

(1) Taliban Has...

nations were gathered at the International Symposium on Imam Abu Hanifa in Kabul today to commemorate the teachings and services of Imam Abu Hanifa. (ATN)

(2) Afghanistan's ...

"I am in the middle of a World Cup and trying to get our team to perform to the level we expect," Simmons, who will leave his role at the end of the tournament, wrote on Twitter.

"But at the end of the World Cup I will tell the Afghanistan people about the part that Dawlat Ahmadzai had to play in our preparation and his part in the dismissal of Asghar Afghan.

Asghar was replaced as captain of the team in all three formats and replaced by Gulbadin Naib for the World Cup in April, a decision which was questioned by a number of senior players. (Pajhwok)

(3) Taliban Show ...

Taliban showed no interest to reciprocate these efforts for peace and reconciliation, he said. (Pajhwok)

(4) Central Bank...

another shows the "weakness" of the state-owned Central Bank to prevent the act.

"The government of Afghanistan has no control over illegal money," said Kram Afzali, the head of the Integrity Watch Afghanistan.

(5) Khost Journalists ...

in accordance with the law," he insisted.

Adil Haidar, the police spokesman, said they always shared information with the media, but they were barred by the Ministry of Interior from giving details of certain incidents without its permission.

Based on Access to Information Law, all government organs are responsible for sharing information with the media. Confidential information is an exception. (Pajhwok)

(6) Lawmakers Scuffle ...

Meanwhile, Kamal Nasir Usoli said without conducting a ballot, no one could take the speaker seat.

MPs Asna and Gozar tried to enter Rahmani to the Wolesi Jirga hall and sit him on the chairman seat, but Sayed Ahmad, a lawmaker from Kandahar province, and some other lawmakers took the speaker's table and threw it into the middle of the hall and then a physical and verbal clash broke out. (Pajhwok)

(7) Officials Visit ...

struggling to bring down the Helmand province or want to hurt our security forces, maybe we had casualties, but the enemy has been destroyed and the nation only suffer and we are trying to remove the space between the nation and the forces and the enemy did not achieved anything," said Sadat.

Helmand is one of the insecure provinces in the south of the country. (Tolo news)

(8) DABS Disconnects ...

Abdul Wahid, chief of Kabul power, accused the mentioned men of not paying electricity bills for years as they had noticed them regularly. He said liability in Kabul has reached over two billion afghanis. (Pajhwok)

(9) Afghan Special ...

conducting counter-terrorism operations against the anti-government armed groups in this province. The U.S. forces also conduct regular airstrikes in restive parts of the country to suppress Taliban and other anti-government militants. (KP)

(10) For First Time ...

in their number compared to previous years.

The test was conducted today (Wednesday), which would continue for three days.

University Chairman Dr. Yahya Fahim said this year the entry test would be taken from 16,501 students, including 2,396 of them girls for bachelors and 1,231 including 63 girls for master's program.

This year, the Nangarhar University has the capability to enroll 3,096 students for bachelor and 180 students for master program.

Prof. Sayed Rozatullah Majid, the national entry test committee head, said that there would be no decimation in

entry tests in all provinces and that they had full preparation in this regard.

Governor Shah Mohmood Miakhel told a ceremony in this regard that all the test participants had been biometrically verified and there would be no chance of cheating.

He assured security of the test participants by security forces and said they would not allow anyone to disrupt the process.

Ajmal Omar, a provincial council member, urged the entry test national committee to pay special attention to the eastern zone and assured cooperation with the University in this regard.

Subhanullah, a 12th grade graduate from Jihadi high school in Khogyani district, expressed hope the exam process would be transparent.

A number of other students held similar views and urged the government to pay special attention to transparency at the exam final results. (Pajhwok)

(11) Tirinkot on ...

chief Col. Khitab Khanjari and protestors at around 5:00pm today (Tuesday).

They claimed still a number of armed protestors had taken positions in some parts of the city.

However, the governor's house wrote on its Facebook page that the situation in the city was under control and the protestors were in talks with local officials.

Mohammad Qasim, one of the protestors, told Pajhwok after the verbal clash with police, a number of other protesting people from other areas also entered the city to share their demands. He said the government has detained innocent people. (Pajhwok)

(12) 3 Militants ...

the Greshk district of southern Helmand province.

District police chief Maj. Abdul Basir Achakzai told Pajhwok the detainee wanted to detonate the explosives in the midst of a crowd in the district bazaar.

The Taliban have not yet commented about the incidents. (Pajhwok)

(13) Trump-Xi ...

"I think we have a chance. China wants a deal. They don't like the tariffs," Trump told reporters at the White House. "I have a very good relationship with president Xi. We'll see what happens."

- North Korean 'bargaining chip' - The White House repeated that the focus of the talks will be to address "structural barriers to trade with China and achieving meaningful reforms that are enforceable and verifiable." The United States and China seemed close to an agreement when talks collapsed last month.

Beijing retaliated to Trump's tariffs and moves against Huawei by increasing custom taxes on \$60 billion in US goods, creating its own list of "unreliable" companies and individuals and threatening to ban exports of rare earths to the United States.

