



People celebrate during a carnival parade in Cologne, Germany on March 4.

## Summit

## Trump blames Cohen hearing

## S. Korea calls for 'three-way' talks

SEOUL, South Korea, March 4, (Agencies): South Korea has proposed semiofficial three-way talks with the United States and North Korea as it struggles to put nuclear diplomacy back on track after the collapse of a summit between President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

The proposal for the talks came during a National Security Council meeting on Monday led by South Korean President Moon Jae-in, who said it was Seoul's "outmost priority" to prevent nuclear negotiations between the US and North Korea from derailing.

At the meeting in Seoul's presidential palace, Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha said the proposed talks, which could include civilian experts from the US and South Korea, would help settle differences over how much sanctions relief Washington should provide North Korea in exchange for nuclear disarmament steps.

Last week's meeting between Trump and Kim in Vietnam broke down over what the Americans said were North Korea's excessive demands for sanctions relief in exchange for a limited offer to shut down its aging main nuclear complex in Yongbyon. North Korea reportedly has other sites producing weapons-grade uranium hidden around the country.

Kang said the core issue is determining what disarmament steps North Korea could be persuaded to take in exchange for sanctions relief.



Moon

and about Moon's role as mediator.

"We hope that both countries will continue their dialogue and that their leaders meet again quickly to reach an agreement that was held off this time," Moon said at Monday's meeting, which was also attended by the prime minister, spy chief and ministers of defense and inter-Korean affairs.

"In the process, our role has become important once again," Moon said. "While I believe the United States-North Korea negotiations will eventually reach an agreement, it's never desirable for a vacuum in dialogue or stalemate to be prolonged," he said, urging South Korean officials to find ways for the US and North Korea to narrow their differences.

Moon said South Korea will continue to push ahead with engagement with North Korea within the boundaries of US-led international sanctions against the North.

Moon has prioritized stabilizing bilateral relations with North Korea amid the larger nuclear negotiations between the US and North Korea, saying inter-Korean reconciliation will drive progress in nuclear talks. But his call for partial sanctions relief to encourage nuclear disarmament steps by North Korea has caused disagreements with Washington, which does not want to give up what it sees as its main leverage with the North.

## Also:

**SEOUL:** US President Donald Trump said on Monday that the Democrats' decision to interview his longtime fixer, lawyer Michael Cohen, on the same day as a meeting with Kim Jong Un may have contributed to the North Korea summit ending with no deal.

Trump and Kim met for the second time last week in Hanoi to try to negotiate a denuclearisation deal as former Trump aide Cohen was testifying before the US House of Representatives' Oversight Committee, accusing Trump of ordering his personal attorney to make threats for him about 500 times over the last 10 years.

"For the Democrats to interview in open hearings a convicted liar & fraudster, at the same time as the very important Nuclear Summit with North Korea, is perhaps a new low in American politics and may have contributed to the 'walk,'" Trump said on Twitter, referring to his decision to walk away from what he previously said was a bad deal with Kim.



A passenger looks out from a train on her way to India, after being stranded in Pakistan for a week, at Lahore Railway Station in Pakistan on March 4. A Pakistani railways official says a key train service between Pakistan and neighbouring India has been resumed, a sign on easing tensions between the two South Asian nuclear-armed rivals. (AP)



May



Corbyn

## Britain

**May woos opp'n lawmakers:** British opposition politicians are accusing Prime Minister Theresa May of trying to bribe them into voting for her Brexit deal.

The government on Monday announced a 1.6 billion-pound (\$2.1 billion) package of funding over several years to help regenerate run-down communities.

Many are in areas of England represented by the opposition Labour Party, and the move is being seen as a bid to win support from their lawmakers for May's withdrawal agreement with the European Union.

Britain is due to leave the EU on March 29, but Parliament has so far rejected May's deal, raising the prospect of a chaotic, economically damaging departure from the bloc.

Labour lawmakers reacted coolly to the announcement. Chris Bryant called the money "corrupt, patronizing, pathetic" and "all to appease the Brexit monster." (AP)

## Man charged with egg assault:

British police have charged a man after opposition leader Jeremy Corbyn was hit by an egg.

Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn was assaulted while visiting a mosque in his London constituency on Sunday. A man was arrested at the scene after allegedly smacking the egg onto the left-wing politician's head while shouting "When you vote you get what you vote for."

The Metropolitan Police force said Monday that 31-year-old John Murphy was charged with assault by beating. He is due to appear in court Tuesday.

Britain's divisive decision to leave the European Union has raised the temperature in politics, with lawmakers complaining of an increasing level of abuse and threats.

