district, Zurmat, just outside Gardez, a commander of a local militia allied with the government said the increase in Taliban activity has been shocking. Adil, who spoke on the condition that only his first name be used to speak to the press, said his outpost receives gunfire from the direction of Zurmat to the west, but also from inside a small cluster of

shops within government-held territory just northeast of him.

His post had previously been held by the Afghan police, but once close U.S. support was withdrawn in Paktia, the government's regular forces were increasingly stretched thin in Gardez. Police and army units were moved in closer to the center of the provincial capital, leaving less well-trained men like Adil stationed at checkpoints along the periphery.

As he spoke, a battered Humvee pulled up to the outpost. It had rolled over a roadside bomb just moments before. One Afghan army soldier had been killed in the blast, and another was wounded. Both were whisked away by an ambulance as their fellow soldiers, dazed with grief, poured water onto the vehicle's smoking engine, damaged in the blast.

No one wanted to speak about the incident, but one young soldier complained incoherently to a senior local interior ministry official, Ahmad Hamid, who was at the scene.

Hamid shook his head as he walked away. "Attacks like these happen every day now," he said. Over the past six months, there have been over 450 attacks in Paktia province alone, more than twice as many as a normal six-month period before the signing of the peace deal, according to data from the governor's office.

On the provincial capital's northeastern edge, dozens of children attend a modest government school. The building was overflowing. Older children are taught indoors, while classes for younger students are held outside on the ground in an adjacent dirt lot. Abdullah Ahmedzai, the

school's acting director, said these are only a fraction of the students who normally attend. Government-run education has only recently resumed in Afghanistan after being closed for months due to the coronavirus pandemic. Ahmedzai said while few Afghan families fear the spread of coronavirus, it has been a struggle to convince parents that their students will be safe from violence.

Just days before, one of the school's teachers was targeted while walking to work by gunmen on a motorbike. Ahmedzai inhaled deeply and closed his eyes when recounting the story.

"Not a single person is safe from these attacks," he said, holding back tears. He explained the man had been shot several times but survived. And just days before that, Ahmedzai said, he received an anonymous phone call of a man's voice threatening to kill him if he didn't cease working for a government school.

Taj Muhammad Mangal, a provincial council member from Paktia, said Taliban threats against schools are on the rise across the province. He said a number of schools have been forcibly closed by hard-line Taliban fighters who object to any education that doesn't follow the model of a madrasa, a school that primarily teaches the Koran and Islamic law.

"Everyone is just fighting for themselves — no one cares for this country," said Ahmedzai, the school director, his face contorted with stress and grief. "I'm exhausted by this situation. I don't want to live here anymore. I want to go somewhere where I don't know anyone."

Peace talks:...

meetings between both sides of the Afghan peace negotiations in Doha have been suspended for the past 10 days and it is not clear when the meetings will be resumed.

Despite recent efforts in the diplomatic fronts in the past two weeks, the two sides of the negotiations have not managed so far to reach

a conclusion about the procedural rules intended to kick start the direct peace negotiations aimed at ending the decades-long war in Afghanistan.

The two sides have agreed on 18 out of 20 articles for the procedural rules, but two main articles—religious basis for the talks and connection of the US-Taliban deal with the negotiations—remain

unsolved. The Taliban insists that if a dispute emerges during the negotiations, the solution must be sought in the Hanafi jurisprudence and that the foundation for the talks should be the peace deal that the group signed with the US in late February. But the Afghan republic team has rejected the Taliban's demands and has suggested some alternatives to the demands.

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China backs Iran nuclear deal, calls for new MidEast forum

China's foreign minister Wang Yi has called for a new forum to defuse tensions in the Middle East after a meeting with his Iranian counterpart where he reiterated Beijing's support for Tehran.

Wang and Javid Zarif also reaffirmed their commitment to Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, according to the Chinese foreign ministry, an implicit rebuke of the United States for abandoning the accord during their Saturday meeting in China's southwestern Tengchong city.

Iran has been locked in an acrimonious relationship with Saudi Arabia, the other major Middle Eastern power, over the war in Yemen, Iranian influence in Iraq and Saudi support for Washington's sanctions on Tehran.

"China proposes to build a regional multilateral

dialogue platform with equal participation of all stakeholders," said the Chinese foreign ministry statement.

