VOA NEWS

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This is VOA news. I'm David Byrd.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi promised to build a "strong and inclusive" country as the charismatic but polarizing leader swept back to power in the world's largest democracy with an even bigger mandate than he won five years ago.

His Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party, or BJP, is on course to capture about 300 seats, according to the vote counting so far.

Modi told his supporters his win was a win for all of India.

He said, "So, all of us, BJP workers and our partners in the National Democratic Alliance dedicate this win to the public."

The result puts the BJP well past the halfway mark in parliament and would make it the first political party in 35 years to secure a majority twice in a row. Along with coalition partners, it will have a commanding majority in parliament, which has 543 seats.

Exit polls in the Netherlands indicate that the Labour Party of European Commissioner Frans Timmermans has won a surprise victory in Dutch voting for the European Parliament.

The leading Social Democrat candidate to head the EU Commission, Timmermans propelled his party to an upset, taking more than 18 percent of the vote.

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte's People's Party for Freedom and Democracy took second place with 14 percent, according to an Ipsos exit poll, which has a margin of error of percent.

The Forum for Democracy party of 36-year-old nationalist Thierry Baudet, which had been topping the polls right alongside Rutte, came in third at 11 percent.

The outcome is expected to reassure established parties that feared a surge among far-right and Euro-skeptic challengers.

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House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said Thursday that President Donald Trump wants opposition Democrats to impeach him, but that the case has yet to be made to start a formal impeachment inquiry.

The speaker said believes the president wants impeachment proceedings to start so he can use them for political gains.

"There's no question: the White House is just crying out for impeachment. That's why he flipped yesterday, because he was hoping."

Pelosi's comments came one day after Trump walked out of a White House meeting with her and Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer about infrastructure spending on Wednesday.

Thursday afternoon, Trump said Pelosi's characterization of that meeting was entirely wrong.

"You had the group, Cryin' Chuck, Crazy Nancy. I tell you what, I've been watching her and I have been watching her for a long period of time. She's not the same person. She's lost it."

The president later called himself "an extremely stable genius," which prompted a tweet from Pelosi that said "When the 'extremely stable genius' starts acting more presidential, I'll be happy to work with him on infrastructure trade and other issues."

President Trump rolled out another $16 billion in aid for farmers hurt by his trade policies, particularly the ongoing dispute with China. The money is in addition to another $11 billion that Trump provided for farmers last year.

Speaking at the White House, the president said he expects to make the money back from tariffs on Chinese goods.

"This support for farmers will be paid for by the billions of dollars the Treasury takes in, we'll be taking in depending on what period time we're talking many billions of dollars, far more than the ($)16 billion that we're talking about."

Trump has imposed tariffs on billions of dollars of goods from China and other trading partners in an effort to reduce the U.S. trade deficit. Other countries have retaliated by imposing tariffs on U.S. goods, including agricultural products, such as corn and soybeans that are grown in areas of the country that supported Trump in 2016.

Talks between the U.S. and China broke off earlier this month.

A California man known as the American Taliban is now free after 17 years in jail.

AP's Matt Small reports.

John Walker Lindh was released from the federal prison in Terre Haute, Indiana this morning. The 38-year-old had spent more than 17 years behind bars after pleading guilty to providing support to the Taliban.

The plea deal called for a 20-year sentence, but he is getting out a few years early for good behavior.

His release is opposed by the family of Mike Spann, who had been interrogating him and other Taliban prisoners shortly before an uprising that claimed the CIA officer's life.

I'm Matt Small.

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