

France Approves of Trials in Iraq for French IS Fighters

PARIS – France's foreign affairs ministry says the Iraqi court that sentenced three French citizens to death for being members of the Islamic State group has jurisdiction to rule in the case.

The ministry spokeswoman, Agnès von der Mühl, said on Monday that IS "terrorists must answer for their crimes in court."

The three were the first French IS members to receive death sentences

in Iraq, where they were transferred for trial from neighboring Syria.

Von der Mühl says France's position is that adults detained in Iraq must be tried by the Iraqi justice system, as soon as it declares itself competent.

She added that "France respects the sovereignty of Iraqi authorities" though she expressed her country's opposition to the death penalty, "in principle, at all times and in all places." (Fox News)

(1) Rising Violence...

cases had increased in Kabul as 15 violence cases, including seven murders, against women were recorded within the past two months.

She said these cases included assassinations, forced marriages, kangaroo court verdict, selling women and children and gang rapes.

She said most of the cases took place in northern Sar-i-Pul province. Wardak added only eight individuals accused of raping a midwife in Samangan province and three others accused of a kangaroo court had been arrested so far.

Seena Shna Mansoor, deputy of Attorney General Office (AGO), also confirmed the increase in violence cases against women during the last few months.

About Meena Mangal murder, She said Kabul police had arrested two suspects in connection her assassination. One of the accused hailed from northern Baghlan province and the second from Kabul.

Meena Mangal was Wolesi Jirga culture and religious affairs commission advisor and had previously worked for Shamshad and Ariana private TV channels and presented different programmes.

Police have arrested nine individuals over allegedly gang-raping a midwife in front of her father's eyes at Doab district of northern Samangan province on last Tuesday, she added. (Pajhwok)

(2) Berlin in...

government officials in Kabul and Taliban leaders in Doha.

Reuters quoted Markus Potzel as saying: "The chance for a process towards a more peaceful Afghanistan should not be missed. If the friends of Afghanistan and Germany can help in this effort, then we should do it."

Germany is the second-largest donor and important member of the NATO-led Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan.

In a bid to restart negotiations on ending the 18 years of conflict in the country, Berlin has been in contact with the Taliban and the Afghan government.

"In the end, only the Afghans themselves, including the Taliban, can decide upon the future of their country," the diplomat added.

An unnamed German official told the news agency they believed US-Taliban parleys would gain momentum if the rebel group began meetings with the Afghan representatives.

Meanwhile, Taliban's political office spokesman Sohail Shaheen confirmed the German offer to help achieve a peaceful resolution.

Shaheen verified talks had taken place with Germany on an Afghan-Taliban meeting in Germany. However he explained, no decision had been made yet. (Pajhwok)

(3) Afghan War...

Also an Afghan war veteran, Buttigieg said Trump, while draft-eligible for the Vietnam War, received deferments because a doctor diagnosed him with bone spurs in his feet.

In December last year, daughters of the doctor said it was done as "a fa-

vor" to Trump's father, Fred Trump. Buttigieg also criticized Trump for reportedly considering pardons for several U.S. service members accused of war crimes, calling the idea "slander against veterans that could only come from somebody who never served."

The Democrat remarked he had no issue standing up to somebody who was working on Season 7 of *Celebrity Apprentice* "when I was packing my bags for Afghanistan," (Pajhwok)

(4) Turkey Sees...

100,000 last year.

The surge has been linked to the deteriorating situation in the country, including widespread poverty and growing human smuggling. (Pajhwok)

(5) More Empowerment...

of climate change and the deepening threats to the world's oceans and seas. "The whole world must move if we are to change our current course. Limiting warming to below 1.5°C remains feasible and it is the only viable path. We need a much stronger multilateral system and much stronger regional consensus and agreements to raise ambition and commitment closer to a level where there is a chance for our children and children's children to survive."

"Cambodia's experiences have made clear that peace and stability are indispensable foundations for development, and in turn an inclusive and equitable development are necessary conditions for strengthening peace and social stability," said Cambodian Prime Minister H.E. Samdech Techo Hun Sen, while highlighting the country's national policies on social protection, health equity funding and supporting ageing to ensure no one is left behind.

