

Mueller on Trump

Special Counsel Robert Mueller produced a 448-page report that painted an unflattering picture of President Donald Trump but stopped short of accusing him of criminal wrongdoing

KEY DATES IN THE PROBE

July 22, 2016: WikiLeaks publishes emails stolen from Hillary Clinton's campaign. Russian hackers are suspected to be involved. The FBI launches an inquiry

Feb. 13, 2017: Trump's National Security Adviser Michael Flynn resigns after revelations of his contacts with Russian Ambassador

May 9: Trump sacks FBI chief James Comey, in picture. Robert Mueller is appointed to lead the Russia probe

Oct. 30: Trump's former campaign manager Paul Manafort is indicted for money laundering, tax evasion and other charges

April 9, 2018: The FBI raids the office of Trump's lawyer Michael Cohen

July 13: Mueller indicts 12 Russian agents for hacking into the Democratic Party's computers

March 22, 2019: Mueller delivers his report to Attorney General William Barr

April 18, 2019: The Mueller report, minus certain sensitive portions, is made public



DONALD TRUMP ROBERT MUELLER

KEY REVELATIONS

a) Trump was shocked to learn of the inquiry

Trump reacted with dismay when told by Attorney General Jeff Sessions on May 17, 2017 that a Special Counsel had been appointed

b) Mueller examined 10 actions by the President with regard to obstruction of justice

c) Trump tried to sabotage the probe but his staff defied him

Trump's staff members repeatedly resisted his attempts to stall the inquiry. For instance, in June 2017, the President instructed Donald McGahn, the White House counsel, to remove Mueller, but McGahn declined and decided he would rather resign

d) No indictment, but no exoneration either

Mueller did not find a criminal conspiracy between the Trump campaign and the Russian government. He did not recommend charging any Trump associates. But he did not exonerate Trump either

e) Contacts, but no conspiracy

The report said there were numerous contacts between members of Trump's circle and Russia and that the campaign "expected it would benefit electorally from information stolen and released through Russian efforts"

But it said the efforts did not amount to criminal conspiracy

f) Russian interference proved

The Russian government interfered in the 2016 presidential election in sweeping and systematic fashion in two ways:

A Russian entity carried out a social media campaign that favoured Trump

A Russian intelligence service conducted computer-intrusion operations against entities working on the Clinton campaign

g) Possible Congressional investigation

While declining to prosecute Trump for obstruction, the Special Counsel said such a determination could be left to the U.S. Congress



SOURCE: AFP, NYT

Bangladesh girl killed on teacher's order

She had accused him of sexual abuse

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
DHAKA

A schoolgirl was burned to death in Bangladesh on the orders of her head teacher after she reported him for sexually harassing her, police said on Friday.

The death of Nusrat Jahan Rafi, 19, last week sparked protests across the nation, with the Prime Minister promising to prosecute all those involved.

Ms. Rafi was lured to the rooftop of the Islamic seminary she attended where her attackers asked her to withdraw the sexual harassment complaint she had filed with police. When she refused, she was doused in kerosene and set on fire.



A protest in Dhaka on Friday against the murder of Nusrat Jahan Rafi. AFP

he said. Ms. Rafi suffered burns to 80% of her body and died in hospital on April 10. But she recorded a video before her death, repeating her allegations against the principal. "The teacher touched me, I will fight this crime till my last breath," she said. She also identified some of her attackers.

Ms. Rafi's brother Mahmudul Hasan Noman said people close to the principal had also put pressure on the family to withdraw the case against him.

The case has caused outrage in Bangladesh, with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina vowing that "none of the culprits will be spared legal action." Rights groups say the number of rape and sexual assault cases has increased in Bangladesh because authorities have failed to prosecute attackers.

The local Manusher Jonno Foundation, a non-governmental group, says at least 39 children under the age of 18 have been raped in the country since April 2.

Another eight have been subjected to attempted or sexual harassment, the groups say.

Democrats issue legal demand to see full report

The redacted version of the Mueller report 'leaves most of Congress in the dark', says House Judiciary Committee chair

REUTERS
WASHINGTON

Congressional Democrats on Friday took a legal step to see all of U.S. Special Counsel Robert Mueller's evidence from his inquiry into Russian interference in the 2016 election, as they consider how to use the probe's findings against President Donald Trump.

