VOA NEWS

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VOA news. I'm Christopher Cruise reporting.

President Trump's longtime personal lawyer, now former personal lawyer, Michael Cohen, spent much of Wednesday testifying before the U.S. House Oversight Committee. The public session was televised nationwide on many of the country's television channels.

In his opening statement, Cohen apologized to the committee for his earlier untruthful testimony which he said was edited by Mr. Trump's family attorneys.

He said when he last testified his role was to protect Mr. Trump, but that Wednesday's appearance was dedicated to telling the truth.

AP Washington correspondent Sagar Meghani reports.

Cohen says Donald Trump demanded blind loyalty when some like Cohen stupidly gave it.

"I regret the day I said 'yes' to Mr. Trump," saying Trump insisted they lie on his behalf even if it meant breaking the law without actually issuing the order.

"He speaks in a code, and I understand the code because I've been around him for a decade."

"How many times did Mr. Trump ask you to threaten an individual or entity on his behalf?" Cohen told Congresswoman Jackie Speier quite a few. "Fifty times?" "More." "A hundred times?" "More." "Two hundred times?" "More." "Five hundred times?" "Probably."

Sagar Meghani, Washington.

President Trump and North Korea [leader] dictator Kim Jong Un exchanged handshakes and pleasantries as they kicked off their second summit focused on denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula.

They are meeting in Hanoi.

Tensions escalated between the nuclear-armed rivals, India and Pakistan, Wednesday (amid) claims and counter claims of shooting down each other's fighter planes.

In an address on Wednesday, Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan said Pakistan shot down a plane so that there would be no collateral damage or casualties but to show India that Pakistan will retaliate if attacked.

This is VOA news.

Egyptian media say more than 20 people were killed, more than 40 wounded Wednesday after a passenger train crashed into the platform at Cairo's main rail station.

The impact caused a fuel tank on the platform to explode, setting fire to the train.

Correspondent Edward Yeranian reports for VOA from Cairo.

The accident at the Ramsis railway station set off a massive fireball, incinerating the front cars of the train and causing horrific burns to passengers and bystanders on the platform adjacent to the crash. Surveillance cameras captured the incident, showing bystanders on fire and running to escape the inferno.

One security camera showed a man, his body on fire, running down a set of stairs before collapsing. Rescue workers reported that many of the casualties were in critical condition, suffering severe burns.

The United States and a number of other nations walked out of the United Nations Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, Switzerland, Wednesday as a representative of Venezuela's embattled President Nicholás Maduro got ready to speak.

Robert Wood is the U.S. ambassador to the event. He told reporters the walkout was meant to indicate that the Maduro government has no moral or political legitimacy. He called Maduro's rule "unacceptable" and said the spokesman's presence was a "disgrace to the chamber."

Iran's president has rejected the resignation of the foreign minister who was instrumental in negotiating the Iran nuclear deal with foreign powers.

AP correspondent Karen Chammas reports.

President Hassan Rouhani earlier gave a speech praising Mohammad Javad Zarif and later rejected his resignation at a time in which both men come under pressure from hardliners and the nuclear deal unravels under American insistence.

Zarif's shock resignation was announced on Instagram and no reason was known for his decision. However, it came after he said he was not present for meetings with Syrian Bashar al-Assad.

After responding to a Rouhani's speech again on Instagram, he later was shown on state television at an event with visiting Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, signaling his return to work.

I'm Karen Chammas.

American and Afghan Taliban officials have temporally paused ongoing peace talks in Qatar to consult with their respective leaderships before returning to the table on Saturday.

The top U.S. trade official said Wednesday that a new trade deal with China is not close to being completed.

U.S. Trade Representative Robert [Lightholder] Lighthizer, that is, told a congressional panel "Much still needs to be done before an agreement can be reached." He said, "If we can complete this effort, and again I say if, and if we can reach a resolution on this issue of enforceability, we might have an agreement."

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