"Increased investments in social protection and stronger institutional and legal frameworks that promote inclusion and empower women and girls are the closest thing we have to a magic formula for the SDGs. This will require political leadership from within the region as well as multi-stakeholder action at all levels," said President of the UN General Assembly H.E. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés in a video message. She added, "By working together, we can use tools such as taxation, trade and technology to demonstrate that we, governments and multilateral institutions can deliver real benefits in people's lives."

Foreign Minister of Mongolia H.E. Mr. Damdin Tsogtbaatar, who was elected as the Chair of the 75th Session, underscored the important notion of the SDGs – to leave no one behind. "This session gives us opportunity to accelerate the pace of implementation, shape policies and integrate national strategies to reduce the gap between rich and poor and threats from climate change."

The 75th session of the Commission is being held under the theme 'Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality.' A flagship report Closing the Gap launched to coincide with the annual meeting assesses whether disadvantaged

groups such as rural populations, persons with disabilities and women have been effectively included in development. It shows that disadvantaged groups have benefited from economic growth and social progress in several countries. There are positive signs of empowerment in education with secondary completion rates for rural residents now on par with urban dwellers. Encouragingly, women's completion rates have caught up with those of men.

However, the report also finds that there is a growing divide between those who have and have not. Income gaps between the top 60 and the bottom 40 per cent of the income spectrum, as well as between rural and urban households, continue to remain stubbornly high. Persons with disabilities have been the least empowered and remain among the most vulnerable in the region.

At the Commission Session today, ESCAP also signed four Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), International Solar Alliance (ISA), Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU) and Multi-GNSS Asia. Among others, the MoUs aim to increase regional cooperation in the areas of disaster resilience, early warning systems, renewable energy, research and evidence-based policy making. (ESCAP news)

(6) Afghans Deported...

They quickly lifted that ban, however. "The situation in Afghanistan today is much worse than it was a few years ago – mostly because of the security situation in the country," Abdul Ghafoor, who heads the Kabul-based Afghanistan Migrants Advice and Support Organization (AMASO), told DW. "You may have noticed that the number of attacks that have been carried out by Taliban all around Afghanistan, especially in Kabul, is mind-blowing."

Just a week ago, he said, Austria and Sweden even canceled deportation flights at the last minute because of the danger.

Ghafoor said many people who are deported to Afghanistan try to leave the country as quickly as possible. "Just recently, I talked to four or five who were deported from Germany," he said. "They are now in Greece, though in really bad circumstances." (DW)

(7) Dovish Trump Says...

Trump also appeared to give backing to his host Abe to mediate, amid reports the Japanese prime minister is considering a trip to Tehran to negotiate.

"I know for a fact that the prime minister (Abe) is very close with the leadership of Iran... nobody wants to see terrible things happen, especially me," Trump said before the summit. (AFP)

(8) North Korea Dubs...

missiles that experts said could be used to penetrate South Korean and American defenses.

The missiles flew on a flattened, lower-altitude trajectory, leading some officials in South Korea to question

Petition Calling for Impeachment of South Korea's Moon to force a response

SEOUL - A petition calling for South Korean President Moon Jae-in to be impeached had gathered more than 217,000 signatures as of Monday, passing a threshold that will require a government response and underscoring Moon's sagging approval ratings. The author of the online petition has not been identified but says he or she is a citizen who took part in candlelight protests in 2017 that helped lead to the impeachment and ouster of

Moon's predecessor, Park Geun-hye. "I think there's no problem for proposing impeachment of a president who acts against the national psyche," the petitioner wrote on a site for petitions that the presidential office, known as the Blue House, maintains on its web site.

The government has to respond to any petition that gathers more than 200,000 signatures.

The petitioner said Moon has condoned North Korea's nuclear development, human right problems and illegal transshipment of North Korean coal, while "acting nonsense" such as lowering the military guard while North Korea has its nuclear weapons. A spokeswoman for the Blue House did not comment on the specifics of the petition, saying: "My understanding is that the Korean government or relevant official of the Blue House will answer in due course." (Reuters)

whether the weapons should be categorized as "ballistic missiles" and therefore a likely violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions against North Korea.

