

Headlines:

- **Global Dissatisfaction with Democracy has Reached a Record High, Research Claims**
- **Trump Releases Long-Awaited Middle-East Peace Plan**
- **Pakistan, US Stand Firm for Afghan Peace**

Details:

Global Dissatisfaction with Democracy has Reached a Record High, Research Claims

The world is unhappier with democracy than ever, new research has claimed. In a report published Wednesday, researchers from Cambridge University analyzed the political sentiment of more than 4 million people, using data from survey projects that covered 154 countries between 1995 and 2020. The proportion of people who said they were dissatisfied with democracy over the last year hit 57.5%, according to the report, with researchers saying 2019 marked "the highest level of democratic discontent" on record. Authors noted that over the last 25 years, the number of individuals dissatisfied with democratic politics around the world rose from a third to more than half. Shifts in satisfaction levels were often a response to "objective circumstances and events" such as economic shocks and corruption scandals, the report said. Following the financial crisis in 2008, for example, global dissatisfaction with the functioning of democracy jumped by around 6.5%. Many large democracies, including the U.S., Australia, U.K. and Brazil, were now at their highest-ever level of dissatisfaction with democracy. According to the report, the U.S. in particular had seen a "dramatic and unexpected" decline in satisfaction with democracy. When the surveys began in 1995, more than 75% of U.S. citizens were satisfied with American democracy. The first big knock came with the financial crisis, the report showed, and satisfaction has continued to deteriorate year-on-year ever since. Fewer than 50% of Americans are now content with democracy in their country, marking the first time on record that a majority of U.S. citizens were dissatisfied with their system of government. "Such levels of democratic dissatisfaction would not be unusual elsewhere," the report said. "But for the United States, it marks an 'end of exceptionalism' — a profound shift in America's view of itself, and therefore, of its place in the world." [Source: CNBC]

The global elite for decades has usurped the democratic process to pass legislation at the expense of the masses. This fraud has contributed to the masses in the West feeling disenfranchised from the democratic process.

Trump Releases Long-Awaited Middle-East Peace Plan

US President Donald Trump has presented his long-awaited Middle East peace plan, promising to keep Jerusalem as Israel's undivided capital. He proposed an independent Palestinian state and the recognition of Israeli sovereignty over West Bank settlements. Standing alongside Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu at the White House, Mr Trump said his proposals "could be the last opportunity" for Palestinians. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas dismissed the plans as a "conspiracy". "I say to Trump and Netanyahu: Jerusalem is not for sale, all our rights are not for sale and are not for bargain. And your deal, the conspiracy, will not pass," he said in a televised address from Ramallah in the West Bank. The blueprint, which aims to solve one of the world's longest-running conflicts, was drafted under the stewardship of President Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner. Thousands of Palestinians protested in the Gaza Strip earlier on Tuesday, while the Israeli military deployed reinforcements in the occupied West Bank. The joint announcement came as both Mr Trump and Mr Netanyahu faced political challenges at home. Mr Trump is the subject of an impeachment trial in the US Senate while the Israeli PM on Tuesday dropped his bid for immunity on corruption charges. Both men deny any wrongdoing. David Friedman, the US ambassador to Israel, said that the timing of the announcement was not tied to any political development, adding it had been "fully baked" for some time. Meanwhile, reports said Mr Netanyahu was planning to press ahead with annexing 30% of the occupied

West Bank, with a cabinet vote due on Sunday. More than 400,000 Israelis live in West Bank settlements. Those settlements are considered illegal under international law, although Israel disputes this. Mr Friedman said Israel did "not have to wait at all" to move ahead with annexation. "Today, Israel takes a big step towards peace," Mr Trump told officials and reporters at the White House. "My vision presents a win-win opportunity for both sides, a realistic two-state solution that resolves the risk of Palestinian statehood to Israel's security." While President Trump is offering the Palestinians a state it would be a much truncated one. No Jewish settlers will be uprooted and Israeli sovereignty will apparently be extended to the settlement blocs and the Jordan Valley. The Palestinians might have a capital in the East Jerusalem suburbs. This "take it or leave it offer" will appall many long-standing students of the region. The question now is not so much what benefit this deal might bring but how much damage it may do by over-turning Palestinian aspirations. [Source: BBC News]

Trump's peace plan comes as no surprise. However, what is surprising is the lame response of the Ummah. It knows that its leadership has sold out, but remains silent at Trump's announcement. Thereby providing further encouragement for Trump to take action that is more drastic elsewhere in the Muslim world.

Pakistan, US Stand Firm for Afghan Peace

Pakistan and the United States yesterday showed optimism about the Afghanistan peace as US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad called on Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa here. Gen Bajwa and Khalilzad discussed the regional peace situation and matters of mutual interest, says a statement issued by the military media wing ISPR. "The US Special Representative appreciated the efforts of Pakistan for peace in the region. They also discussed the Afghan reconciliation process," it added. Separately, Khalilzad also called on Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi here. "During the meeting, matters pertaining to joint efforts for restoring peace in Afghanistan and current situation in the region came under discussion," a foreign ministry statement said. "Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad updated Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on the ongoing peace talks with Taliban and lauded the reconciliatory role of Pakistan in that regard," the statement said. "The two sides agreed to continue consultations to make joint efforts for Afghan peace process," it added. Qureshi said that Pakistan will continue supporting peace efforts in Afghanistan as a joint responsibility. He said that a peace deal between the US and the Afghan Taliban would pave way for 'Intra-Afghan Dialogue' and also prove beneficial for stability in Afghanistan, which will prove useful for peace and stability not only in Afghanistan but the entire region. Pakistan has been working on Afghan peace for years. The US credited Pakistan for imminent peace deal between the US and the Afghan Taliban as Foreign Minister Qureshi recently met his American counterpart Mike Pompeo in Washington. Pompeo had appreciated Pakistan's efforts for peace in Afghanistan. The meeting came after FM Qureshi announced that the Afghan Taliban were willing to shun violence. "This is a step toward peace agreement in Afghanistan," he added – indicating a major diplomatic victory for Pakistan. The US and Taliban officials had announced a resumption of official negotiations for the first time since President Donald Trump abruptly halted talks three months ago to end the 18-year war. Last month, Pakistan and the US had shown satisfaction with the recent talks between the US and the Afghan Taliban in Doha, Qatar. Prior to meeting Pompeo, Foreign Minister Qureshi had urged the US for a "responsible" withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan and not to repeat the 'mistake' of 1980s' pull out by the then Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. PM Imran Khan said: "Fortunately, America and Pakistan are on the same page regarding Afghanistan. Talks are being held between their government and Taliban." As the peace deal between the US and the Taliban becomes obvious, the US has started getting warmer to Pakistan. The Donald Trump administration has approved a resumption of Pakistan's participation in a coveted US military training and educational program more than a year after it was suspended. [Source: The Nation]

Rather than joining forces with the Taliban to expel America from the region, Pakistan is putting pressure on the militants to compromise and sign up to America's peace deal.