In 2016, Labour lawmaker Jo Cox was stabbed and shot to death by an attacker shouting far-right slogans. (AP)

**UK launches global fund:** Britain launched a global "period poverty" fund and taskforce on Monday to help all women and girls access sanitary products by 2050 and to tackle the stigma around menstruation.

It is estimated that half of all women and girls in poor countries are forced to use rags, cloths, grass and paper during their periods since many can't afford to buy sanitary products, the UK government said.

A survey by the children's charity Plan International found that 10 percent of girls in Britain alone have been unable to afford sanitary products.

The government pledged to give 2 million pounds (\$2.64 million) to organizations working to end period poverty globally, and has also earmarked 250,000 pounds to create a taskforce of govern-

## Analysis

## Leaders failed to address 'threats'

## India, Pak triggers remain

ISLAMABAD, March 4, (AP): Nuclear-armed neighbors India and Pakistan have pulled back from the brink of an all-out military confrontation over the contested Kashmir region.

But Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Pakistani counterpart Imran Khan failed to address the underlying threats to stability, raising the likelihood of renewed escalation.

Modi, who seeks re-election this spring, played to his Hindu nationalist base with India's tough response to a suicide attack in the Indian-controlled part of Kashmir that killed dozens of Indian troops.

India bombed inside Pakistan, saying it targeted training camps of Jaish-e-Mohammed, a militant group that claimed responsibility for the attack. The strikes drove up Modi's popularity, reinforcing the message that an uncompromising stance toward Muslim-majority Pakistan pays off politically.

Khan sought to de-escalate, promising talks and an investigation. The premier has made peace talks with India a recurring theme, as he focuses on his country's struggling economy. Yet Pakistan's deadly militant groups — many spawned by the Pakistani military as proxies against India — are becoming increasingly difficult to control.

Their continued presence is bound to trigger renewed tensions, said Moeed Yusuf of the Washington-based United States Institute of Peace. "The bottom line is that Pakistan's international image and standing cannot be fixed (as long as) these groups remain alive on Pakistani soil," he said.

Already Pakistan and India have fought two wars over Kashmir, a former princely state tucked away in the Himalayan region that is divided between the two rivals but claimed in its entirety by both.

A Feb. 14 suicide attack killed more than 40 Indian soldiers in Indian-controlled Kashmir. Jaish-e-Mohammed claimed responsibility. Last Tuesday, Indian aircraft

bombed in Pakistan saying they targeted the group's training camps and claimed the strikes killed many militants. Pakistan and journalists at the site said the bombs hit empty fields.

Pakistan retaliated the next day, downing two Indian aircraft and capturing an Indian pilot.

Khan went on national TV, offering Modi peace talks and promising an investigation of the suicide attack. Later that day, India handed over a dossier it said laid out evidence of Jaish-e-Mohammed's involvement in the bombing.

On Friday, Pakistan handed the captured pilot to India, signaling de-escalation and raising hopes that war had been averted.

India has violently suppressed widespread dissent inside its portion of Kashmir, which is the only Muslim majority state in mostly Hindu India. International human rights groups have accused Indian security forces of widespread abuses, arrests and torture.

The 30-year insurgency against New Delhi's rule has left more than 70,000 people dead. Insurgents demand either outright independence for a united Kashmir or union with Muslim Pakistan.

Crackdowns by Indian security forces have spawned a new generation of homegrown militants. The bomber in the Feb. 14 attack was a local man, illustrating the depth of anger inside India's portion of the territory.

Modi has fired up Hindu nationalism as part of his election campaign, in part by using anti-Pakistan rhetoric.

In this heated climate, there have been reports of growing threats toward minority Muslims. Kashmiri Indians elsewhere in the country became targets of angry mobs after the suicide attack.

Khan, who has the backing of Pakistan's powerful military, tried to play peacemaker. He said he tried to call Modi three times since Wednesday, but that the Indian leader was not picking up.

ment departments, charities and private enterprises to tackle the issue.

"Empowerment starts when you are young. Girls should be able to focus on their education and their future without being worried about or embarrassed by their



In this file photo dated September 1945, Pope Pius XII, wearing the ring of St. Peter, raises his right hand in a papal blessing at the Vatican. Pope Francis said on March 4, 2019 he has decided to open up to researchers the Vatican archives on World War II-era Pope Pius XII, who has been accused by Jews of staying silent on the Holocaust. (AP)

## Europe

## Macron warns against nationalism:

French President Emmanuel Macron, warning against the dangers of resurgent nationalism, said on Sunday that France and Italy needed to overcome their recent diplomatic clash and work together again for the good of Europe.

Ties between the traditionally close allies have grown increasingly tense since mid-2018, with Italy's Deputy Prime Ministers Luigi Di Maio and Matteo Salvini firing verbal pot-shots at Macron and his government, mostly over migration.