The White House has played down the tests, with U.S. President Donald Trump saying they were short range and therefore not a breach of trust by leader Kim Jong Un.

But others, including the Japanese government and Bolton have said the tests were clear violations of the U.N. resolutions. (Reuters)

(9) Thai Parties...

late on Monday morning, and would be followed by Bhumjaithai in the afternoon.

It was not clear if any agreement would be announced.

"We are confident, but we need all the commitment from coalition partners," Palang Pracharat's leader, Uttama Savanayana, said on Monday before a meeting with the Democrat Party.

Puttipong Punnakanta, one of Palang Pracharat's board members and a member of parliament, told Reuters on Sunday the party - which gained the second-largest number of seats in the March 24 election - said he was confident of making a deal.

"It's certain that we will be forming a coalition government, with at least 251 seats and more," he said. "We will see Prayuth Chan-ocha as prime minister next month."

The opposition Pheu Thai Party, which was ousted in 2014, won the most seats in the 500-member House of Representatives but its Democratic Front coalition did not gain a majority when final results were announced.

The seven-party Democratic Front has complained that the Election Commission changed a complex formula of seat allocation after the vote, giving seats to 11 small parties at the expense of a projected opposition majority under the old formula. (Reuters)

(10) Anthony Albanese...

government initiatives.

"I will hold his government to account, strongly, forcefully," Albanese said, adding, however, that "people want solutions, not arguments. They have conflict fatigue. Some reforms require bipartisan support."

These, he said, would include finding a bipartisan way to finally give indigenous Australians recognition in the nation's constitution, and providing businesses with certainty on the country's energy policy, a long-term contentious area for reasons such as government support for fossil fuels.

"The time for the ongoing conflict on these issues surely is over," Albanese said.

He pledged to "serve all Australians" as opposition leader, and to reach out to the one-in-four voters who didn't vote for either of the country's two main power bases – center-left Labor, or Morrison's coalition – in the election. (AP)

(11) Greece: Stock...

national polls are June 30 or July 7. The result is a resounding defeat for a party that rose to prominence

in 2015 on promises of repealing austerity imposed during Greece's international bailout, but ended up imposing more. (AP)

(12) Fiat Chrysler...

board is holding a special meeting at its headquarters in the Paris suburb of Boulogne-Billancourt on Monday morning about the merger idea. The company wouldn't comment on the proposal until after the meeting.

The merged company would produce 8.7 million vehicles annually and save 5 billion euros (\$5.6 billion) for the companies each year by sharing research, purchasing and other activities, the statement said. It said the deal would involve no plant closures, but didn't address potential job cuts.

The two are somewhat complementary: Fiat Chrysler is stronger in the U.S. and SUV markets, while Renault is stronger in Europe and on electric vehicle developments.

The Renault-Nissan-Mitsubishi alliance has been troubled since the November arrest of its boss and biggest champion, Carlos Ghosn, on financial misconduct charges in Japan. Together, the three companies are the biggest maker of passenger cars in the world.

The French government, which owns 15% of Renault, is "favorable" to the idea of a merger with Fiat Chrysler but wants to study its conditions more carefully, especially in terms of "Renault's industrial development" and employees' working conditions, government spokeswoman Sibeth Ndiaye said Monday.

Such a merger would show "our capacity to respond to European and French sovereignty challenges in a globalized context," she said. "We need giants to be built in Europe." (AP)

(13) Huawei Ban Could...

Maimonides University in Buenos Aires.

What's more, China's technological progress can help not only the Asian country to prosper but also its development partners around the globe, owing to Chinese investment in infrastructure and other projects, he said.

"Africa has experienced a technological leap," Gualda said. "Today, the continent has seen enormous development in trade and electronic payment thanks to Chinese investment in infrastructure, and Chinese companies."

The expert also noted that in general U.S.-China trade tensions are bound to cause "collateral damage" to the United States and other countries. (Xinhua)

(14) 'Negotiating with...

withdrew from the agreement last year. Iranian officials promised to roll back their decision if the European Union continues to respect the deal.

Washington and Tehran have not had formal diplomatic ties since 1980. Iranian diplomats recently told Reuters that Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif had never directly spoken with his US counterpart, Mike Pompeo. (RT)