

**(1) Khalilzad Briefs...**

days ahead," Kumar wrote. The US, Russia, Iran and other powers have been reaching out to the Taliban to push the Afghan peace drive. India has been a key stakeholder in reconciliation in Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

**(2) Afghanistan Still...**

forces officer, had received secret orders to topple Daud Khan's republican government.

More than four decades later, Tanai says he still believes the aftermath of Khyber's murder forced jailed PDPA leader Hafizullah Amin to order a military coup. Amin oversaw the PDPA's secret organization within the Afghan military.

"The conditions were not ready for a coup," Tanai, who was a member of the PDPA's Khalq or Masses faction, told Radio Free Afghanistan. "In a way, the coup was imposed on us after Daud Khan attacked our party by rounding up its leaders. He then wanted to move against the party's supporters within the military."

Sulaiman Layeq, a leader of the sometimes rival Parcham faction, agrees. The 89-year-old remembers being incarcerated at Pul-e Charkhi alongside Amin and the PDPA's top leader Nur Muhammad Tarakai in April 1978.

"The coup was carried out in broad daylight," he told Radio Free Afghanistan. "Party members had no choice but to accept the coup as fait accompli even while it was ordered by one individual." The coup was largely carried out by troops loyal to Amin stationed near the notorious Pul-e Charkhi prison east of Kabul where he was held. Two young military officers, Aslam Watanjar and Muhammad Rafi, led a tank column from the Afghan Army's Fourth Armored Corps to capture Arg and other key installations around Kabul, some 20 kilometers away. Their advance and later attacks in Arg and elsewhere in Kabul were supported by Afghan Air Force Officer Abdul Qadir.

Writing in his book *Twenty-four Hours That Shook Afghanistan*, Junbish says that by around 10:30 a.m. in Arg Daud Khan and his cabinet were still unaware a tank column was en route to Kabul. Around that time, a bodyguard barged into the meeting to ask the Afghan leader whether he knew about the advancing tanks. But Daud Khan had no idea what they were up to.

Tanai says rebellious forces had captured the headquarters of Afghanistan's state radio and television less than a kilometer from Arg around 11:30 a.m. Half an hour earlier, they had cut the links between Arg and the Afghan Defense Ministry.

He says he was ordered around midday to attack the besieged presidential palace where the guards were offering stiff resistance.

By evening, the rebellious officers loyal to the PDPA had captured most of the army and air force installations around Kabul and had taken over the communications and defense ministries. They had also freed the PDPA leaders from Pul-e Charkhi.

In the evening, Watanjar announced the coup to the world.

"For the first time in history of the empire -- the sign of oppression and cruelty -- the power of the family of [King] Nadir Khan has ended," he said in a radio broadcast in Pashto, naming Daud Khan's uncle, who had restored the Durrani monarchy after a brief interregnum in 1929. "All the state power is now in the hands of the people," he added as he hinted at who was behind the coup. "The state power is now firmly in the hands of the revolutionary military council." Inside Arg, Daud Khan and his family, guards, and cabinet mem-

bers continued resisting into the early hours of the next day. But all of them were eventually killed on April 28, 1978. The coup ended nearly 250 years of Durrani monarchy in Afghanistan.

Pacha Mir, head of maintenance at the Afghan Army's armored corps, was tasked with burying the slain president and his family near Pul-e Charkhi. Their secret grave was finally discovered in 2008. He was given a state funeral the following year.

PDPA leaders called their coup the Saur Revolution after the month in the Afghan calendar that it took place. Reflecting on the aftermath of their coup, Layeq says the vanity of the Afghan leaders destroyed whatever good they expected from the coup.

"I think the bottom line in Afghanistan is that all [leaders] want to survive on their own," he noted.

On the streets in Kabul, the coup is still blamed for all of Afghanistan's woes. "It was a black day for Afghanistan," said Kabul resident Bakhtiar, who goes by one name only. "The destruction of our homeland began on that day."

Syed Rahman Niazi, another Kabul resident, blames the coup for their miseries. "Blood was shed to gain power that fateful day," he said. "After the coup, our rulers killed Afghans and we were forced to abandon our homes. They showed no mercy to us."

The coup's leaders quickly fell out with one another. In September 1979, Amin deposed Tarakai. Most historians agree it was Amin who ordered Tarakai's killing the following month.

Amin's rule, however, was short-lived. Amin, his extended family, and supporters were killed by Soviet special forces before invading Afghanistan on the eve of Christmas Eve in 1979. The Red Army then propped up another PDPA regime for the next decade as it occupied Afghanistan.

Afghanistan's neighbors, Pakistan, Iran, China, the United States, Arab monarchies, and the Western world generously funded anti-Soviet jihad by Afghan Islamist guerillas known as mujahedin. The departure of Soviet troops in February 1989 didn't end the war in Afghanistan.

