

Headlines:

- **'Our Nation is in Peril': Tony Blair Urges Calm in Brexit Talks**
- **Gaza's Palestinians Divided Over "Israel"-Turkey deal**
- **Russian President Putin says NATO Provoking Arms Race Frenzy**

Details:

'Our Nation is in Peril': Tony Blair Urges Calm in Brexit Talks

Tony Blair has called for "serious statesmanship" in the talks with the European Union that will shape the future of the UK after Brexit. The former prime minister warned "our nation is in peril" after the vote to leave the EU and the negotiations on the UK's future relationship with the other countries would be of "extraordinary complexity". He urged the contenders in the Conservative leadership race to act with "genuine patriotic regard" to the country's future as he accepted his own party was "effectively disabled". In an article in the Daily Telegraph, Blair said: "There is going to be a negotiation of extraordinary complexity where there are a thousand devils in every detail. Those we used to call 'our European partners' are, unsurprisingly, divided and uncertain themselves." He said some countries wanted a quick divorce, while others favoured a delay in commencing the article 50 process, which starts a two-year countdown to Brexit. "This needs serious statesmanship," he said. "So before any formal negotiation begins, we need to get a high level sense of where the boundaries are going to be, the things that might be compromised, the things that are red lines. "The psychology of the other 27 countries is crucial to feel and shape: they could decide that other secessionist movements should be deterred and so be disinclined to flexibility; or they could decide that the British view – especially on immigration – reflects something strong across Europe and have a measured response which tries to accommodate that sentiment." In a stark assessment of the task, he added: "Our nation is in peril. To allow us to come safely through this we need to be adult in our politics, to proceed with calm, maturity and without bitterness; because our future as a nation in the world and as the UK itself is at stake." The former Labour leader said that Britain "should keep all our options open" but went on to insist that "is not an argument for another referendum". He warned that Ukip leader Nigel Farage's performance in the European parliament could damage the country's ability to secure a favourable deal. In highly charged exchanges in the wake of the Brexit vote, Farage was booed and barracked by MEPs as he accused them of being "in denial" about the failure of their single currency and their attempt to create political union in Europe. The Ukip leader said he had been laughed at when he arrived in Brussels 17 years ago with a message that Britain must leave. And he told MEPs: "You're not laughing now." Blair said: "Don't underestimate the damage having Nigel Farage address the European parliament in that way does to our interests. Remember who has to agree any new deal for Britain: the European parliament." With David Cameron set to leave the stage, the next leader of the Conservative party will have the task of negotiating Brexit. "On the leave side, there are some who are triumphalist and some more inclined to reach out," said Blair. "Those leave leaders now so powerful within the politics of our nation should demonstrate they are in 'reach out' mode fast. "With the Labour party effectively disabled we need the Conservative party to conduct its leadership battle with genuine patriotic regard for our nation's interest." [Source: Guardian]

The lack of leadership in British politics post-Brexit vote is quite revealing. It clearly demonstrates that the country was not expecting the leave campaign to succeed.

Russian President Putin says NATO Provoking Arms Race Frenzy

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday insisted Moscow will not be dragged into an arms race by NATO as he accused the US-led alliance of tearing up the military balance in Europe. The Kremlin strongman warned that Russia "knows how to react adequately and we will" to NATO bolstering its forces in eastern European nations such as Poland and the Baltic states in moves he said were aimed at "undermining the military balance built up over decades". "We don't intend to give in to this militaristic frenzy but it seems that is what they are pushing us to, to provoke a costly and pointless arms race," Putin told Russian diplomats in Moscow. "This will not happen. But we will also not be weak. We will always be able to defend ourselves reliably," he said. Relations between Russia and the West have slumped to their lowest point since the Cold War over Moscow's 2014 annexation of Crimea and its alleged masterminding of a separatist uprising in Ukraine. Fears of Russian expansionism have sent a chill through NATO members such as Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland and have seen the US-led alliance bolster its presence in eastern Europe. NATO announced this month that it would deploy four battalions to the Baltic nations and Poland to counter a more assertive Russia, ahead of a landmark summit in Warsaw on July 8-9. Russia bitterly opposes NATO's expansion into its Soviet-era satellites and has said it will create three new divisions in its southwest region to meet what it described as a dangerous military build-up along its borders. Putin has massively ratcheted up military spending since coming to power over 16 years ago in a bid to overhaul Russia's armed forces, which often rely on creaking Soviet-era weaponry. On Wednesday, Russia's Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu vowed to counter the NATO build-up by sending two thousand units of new and modernised equipment to the country's western military district which borders several NATO member countries. Due in part to Western sanctions over Ukraine and the fall in oil prices, Russia is currently suffering its longest recession since Putin took power. [Source: DNA India]

