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Pajhwok

20 police injured in protest over anti-Islam movie

By Muhammad Hassan Khetab

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Afghan protesters shout slogans during a demonstration in Kabul September 17, 2012. Thousands of protesters took to the streets of the Afghan capital on Monday, setting fire to cars and shouting "death to America", the latest in demonstrations that have swept the Muslim world against a film mocking the Prophet Mohammad

Twenty policemen were injured after hundreds of angry protestors pelted stones at them during a violent rally on Monday against an anti-Islam film released in the US, an official said.

The movie, produced by American-Israeli real estate investor Sam Basil, was recently released by the same Christian pastor who last year attempted to burn copies of the holy Quran in the US.

The film sparked violent protests by Muslims in Libya, Egypt and other Islamic countries. One protest in the Benghazi city of Libya led to the death of four Americans, including the US ambassador.

In Kabul, the mob emerged from the Paktiakot locality around 6am in the limits of the ninth police district. It tried to enter the city, but police blocked its way.

A Pajhwok reporter at the scene said the protestors were chanting anti-American slogans and torched an effigy of President Obama and US flag. They called for harsh punishment to the moviemaker.

Quick reaction force commander Brig. Gen. Mohammad Fahim confirmed 20 police were injured after the mob pelted stones and rocks at them.

The angry crowd also set four containers and a police vehicle on fire. Firefighters moved swiftly to extinguish the flames engulfing cars and storage containers.

A police official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that Kabul police chief Brig. Gen. Mohammad Ayub Salangi was also slightly injured.

One participant Rahmatullah shouted: "We will continue our protests as long as the individuals who insulted our Prophet Hazrat Mohammad (PBUH) are not punished." The rally ended at around 11:30am.

In northern Balkh province, a large number of university students staged a demonstration to protest the film in Mazar-i-Sharif, the provincial capital.

A student leader Amanullah told Pajhwok Afghan News the US should prevent acts that played with the sentiments of Muslims. He said the movie exposed the real face of the US, which had no value for Islam and its followers.

He said the film came at a time when the world, particularly the US, was in great need of inter-faith harmony. Such blasphemous acts would scuttle efforts at harmony among followers of different faiths, the protestor said.