Xi told Trump that the two countries must "accommodate each other's legitimate concerns" and that "China hopes the US side can treat Chinese firms in a fair manner," according to the official Xinhua news agency.

Trump had requested the call between the two leaders, according to Xinhua.

A week before the G20, Xi will visit North Korea on Thursday and Friday, his first trip there as president. China is North Korea's sole major ally, and analysts say Xi could use any leverage Beijing may have in the nuclear standoff between Washington and Pyongyang as a "bargaining chip" in his talks with Trump. (AFP)

(14) UN Expert Calls...

But the report downplayed the focus on a single official, noting that her focus is to identify those who may have failed in or abused their positions of authority. "The search for justice and accountability is not singularly dependent on finding a 'smoking gun' or the person holding it," she wrote.

Eleven people are currently on trial in Saudi Arabia in largely secret proceedings, and 5 could face the death penalty.

The report author said she had access to a recording of Khashoggi's killing and said she received information

about a "financial package" offered to Khashoggi's children, "but it is questionable whether such package amounts to compensation under international human rights law."

Callamard has been investigating the killing since January and said her inquiry has limitations, including not receiving a response to her request to travel to Saudi Arabia

She added that she had received only a total of 45 minutes of tapes recorded within the consulate around the time of the killing, while Turkish intelligence reportedly had some 7 hours of recordings. (Fox News)

(15) Pentagon's Plan...

evolutionary, so it remains in question whether the US Navy can do it quickly, drone expert Denis Fedutinov told RT.

"Obviously, first you build relatively small boats to develop the technologies and then gradually switch to larger crewless ships that can conduct a wider range of missions," he said.

The US Navy may have been emboldened by the trials of the Sea Hunter, the 135-ton autonomous trimaran ship developed by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) as an anti-submarine sensor platform. The robotic ship (accompanied by a manned convoy which checked on her systems from time to time) managed to travel from San Diego to Hawaii and back all on her own earlier this year.

Boeing's experimental large unmanned submarine Orca won a contract from the Navy this year, with four ships in the pipeline now - another testament for the progress of the robotic technologies at sea.

But even if the technology for remotely-controlled or partially autonomous vessels will be there within years, there will be other considerations, pointed out Michael Maloof, a former senior security policy analyst at the Pentagon. Even the vast budgets that the DoD gets these days are still limited. And drones come with their unique vulnerabilities.

"Before you deploy, you've got to have a system in place that can counter any means to knock out [the drones] especially given how expensive they are going to be," he told RT. One widely publicized example was Iran tricking a US RQ-170 Sentinel spy drone to land on its territory by spoofing GPS data, Maloof said. One can imagine a similar scenario could allow somebody to hijack one of the US Navy's robotic crafts and get access to all the technology on it.

"They could take this robotic ship and turn it against us. Let's say it's armed with ballistic missiles, and those get into the wrong hands. There are a lot of consequences here, that have not been addressed," he said.

On the other hand, he added, the entire buzz about the robotic fleet and how China's naval build-up would be nullified by it may be the modern incarnation of the Strategic Defense Initiative. The Reagan-era program made the Soviet Union believe that its nuclear deterrence could be countered by the US anti-ballistic missile systems and invest a lot of resources into preventing this outcome. But in reality the SDI was to a large degree fiction.

"It was a big bluff. We still don't have the technologies for that," Maloof said. (RT)

(16) Sudan Generals...

"At the end of the day, it is the security forces who conducted these raids and led to the killings of the people," Siddiq told AFP in an interview at his official residence in Khartoum.

"Therefore, the military council bears responsibility for taking the steps to build and rebuild the trust and confidence that would enable the civilian transition to occur."

At least 128 people have been killed since the crackdown, the majority on the day the sit-in was cleared.

That is according to doctors linked to the protest movement that led to the ouster of longtime leader Omar al-Bashir and his replacement by the military council in April.

The health ministry has put the nationwide death toll on June 3 at 61.

- Military council 'responsible' - The military council has expressed "regret" over what happened but insists it had only ordered the clear-

ing of an area near the protest camp where drug dealers had reportedly operated.

The initial findings of a military investigation showed that "officers and soldiers of different ranks and regular forces" had entered the sit-in itself without orders from their superiors, the investigating committee said.

Siddiq, a fluent Arabic speaker who began his Khartoum posting in April 2018, said the international community was waiting for the committee's report.

"But until that happens... the military council is responsible for security and therefore it's responsible for what happened," he said.

"Therefore, I think we need to see measures from the military council that build trust, build confidence" among the Sudanese public and the international community, he added.

Minutes after the assault began, Siddiq, whose residence is near the army headquarters, had heard gunshots and raised the alarm on social media. "No excuse for any such attack. This. Must. Stop. Now," he tweeted as the operation was in progress.

He said he had heard the attack taking place at 5 AM on June 3.

"I could hear the shooting and it seemed to me that it was pretty clear to me what was happening, which is why I made my statement," he said.

"Unfortunately, the killing happened and a lot of people lost their lives and there has been trust that has been lost." (AFP)

(17) Ex-French ...

