VOA NEWS

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This is VOA news. I'm Marissa Melton.

U.S. lawmakers are formally accusing President Donald Trump of misconduct and obstruction based on what they say is a monthlong effort by the president to use powers of his office to solicit foreign interference on his behalf in the 2020 election.

[at] AP's Sagar Meghani has more.

Over 300 pages, the report makes the case that the president pushed foreign government to help him win reelection and obstructed Congress's investigation.

"... the result of a president who believes he is beyond indictment, beyond impeachment, beyond any form of accountability and, indeed, above the law."

While the impeachment process has sharply divided the nation, House Intelligence Chairman Adam Schiff says this should worry all Americans.

"This is about whether the American people have a right to expect, that the president of the United States is gonna act in their interests with their security in mind, and not for some illicit personal or political reason."

Hours earlier in London, the president called the probe a waste of time and dismissed Schiff as a "deranged maniac."

"I think he's a very sick man."

Sagar Meghani, Washington.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed a bill that amends an existing law on media outlets deemed foreign agents. The new law gives the authorities the power to label reporters who work for those organizations as "foreign agents" themselves.

Critics say the law is used to muzzle dissent, limit news plurality, and discourage the free exchange of ideas.

Violators of the new regulations could have their websites blocked.

Russia passed the original "foreign agent" law, which requires all NGOs receiving foreign funding to register in 2012 following the biggest wave of anti-government protests since Putin came to power.

More on this and other stories can be found online at voanews.com. From the news center in Washington D.C., this is VOA news.

North Korea repeated its assertions that the Trump administration is running out of time to salvage nuclear negotiations, saying it's entirely up to the United States to choose what "Christmas gift" it gets from the North.

AP correspondent ??? reports.

The statement came as North Korea continues to dial up pressure on Washington and Seoul ahead of leader Kim Jong Un's end-of-year deadline for the U.S. to offer mutually acceptable terms for a deal.

Negotiations have faltered since a February summit between Kim and President Donald Trump broke down after the U.S. rejected North Korean demands for broad sanctions relief in exchange for a partial surrender of its nuclear capabilities.

Working-level talks held in Sweden in October broke down over what the North Koreans described as the Americans' "old stance and attitude."

I'm ???.

Stocks dipped on Tuesday after President Trump made a comment about trade and China. AP correspondent Tim McGuire.

This remark at the NATO summit sent Wall Street into a sharp drop.

"In some ways, I like the idea of waiting until after the election ..." - President Trump's response to a question about his expectations of a trade deal soon with China.

New tariffs on Chinese goods kick in on the 15th of this month.

He also talked about a 100 percent tariff on French wines and cheese because of a tax on hi-tech companies including Facebook, Google and Amazon.

At one point, the Dow was down by more than 400 points before losing 280. S&P 500 slipped 20 and the NASDAQ off once more than 100 recovered to lose just 47 points on the day.

I'm Tim McGuire.

The U.S. government's launching a program to provide an HIV prevention drug for free. AP's Ed Donahue has more.

Access is being expanded to what's called PrEP, pre-exposure prophylaxis. It's free to people who need the protection from HIV but don't have insurance to pay for it.

Some HIV drugs can cost $2,000 a month. The government says only about 18 percent who might benefit got a prescription last year.

Drug maker Gilead Sciences agreed to donate enough of its HIV prevention medicines for up to 200,000 people a year for 10 years.

The Trump administration aims to reduce HIV infections by 75 percent in five years and by 90 percent in 10 years.

Ed Donahue, Washington.

Iranian state television on Tuesday acknowledged security forces shot and killed what it described as rioters in multiple cities amid recent protests over the spike in government-set gasoline prices.

It was the first time that authorities have offered any sort of accounting for the violence they used to put down the demonstrations.

Amnesty International says the unrest and crackdown that followed began in mid-November killed at least 208 people.

I'm Marissa Melton. You're listening to VOA news.