Europe frightened by Russia's forays into Georgia, Ukraine and Crimea, has reacted by bolstering its defenses across Europe, which includes upgrading nuclear weapons and putting in place a missile defence shield. Such maneuvers have prompted strong criticisms from Putin, and have provoked Russia to spend more on defence to offset these threats.

Gaza's Palestinians Divided Over "Israel"-Turkey deal

Palestinians in Gaza are sharply divided over the reconciliatory deal signed between "Israel" and Turkey on Tuesday. While some, including Hamas officials, have described the deal as an opportunity for "a Turkish role to end the siege on Gaza", others said it was unlikely that the deal would have a profound impact on ending the siege. "Turkey, motivated by moral and ethical principles, dedicated its efforts to lifting the siege [on Gaza]," wrote Saleh al-Na'iami, a Gaza-based political analyst, a few hours after the deal was announced. "Even after the reconciliation [deal] there's a significant downgrading of ties with Israel compared with before Erdogan ascended to power." Others, such as Palestinian writer and activist Refaat Alareer, disagreed. He believes that the Gaza blockade has been used "to whitewash the deal". For the past nine years, Israel has imprisoned and policed Gaza via what Palestinian analysts describe as '19th-century colonisation policies', keeping nearly two million civilians spatially contained with neither a present nor a future. The blockade has

prevented the reconstruction of thousands of homes, schools, hospitals, power plants and water networks destroyed during successive Israeli military offensives in 2008 to 2009, 2012 and 2014. "Israel" also keeps effective control over entry and exit into Gaza, its air space and sea, as well as its population registry, telecommunications networks and many other aspects of daily life and infrastructure. On Tuesday, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon criticised Israel's blockade of the Gaza Strip during a visit to the Palestinian territory. Ban said that "the closure of Gaza suffocates its people, stifles its economy and impedes reconstruction efforts. "It's a collective punishment for which there must be accountability," he added. According to the deal, "Israel" offered its apologies for the 2010 raid on the Mavi Marmara activist ship - one of Ankara's three conditions for a deal. It also agreed to pay out \$20m to the bereaved and injured. Under the deal, Turkey is required to pass legislation protecting "Israeli" soldiers against related lawsuits. Also, Turkey has waived a demand for the removal of the "Israeli" blockade on the Gaza Strip. "Israel" would enable Turkey to set up infrastructure projects in Gaza, including the construction of a hospital, a power station and a desalination facility. All the materials for these projects would be transported via Israel's Ashdod Port. Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim said that the "Israeli" embargo on Gaza has been "largely lifted" as part of the reconciliation deal. A first shipment of 10,000 tonnes would be sent next Friday, he said, and work would begin immediately to tackle Gaza's water and power supply crisis. "Our Palestinian brothers in Gaza have suffered a lot and we have made it possible for them to take a breath with this agreement," Yildirim told a news conference in Ankara. Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan told Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on Sunday the deal would improve the humanitarian situation in Gaza, sources in Erdogan's office said. But for Gaza residents such as Omar Ghraieb, a blogger, lifting the siege on Gaza means freedom of movement, not more food or aid. "The siege on Gaza has crushed dreams, killed patients, separated families, destroyed businesses, defeated ambitions. It's not just about aid [and] food," he said, adding that having the siege lifted means self-efficiency and an air and sea port for Gaza. "Is this too ambitious?" He asked. [Source: Al Jazeera]

Erdogan sees no shame in selling out Palestine to the Jewish State. Compare Erdogan's actions to the stance of Sultan Abdul Hamid when he was asked to sell Palestine to the Zionists: "Even if you gave me as much gold as the entire world, let alone the 150 million English pounds in gold, I would not accept this at all. I have served the Islamic milla [nation] and the Ummah of Muhammad for more than thirty years, and never did I blacken the pages of the Muslims- my fathers and ancestors, the Ottoman sultans and caliphs. And so I will never accept what you ask of me."