Even the fall of the PDPA regime, then renamed the Homeland Party, on April 28, 1992, didn't bring the war in Afghanistan to an end. Kabul was destroyed in the ensuing civil war. The emergence of the Taliban in the mid-1990s added a new dimension to the civil war and ultimately paved the way for the current phase of the war in Afghanistan.

Afghans have endured every imaginable atrocity during the various phases of war in their country. More than 1 million Afghans are estimated to have been killed and injured during the various phases of war.

The fighting has also displaced more than 10 million Afghans during the past four decades, making Afghans one of the largest refugee communities worldwide. (RFE/RL)

**(3) Calls Mount for...**

"The Americans had taken their technical team and they talked with the Taliban. Similarly, when it comes to the issue of the ceasefire, it is an important issue, whether there will be a ceasefire when these forces are withdrawing or no? If there is a ceasefire, would it be with the foreigners or it will also comprise the Afghan government. These are all among the issues which are very complicated and they need to be discussed and this has also prolonged the negotiations," added Muzhdah. "Khalilzad was insisting that the Taliban should announce a cease-

fire, but it is unacceptable for the Taliban, similar demands were made before also, but this time, they insisted a lot on a ceasefire, but the Taliban insists that first there is a need to clarify the issue of foreign forces withdrawal," said Sayed Akbar Agha, a former Taliban member.

The Taliban in a statement on Friday, May 3, rejected the call for a ceasefire which was the main demand of the grand council of almost 3,200 Afghan delegates from around the country. The group said "Jihad" will have more "rewards" during Ramadhan.

After a one-day pause in Qatar talks, the US Special Envoy Zalmay Khalilzad will make his second visit to India on Monday for consultations with the Indian officials on the Afghan peace process. Khalilzad is expected to brief Indian authorities about the progress made in the peace efforts in the past few months, the Times of India reported.

In addition, President Ashraf Ghani in a video message on Ramadhan reiterated his call on the Taliban to respond to the demand of Afghans for peace and reconciliation.

He said Ramadhan is a month of peace and reconciliation.

"I once again call on the Taliban to respect this holy month and address the demand of Afghans for peace and reconciliation which was reflected at the Grand Consultative Jirga for Peace," Ghani said.

US ambassador to Kabul John Bass and NATO Civilian Representative to Afghanistan Nicolas Kay in their messages on the occasion of Ramadhan said this month provides the opportunity to show generosity and make peace.

"It is a time for hope, peace and charity," said Bass.

"I do hope that Afghans will enjoy a peaceful Ramadhan and there will be less violence and less killing that we have seen recently. Afghans are yearning for peace and NATO supports this desire for peace," said Kay. (Tolo news)

**(4) 20% of Kabul...**

Election Commission (IEC) says that IEC will announce the final result of Kabul election within four days once IECC finalized its assessments. More than six months have passed since Afghanistan hold the country's parliamentary elections but the final result of the capital Kabul is still awaiting due to major fraud and mismanagement by the IEC. Lawmakers who represent Kabul province have 33 of the 250 seats in Afghanistan's lower house of parliament. (ATN)

**(5) Afghanistan Gets...**

May 24 with England on May 27. The schedule of World Cup matches of Afghanistan team is as follows:

VS Australia on June 1  
VS Sri Lanka on June 4  
VS New Zealand on June 8  
VS South Africa on June 15  
VS England on June 18  
VS India on June 22  
VS Bangladesh on June 24  
VS Pakistan on June 29  
VS West Indies on July 4

**(6) Taliban Says Killed...**

and Afghanistan share a rugged 2,400-kilometer-long border and regularly accuse each other of not doing enough to curb the flow of militants in the border region. (RFE/RL)

**(7) Satellite Images Show...**

Singapore-based regional security analyst Ian Storey told Reuters that China's Type 002 might put added stress on the relationship between the U.S. and China as other nations in the region become threatened by China's growing military presence. "Once completed, it will outclass any warship from any Asian coun-

try, including India and Japan," said Storey, of the ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute. "It is yet another indication that China has emerged as Asia's paramount naval power." (Fox News)

**(8) Was It Hard-Boiled...**

The Daily Telegraph reported that the protester showed no remorse as she voluntarily headed to a police station. The young woman, whose identity was not revealed, was allegedly protesting the Morrison government's migration policy, in particular the infamous Manus Island migrant detention camp. (RT)

**(9) Guaido Blames Coup...**

discussions...with civil and military officials," he said, insisting "we are very close to achieving change in Venezuela."

