

USD	41	GBP	01
AFN	79.33	AFN	109.09

EUR	1000	PKR	1000
AFN	1079	AFN	499

EUR	41	EUR	1000
AFN	92.98	AFN	6.37

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AFN	92.98	AFN	6.37

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## Germany, Belgium floods toll tops 100, with many missing



The death toll from devastating floods across parts of western Germany has risen to 93, according to local authorities, pushing the total toll of flooding in Western Europe past 100, as the search continued for hundreds of people still unaccounted for.

While heavy rainfall hitland ports of France, Switzerland, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, the worst hit areas were western Germany where more than 10 victims have been reported in the state of Rhineland-Palatinate and in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia. In Belgium, the toll stood at 15.

There are fears more victims will be found as more data pour across the devastated region and cleanup and salvage operations are

under way. Around 100 army troops have joined rescue workers in Germany as about 1,000 people were still reported missing.

German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier said he was "struck" by the devastation caused by the flooding and pledged support for the families of those killed and to crisis and towns facing significant damage.

"In the hour of need, our country stands together," Steinmeier said in a statement. "It's important that we show solidarity for those from whom the flood has taken everything."

Scientists say high-latitude climate action was needed to prevent such a disaster in the future.

"Back in the wake-up the fight against climate change decisively we will be able to prevent, we will be able to keep extreme weather conditions such as those we are experiencing," he said.

German Interior Minister Horst Seehofer said emergency Spiegel that the federal government aimed to provide financial support for the affected regions as quickly as possible, adding a package of measures should go to the cabinet for approval on Wednesday.

Many were killed through the Belgian town of Poperinghe, near Liege as police helicopter hovered

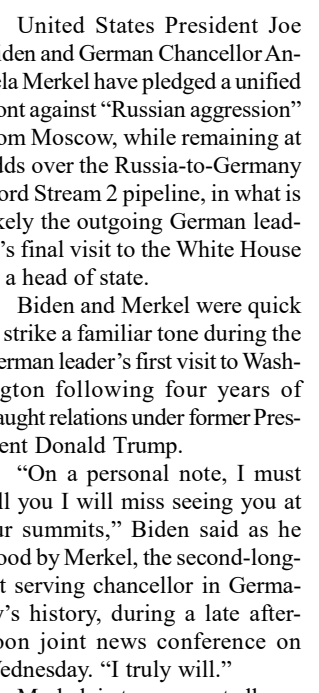
above the town in an emergency rescue mission. The flood of water was so high that it reached the roof of many houses.

Damaged buildings could be along the river bank. In a provincial tally, the Belgium death toll has risen to 12, with five people still missing, local authorities and media reported on Friday.

Main Deputy, the government of neighboring Rhineland-Palatinate said, and the disaster showed the need to speed up efforts to curb global warming.

"We've experienced droughts, heavy rain and flooding over several years in a row, including in our state," he told the Frank media group. "Climate change isn't abstract anymore."

## Biden, Merkel united against Russia, disagreements remain



United States President Joe Biden and German Chancellor Angela Merkel have pledged a unified front against "Russian aggression" from Moscow, while remaining at odds over the Russian-to-German Nord Stream 2 pipeline, in what is likely the ongoing German leader's final visit to the White House as a head of state.

Biden and Merkel were quick to make a familiar case during the German leader's first visit to Washington following four years of fraught relations under former President Donald Trump.

"On a personal note, I must tell you I will miss seeing you at our summit," Biden said as he joined by Merkel, the second-largest serving chancellor in Germany's history, during a late afternoon joint news conference on Wednesday. "I truly will."

Merkel, in turn, reportedly referred to Biden as "Dear Joe."

"I value the friendship," she told reporters while hailing the US and Germany as sharing the same values and "determination to make the challenges of our time."

On Russia, Biden and Merkel were careful to stress unity on standing up to "aggression" as they assigned a longstanding disagreement over the newly-completed Nord Stream 2 natural gas pipeline, which would deliver gas from the Arctic to Germany via the Baltic Sea, bypassing Ukraine and helping it of valuable transit fees.

Washington has long opposed the \$11.5-billion project, arguing that it will increase European energy security by increasing the continent's reliance on Russian gas and oil.

The incident happened some 11 months after the small fishing port of Kato Pyrgos, just

Merkel, for her part, repeated Biden's stance that the pipeline is intended as an additional project, not a replacement for Ukraine as a gas transit route. She added that Russia could face EU sanctions if it violated its agreement to continue shipping gas through the

Merkel, who has been chosen

NATO against Russian aggression."

The visit comes amid a backdrop of mounting uncertainty over how Germany and the US will navigate disagreements going forward.

Merkel, who has been chosen

Germany's government after the national election in September.

Polling shows her Christian Democrats are poised to win the lead in forming a government after

Some members of Congress, who have been vocal in dis-

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find our eastern flank allies at

official since 2005, plans to exit

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