The forum would "enhance mutual understanding through dialogue and explore political and diplomatic solutions to security issues in the Middle East", the statement added.

Wang added that support for the Iranian nuclear deal, negotiated by the Obama administration but ultimately abandoned by Donald Trump, would be a precondition of entry to the forum.

Zarif said on Twitter his "fruitful talks" with Wang amounted to a rejection of "US unilateralism" and had also focused on strategic ties and collaboration on the development of a coronavirus vaccine.



A look at the world

Kyrgyzstan parliament names Sadyr Zhaparov new premier

Kyrgyzstan's parliament named Sadyr Zhaparov the prime minister, who was freed from prison on Tuesday by his supporters protesting against the results of the Oct. 4 parliamentary elections.

Gathering at the Ala Archa State Residence in the capital Bishkek, 63 members of the current parliament unanimously approved Zhaparov's new post and his Cabinet.

Protests in Kyrgyzstan started on Monday, with people breaking into parliament and other buildings and clashing with police, demanding a new vote.

On Tuesday, Prime Minister Kubatbek Boronov along with Dastan Jumabekov, the speaker of the country's parliament, announced their resignation over the crisis.



The elections authority in Kyrgyzstan annulled the parliamentary elections results. Prior to cancelling the results, the elections authority announced that only four out of 16 parties managed to cross the parliamentary threshold.

Since Sunday, the supporters of the parties that did not reach the parliamentary threshold announced their rejection to the elections' results claiming the electoral process was not fair.

The clashes between the protesters and security forces left one person dead and 590 others injured.

Kyrgyzstan's former President Almazbek Atambayev, who was freed from prison by supporters earlier this week, has been rearrested, the country's State Committee for National Security said on Saturday.

Atambayev and his aides Farid Niyazov, Damir Musakeyev, and bodyguard Kanat Sagynbaev were arrested on charges of organizing the ongoing anti-government demonstrations, the committee said.

Videos circulating on social media showed security personnel outside Atambayev's house in the village of Koy-Tas, outside the capital Bishkek.

The arrests come a day after President Sooronbay Jeenbekov declared a state of emergency following mass protests against the results of the Oct. 4 parliamentary elections. ...

P2

Lukashenko Meets Opposition in KGB Jail



Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko met with jailed opposition leaders, his first meeting with members of the coordinating council, according to Belta.

Lukashenko spent four and half hours at the KGB jail, the state news service said, citing the unofficial Pool Pervogo telegram channel, which is widely seen as run by people close to the presidential press service. Viktor Babaryka, the former head of Russian-owned lender Belgazprombank who planned to run in the August presidential election, and his son were among the group, according to a photo posted by the channel.

The authorities have jailed opposition leaders and forced others to flee the country in the face of daily protests against Lukashenko's claimed landslide victory on Aug. 9. While Western governments including Germany and Lithuania have refused to recognize his election, Russian President Vladimir Putin has supported his ally, offering Belarus \$1.5 billion in loans and blaming the unrest on the West.

While the outcome of the talks wasn't disclosed, Lukashenko went to hear the opposition members' opinions and told the jailed group that "you won't write the constitution in the streets," Belta reported. Putin has backed Lukashenko's vague plans for constitutional reform, something the Belarusian president has announced previously in his 26-year rule without result, but which could open the door to a change in leadership.

Trump silence on Nagorno-Karabakh weighs on Armenian-American voters

President Trump's silence on a weeks-long conflict in the southern Caucasus is roiling the Armenian community in the U.S., which is expressing outrage over a lack of action by the administration.

The Armenian American community, which numbers about 1.5 million, has called for the president and Congress to condemn Azerbaijan for an outbreak



of fighting last month in the contested territory of Nagorno-Karabakh that they view as part of their historic homeland.

They are further outraged by Turkey's interference in the conflict and the president's unwillingness to condemn Ankara.

On Thursday, thousands of Armenian-Americans gathered outside the White House to protest the lack of action and urgency from Trump.

"Even a single tweet from Trump calling for peace - and we're not even talking about standing by or with Armenia at this point - talking about a call for peace, as simple as that. And even that is not happening," said Arsen Kharatyan, who helped organize the protest.

Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden issued a statement on September 29, two days after fighting erupted, saying Trump should call the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan to insist on a ceasefire and condemn Turkey's interference.



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