France briefly recalled its ambassador to Rome last month in protest, but Macron told state Italian television RAI that the two nations had shared interests that needed to be nurtured.

"There was a misunderstanding. The most recent upset is not serious as far as I am concerned and we must get over it," Macron said in an interview with RAI.



Macron

While Macron has promoted an avowedly pro-EU programme, Di Maio and Salvini have regularly denounced the European Union, saying it has grown distant from ordinary citizens and sucked away too much power from national governments.

Far-right parties like Salvini's League have grown in strength across the continent and are expected to chalk up major gains in European parliamentary elections at the end of May.

Macron said EU member states needed to shun nationalism and instead had to work together to resolve myriad problems, such as mass immigration from Africa and economic slowdowns. (RTRS)

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## Italy's PD picks new leader:

Nicola Zingaretti, the governor of the central Lazio region, was elected as head of Italy's centre-left Democratic Party (PD) on Sunday, one year after the group lost power in a humbling national elections defeat.

More than 1.6 million PD supporters cast ballots at makeshift voting booths around the country, the party said, a much higher turnout than expected indicating a renewal of interest in the group following its 2018 rout.

Zingaretti, whose brother Luca plays the lead role in the Italian TV police drama Inspector Montalbano, won more than 60 percent the vote, according to early returns. His two rivals, Maurizio Martina and Roberto Giachetti, swiftly conceded.

He is viewed as a moderate and will be tasked with restoring unity to a party that was torn apart by schisms under its previous leader - former prime minister Matteo Renzi, whose confrontational style made him a highly divisive figure.

Accused of not doing enough to tackle poverty, high unemployment and mass immigration, the PD was trounced last year by populist forces, sparking months of internal feuding and soul-searching ahead of Sunday's primary vote. (RTRS)

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## US puts end to dispute:

The United States has put an end to a dispute with the European Union over diplomatic protocol and lauded the 28-nation bloc as "one of America's most valuable partners."

US Ambassador Gordon Sondland announced Monday that "effective immediately" a recent diplomatic demotion of the EU ambassador in the largely ceremonial diplomatic Order of Precedence would be ended.

The perceived snub caused friction in early January and was seen as underscoring deteriorating trans-Atlantic relations. Sondland said in a statement that "the European Union is a uniquely important organization, and one of America's most valuable partners in ensuring global security and prosperity."

Both sides, however, continue to disagree over issues, from the threat of economic sanctions to isolating Iran. (AP)

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## 'Strip terror fighters of citizenship':

The German government plans to introduce legislation enabling authorities to strip Germans with dual nationality of their German citizenship if they fight for a terror group.

Interior Ministry spokeswoman Eleonore Petermann said Monday that the new rule will be applicable to over-18s and "for reasons of constitutional law" can only apply to future cases and can't be used for retrospective cases.

Officials said the legislation will be drawn up soon but didn't offer a precise timetable.

German law already allows for dual nationals to be stripped of their German nationality if they volunteer for their other country's armed forces without the consent of German authorities.

The move comes as Germany and other European countries consider what to do about those citizens who fought for the Islamic State group. (AP)

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## Estonia faces complex talks:

Estonia faces complex coalition talks Monday after a nationalist and anti-immigration party more than doubled its support to finish third in the general election — a result being closely watched across Europe as a sign of surging popularity for far-right populists.

The center-right Reform Party, which is the main opposition in the Baltic country's outgoing parliament, won the most votes in Sunday's election but nowhere near a majority. It has ruled out any deal with the far-right Estonian Conservative People's Party, known as EKRE, which more than doubled its seat tally compared to the 2015 election.

With European Parliament elections due in May, many political observers on the continent had looked at the Estonia vote as a barometer as to whether the far right would continue to make gains.

Martin Helme, who heads the EKRE along with his father, said he sees the party's gains as part of a trend in Europe and other parts of the world. (AP)

## PM office gets wrong city:

British Prime Minister Theresa May's office posted a picture of the wrong English city when it sought to mark the anniversary of the poisoning of a former Russian double agent that London has blamed on the Kremlin.

Over a picture of green trees, a river and Bath's spire, Theresa May's twitter feed said: "Salisbury has fought back so well from such a devastating and reckless incident — a testament to the resolve, forbearance and positivity of the community."

Former Russian spy Sergei Skripal, and his daughter Yulia, were found slumped on a public bench in the English city of Salisbury on March 4 last year, and Britain has charged two Russians in absentia with their attempted murder.

Russia has denied involvement in the poisoning, which sparked the biggest diplomatic expulsions since the height of the Cold War.

The two Russians accused by London of carrying out the poisoning for Russian military intelligence later told a television station that they had visited the city of Salisbury to see its famous cathedral spire. (RTRS)