U.S. House of Representatives Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler, a Democrat, issued a subpoena to the Justice Department to hand over the full report by Mr. Mueller, saying he cannot accept a redacted version released on Thursday that "leaves most of Congress in the dark."

"My committee needs and is entitled to the full version of the report and the underlying evidence consistent with past practice. The redactions appear to be significant. We have so far seen none of the actual evidence that the Special Counsel de-

veloped to make this case," Mr. Nadler said in a statement.

The report provided extensive details on Mr. Trump's efforts to thwart Mr. Mueller's investigation, giving Democrats plenty of political ammunition against the President but no consensus on how to use it.

Clear picture

The 448-page report painted a clear picture of how Mr. Trump had tried to hinder the probe but did not conclude that he had committed the crime of obstruction of justice, although it did not exonerate him.

The report blacked out details about secret grand jury information, U.S. intelligence gathering and active criminal cases as well as potentially damaging information about peripheral players who were not charged. Half a dozen former Trump aides were charged by Mr. Mueller's office or



Jerrold Nadler, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee. NYT

convicted of crimes during the 22-month-long investigation.

The Democrats' subpoena gives U.S. Attorney General William Barr until May 1 to produce the materials requested.

Democratic leaders played down talk of impeachment just 18 months before the 2020 presidential election, even as some prominent members of the par-

ty's progressive wing, most notably Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, promised to push the idea.

Former FBI Director Mueller also concluded that there was not enough evidence to establish that Mr. Trump's campaign engaged in a criminal conspiracy with Moscow to sway the 2016 election.

Impeachment caution

House Democratic leader Steny Hoyer on Thursday advised against an immediate attempt to impeach Mr. Trump. "Based on what we have seen to date, going forward on impeachment is not worthwhile at this point. Very frankly, there is an election in 18 months and the American people will make a judgment," Mr. Hoyer told CNN.

Mr. Nadler told reporters on Thursday that Mr. Mueller probably wrote the report with the intent of providing Congress a road map for fu-

ture action, but the Congressman said it was too early to talk about impeachment.

Mr. Trump, who has repeatedly called the investigation a political witch hunt, lashed out again on Friday. "Statements are made about me by certain people in the Crazy Mueller Report... which are fabricated & totally untrue," Mr. Trump tweeted. He seemed to be referring to former White House counsel Don McGahn, who was cited in the report as having annoyed Mr. Trump by taking notes of his conversations with the President. "Watch out for people that take so-called notes, when the notes never existed until needed."

Mr. Trump wrote: "It was not necessary for me to respond to statements made in the Report about me, some of which are total bullshit & only given to make the other person look good (or me to look bad)."

No proof of meddling, says Kremlin

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MOSCOW

Russia on Friday once more dismissed the Mueller report, saying it failed to present clear evidence of any meddling by Moscow in the 2016 U.S. election and called its impact on relations regrettable.

"As a whole the report as before does not present any reasonable proof at all that Russia allegedly meddled in the electoral process in the U.S.," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told journalists.

"We regret that documents of such quality have a direct influence on the development of U.S.-Russian bilateral relations which are not in the best shape as it is," he said.

ELSEWHERE



Pak. Taliban militants held over Pearl murder

Two Pakistan Taliban militants, Azeem Jan and Muhammad Anwar, have been arrested for their involvement in the kidnapping and killing of American journalist Daniel Pearl, in picture, and several other terror-related activities in the country, officials said on Friday. Jan was also involved in the terrorist attack on French Embassy staff in Karachi. AFP

13 killed as church wall in South Africa collapses

Thirteen people were killed in a southeastern province of South Africa during an Easter service after a church wall collapsed on them late on Thursday following days of heavy rain and strong winds, emergency services said on Friday. At least 29 people with injuries were taken to hospital for treatment, KwaZulu-Natal emergency medical services spokesperson Robert McKenzie said. REUTERS

Indian extradited to U.S. over call centre fraud

Singapore has extradited Indian national Hitesh Madhubhai Patel to the U.S. to face charges in a call centre fraud that scammed millions of dollars from mostly South Asian victims in the U.S., the Justice Department said on Friday. The case was first announced in 2016, charging 60 people with wire fraud and money laundering conspiracy. AFP

