VOA NEWS

June 3, 2020

This is VOA news. Via remote, I'm Marissa Melton.

Police in major U.S. cities are bracing for an eighth night of protests today even as U.S. President Donald Trump has vowed to end [the] what he calls "(the) riots and lawlessness" across the country. Big city mayors have imposed curfews to keep people off the streets after dark and National Guard troops have been deployed to quell any violence.

The often peaceful day-time demonstrations spawned by the death last week of a black man while in police custody in Minneapolis, Minnesota, degenerated as night descended on Monday into an angry street confrontation between protesters and police in several cities.

On Tuesday morning, President Trump declared on Twitter that Washington - these are his words - "had no problems last night. Many arrests. Great job done by all. Likewise, Minneapolis was great," and in parentheses, he adds, "(thank you President Trump!)."

Former Vice President Joe Biden, Trump's presumptive Democratic opponent in the November national election, attacked the U.S. leader's response to the week of coast-to-coast violence, saying, - these are Biden's words - "The country is crying out for leadership."

He said the nation particularly needs - again his words - "Leadership that can recognize pain and deep grief of communities that have had a knee on their neck for a long time."

At the White House on Monday, Trump vowed that "if a city or state refuses to take the actions necessary to defend the life and property of their residents, I will deploy the United States military and quickly solve the problem [for him] for them."

He said he was "mobilizing all available federal resources, civilian and military, to stop the rioting and looting, to end the destruction and arson, and to protect the rights of law-abiding Americans, including your Second Amendment rights." The Second Amendment protects the rights of Americans to own firearms.

From Washington D.C., you're listening to VOA news.

Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam has said the violent protests across the United States are an example of foreign governments applying a "double standard" when it comes to China's approach to quelling a year of anti-Beijing protests.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced last week that the United States no longer considers Hong Kong autonomous from China's autocratic rule after the mainland's rubber-stamp parliament approved a bill that would prevent and punish acts of what it calls "secession, subversion or terrorism activities" that threaten national security. The bill also would allow Chinese national security organs to set up agencies in Hong Kong.

With 1,300 American businesses operating in the financial hub, Lam warned the United States will be hurting its own interests if the Trump administration suspends Hong Kong's preferential status which has made the city a top U.S. trading partner.

Lam is expected to lead a delegation of senior Hong Kong officials to Beijing Wednesday to present her views on the planned national security laws to Chinese government officials.

The Taliban rejected Tuesday an annual United Nations report that questioned the Islamist insurgency's intent to live up to the terms of a landmark agreement with the United States to help find a political resolution to the nearly 19-year war in Afghanistan.

A harshly worded Taliban statement berated the U.N. findings as "baseless, intelligence-based and bigoted remarks" against the group.

In its statement, the Taliban asserted "the report is constructed with the aim of harming and derailing the agreement ... to keep the fire of war raging in our homeland."

The U.N. Sanctions Monitoring Team in its report released Monday accused the Taliban of not breaking ties with al-Qaeda as part of counterterrorism assurances in the agreement.

The U.N. assessment based on interviews with intelligence and security agencies of member states as well as independent research groups also cast doubts on the Taliban's pledges it would engage in intra-Afghan negotiations to reach a permanent cease-fire in the conflict-torn country.

Bangladesh has confirmed the first coronavirus death among the nearly one million Rohingyas living in the country's overcrowded refugee camps.

A Bangladesh health official told reporters the victim was a 71-year-old man who died Saturday at an isolation center on Cox's Bazar. The man was among 29 Rohingya refugees who've tested positive for COVID-19 in recent weeks.

More than 700,000 Rohingyas living in the Cox's Bazar camps crossed over from neighboring Myanmar to escape a brutal, scorched-earth military campaign against them in 2017.

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