They suspect Sarkozy and his lawyer were seeking information on developments in the case, with Sarkozy offering Azibert a plum job in Monaco in exchange.

The inquiry also revealed that Sarkozy and Herzog often communicated via cellphones obtained under false identities -- with Sarkozy using the name Paul Bismuth.

He was cleared over the Bettencourt allegations in 2013, and has argued that Azibert never got the Monaco job, meaning he should not have to face trial.

But investigators believe the deal fell through because Sarkozy and his lawyer learned their phones were being tapped.

In 2014, Sarkozy became the first former French president to be taken into police custody during a preliminary stage of the inquiry.

Sarkozy is not the first ex-president to be prosecuted -- his predecessor Jacques Chirac was given a two-year suspended sentence in 2011 for embezzlement and misuse of public funds during his time as mayor of Paris.

But he has been dogged by legal investigations since failing in his 2012 re-election bid.

Last month a top court rejected an appeal to avoid another trial, involving charges of illicit financing for the 2012 campaign.

Prosecutors claim Sarkozy spent nearly 43 million euros (\$48 million) on his lavish re-election bid -- almost double the legal limit of 22.5 million euros -- using fake invoices.

Sarkozy has denounced the charges, saying he was unaware of the fraud by executives at the public relations firm Bygmalion, who are also among a total of 13 people likely to face trial. (AFP)

(18) Australian Government...

final results for the Senate, the Australian Electoral Commission said Morrison's Liberal-National coalition won 19 of the 40 seats contested.

These lawmakers will now sit alongside 16 government Senators who were not up for re-election this year, giving Morrison 35 of the 76-seats in Australia's Senate.

The government previously held 31 seats, leaving them dependent on the support of independents to pass legislation.

While Morrison remains shy of an outright majority, several right-wing independents are expected to support the bulk of his legislation.

"The government has struggled for years to pass legislation. This Senate will be much friendlier, and the bulk of Morrison's agenda will become law," said Haydon Manning, a professor of political science at Flinders University, told Reuters.

The conservative government in April proposed A\$158 billion in tax cuts over the next decade, primarily aimed at middle-income earners.

While Australia's opposition Labor party has promised to support the tax cuts for the lower income earners, it has said it will oppose the third stage of the fiscal plan that delivers tax cuts that favor higher earners.

Morrison has said the tax cuts will not be split, setting the stage for a political fight amid calls for urgent fiscal stimulus to boost a flagging economy.

Australia's central bank earlier this month cut interest rates for the first time in nearly three years, though it warned the economy needed additional support.

Should Morrison win enough support for his tax plan, about 10 million middle- and low-income earners - will receive up to A\$1,080 (\$742.72) per person.

Economists have estimated the tax breaks would inject about A\$7.5 billion into the economy over 2019/20. (Reuters)

(19) Japan's Abe...

more powerful lower chamber.

A report this month by advisers to the Financial Services Agency (FSA) said a model case couple would need \$185,000 in addition to their pensions if they lived for 30 years after retiring.

The report was meant to highlight the need to plan ahead for retirement but instead gave opposition parties ammunition to blast Abe's government.

"What is making lots of people angry is that you are simply stressing stability (of the system) and not addressing their anxiety head-on," Yukio Edano, leader of the largest opposition Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan, told Abe during debate before a parliamentary panel.

Abe said the report had caused "misunderstandings" and reiterated the government's position that reforms to the pension system implemented in 2004 had ensured its sustainability. Pensions are a particularly sensitive topic for Abe.

His Liberal Democratic Party suffered a massive defeat in a 2007 upper house election during his first stint as premier partly because of voter outrage over misplaced pension records. Two months later, Abe resigned.

Abe's ruling bloc is unlikely to lose its upper house majority but the fuss has trimmed his support and a weak performance would hamper efforts to cement his legacy.

Aso, 78, the wealthy scion of an elite political family, also said he'd never worried about supporting himself as he aged and didn't know if he was receiving a pension. (Reuters)

(20) South Korea...

Seoul's announcement came a day before Chinese President Xi Jinping was to travel to Pyongyang for a summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, a visit experts say will likely be accompanied by Chinese assistance in food, fertilizer and medicine.

North Korea has significantly reduced its dialogue and engagement with South Korea since February, when a nuclear summit between leader Kim Jong Un and President Donald Trump collapsed over disagreements on sanctions relief and disarmament.

While South Korean President Moon Jae-in has expressed hope that South Korean aid will help thaw bilateral relations, it remains to be seen whether Seoul's packages would facilitate diplomacy when the North has been demanding much bigger things from the South, such as the resumption of inter-Korean economic projects held back by U.S.-led sanctions against the North.

The \$8 million sent to the WFP and UNICEF was the first time the South provided humanitarian aid to the North through an international agency since 2015, when it gave \$800,000 to a U.N. Population Fund project to evaluate North Korean public health conditions.

Moon's government first proposed to provide the money in 2017, but the plans were halted amid a series of North Korean weapons tests before Seoul reaffirmed its commitment to the plans in May. An abrupt turn toward diplomacy in 2018 saw Kim meet with Trump twice and three times with Moon. (AP)