Freddy Superlano, who the Post calls the "architect" of Guaido's "Operation Freedom," blamed turncoat Maduro loyalists for the coup's failure, claiming a cell of top Maduro officials - including defense minister Vladimir Padrino Lopez - had secretly hatched a plot with Guaido mentor Leopoldo Lopez to "give Maduro up" in exchange for holding on to their positions in the new regime. "We moved forward out of trust that the top ranks [of the government] would make announcements against Maduro," Superlano complained, though he claims negotiations with the officials "are still happening" despite their unequivocal condemnation of the coup, and that Maduro's government will collapse any minute now.

Guaido's supporters might be next on the blame list. Protesters are reportedly weary of being used as "cannon fodder" and have gone public with their discontent as the opposition leader called for still more street protests on Sunday. Efforts to flood the streets with supporters in order to hand-deliver another call to arms to military barracks also fizzled as "hundreds rather than the anticipated thousands" turned out to do Guaido's bidding.

Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza has pinned responsibility for the failed coup on the CIA as well as his country's opposition, claiming the US agency had a "joint plan" with Guaido's Venezuelan backers, while Maduro placed the blame squarely on Guaido and his inner circle's heads, in a speech the day after the failed coup, telling the crowd that "the Venezuelan coup leaders not only deceived themselves, but also deceived US imperialists, saying that I was going to leave the country."

Maduro affirmed the "total loyalty" of all senior military officers and called on them to be ready to defend Venezuela against an invasion by the US, which was operating "a conspiracy with a lot of money in order to destroy and divide our armed forces from the inside, with the help of a group of traitors." (RT)

**(10) Turkey to Re-Run...**

on pots and pans in protest against the ruling in several Istanbul districts.

The AKP had appealed for an election re-run after initial results and a series of recounts showed it had lost control of Istanbul for the first time in 25 years.

It was a shock loss for Erdogan, who in the 1990s served as the city's mayor and had campaigned hard ahead of the nationwide local vote, his first electoral test since last year's sharp currency crisis tipped the Turkish economy into recession.

The Turkish lira weakened and was at 6.1075 against the dollar at 1730 GMT, on track for its worst day in more than a month.

The currency has tumbled more than 10 percent since a week before the initial election. Suspense over the ruling had left investors worried that weeks of additional campaigning would divert funds and attention from addressing economic reforms.

"This is damaging for Turkey's perception as a democracy and will leave Turkey's economy vulnerable, given risks to macro financial stability in the period to July," said Timothy Ash of Blue Bay Asset Management.

Inflation near 20 percent and unemployment near 15 percent drove many voters to abandon the AKP in the initial vote. Before the second vote, tensions with the United States could escalate over Turkey's planned purchase of a Russian S-400 missile defense system, which could trigger U.S. sanctions. (Reuters)

**(11) China's Top Trade...**

Confirmation of Liu's travel plans lifted Asian stock markets as his presence could raise hopes that a deal is still possible.

The tariffs announcement tanked stock markets worldwide on Monday and worried US farmers and businesses who have been banking on a resolution to the year-long conflict that has engulfed \$360 billion in two-way trade.

US officials had said the world's two largest economies were close to an agreement but Beijing reversed course in recent days.

"Over the course of the last week or so, we've seen an erosion in commitments by China, I would say retreating from commitments that have already been made in our judgement," US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer was quoted as saying in media reports on Monday.

He said the tariffs would increase at 12:01 am (0401 GMT) on Friday. Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin described the negotiations as 90 percent complete but told reporters that in recent days the talks went "substantially backward", according to the media reports. (AFP)

**(12) Climate Change...**

Erasmus, the chairman of the Arctic Athabaskan Council, a Canada-based group of indigenous people, expressed disappointment that a joint declaration had not been reached.

"We have some real concerns," he said. "We recognize that climate change is real. Climate change is man-made, and our elders tell us that we are clearly in trouble."

Official U.S. statements and documents prepared for the meeting did not refer to "climate change" and their scientific focus was limited to reductions in U.S. carbon emissions that predate the administration and research.

In a roughly 20-minute speech outlining the Trump administration's Arctic policy on Monday, Pompeo acknowledged melting ice but didn't use the phrase "climate change." In fact, his address was largely an admonition against increasing Russian and Chinese activity in the Arctic. Nor did he indicate that the administration places any priority on easing the melting that scientists say is already causing oceans to rise. (AP)

**(13) Pope Makes...**

It officially changed its name to North Macedonia in February as part of an agreement to end an almost three-decade long dispute with Greece, which blocked the former Yugoslav republic's path to membership in NATO and the EU over rights to the Macedonia name.

Francis was surrounded by Mother Teresa's sari-clad Sisters of Charity nuns in praying before the memorial, a giant statue of the tiny nun, located outside the remains of the church where Anjeze Gonxhe Bojaxhiu was baptized in 1910. (AP)