Malaysia revives project backed by China

Malaysia will revive a \$34 billion Chinese-backed transport and property development that was abandoned in 2017, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's office said on Friday, adding the project would contribute to Beijing's global infrastructure drive. AFP

Bilateral ties not linked to India's stance on BRI: China

'We see progress after Wuhan meet'

ATUL ANEJA
BEIJING

China on Friday said its ties with India had a "bright future" and they were preparing for a summit between their leaders as a follow-up to last year's two-day across-the-board Wuhan informal summit between President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

At a press conference on a three-day Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation that begins on May 25, Foreign Minister and State Councilor Wang Yi was emphatic that ties between India and China were insulated from their differences on the Beijing-led Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

37 leaders to attend

Thirty-seven heads of state or heads of government, including leaders from

Russia, Italy, Hungary, Austria, Switzerland, Malaysia and Singapore, as well as high-level representatives from France, Germany, U.K., Spain, the European Union and Republic of Korea, will attend the mega event.

Mr. Wang said, "The two leaders [President Xi and Prime Minister Modi] had a very successful meeting in Wuhan. Particularly, they established mutual trust and they jointly planned for the future of improvement and the strengthening of the China-India relationship. After the Wuhan summit, we see progress in all areas of cooperation."

Mr. Wang pointed out that India and China were currently limiting the threshold of their differences so that overall development of ties remained unhampered.

Meet between Afghan govt., Taliban postponed

Militants object to long list of officials

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
DOHA

Hopes for a breakthrough in a push to end Afghanistan's gruelling conflict suffered a major setback on Friday after a key summit between the Taliban and Afghan officials was indefinitely postponed.

The so-called intra-Afghan dialogue, due to take place in Doha this weekend, fell apart at the last minute in a row over the large number of delegates Kabul wanted to send.

Washington, which is leading an effort to end the war, signalled its disappointment and urged both sides to return to the table. Sultan Barakat, who heads the group that was to host the event, said in a statement the postponement was "necessary to build further consensus as to who should participate". President Ashraf

Ghani's administration had on Tuesday announced a list of 250 people from all walks of Afghan life, including government figures, who it wanted to send to Doha.

But the Taliban poured scorn on the lengthy list, saying the conference is "not an invitation to some wedding or other party at a hotel in Kabul".

Kabul blamed the Qatari government for the summit's derailment. In a statement, the presidential palace said Qatar had rejected the long list of delegates and suggested a shorter one which was "not acceptable".

The Taliban complained on Friday that it was "not fair" Mr. Ghani had wanted to send such a large delegation, and that "negotiations with the powerless Kabul administration is a waste of time".

Journalist killed during N. Ireland riots

Lyra McKee's death is being treated as a terrorist incident, say U.K. police



Journalist and author Lyra McKee, who was killed reportedly by a dissident republican. AFP

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
DERRY

A journalist was shot dead during riots in Northern Ireland in what police on Friday were treating as a terrorist incident following the latest upsurge in violence to shake the troubled region.

"Lyra McKee was murdered during orchestrated violence in Creggan last night," Assistant Chief Constable Mark Hamilton said in a statement.

'Absolute madness'

Ms. McKee, 29, had earlier posted an image that appeared to be from the riots in the Creggan housing estate in the city of Londonderry, also known as Derry, accompanied by the words "Derry tonight. Absolute madness."

Images of the unrest

posted on social media showed a car and van ablaze and hooded individuals throwing petrol bombs and fireworks at police vehicles. "A single gunman fired shots in a residential area of the city and as a result wounded Ms. McKee," said Mr. Ha-

milton, adding that police believed the gunman was a "violent dissident republican". "We are treating this as a terrorist incident and we have launched a murder enquiry," he added.

Ms. McKee had written for *The Atlantic* magazine and BuzzFeed News and

was named by *Forbes* magazine in 2016 as one of their "30 under 30" outstanding figures in media, according to her literary agent Janklow & Nesbit.

Thursday's unrest raised memories of past decades of violence in Northern Ireland. Ireland's Prime Minister Leo Varadkar warned that "we cannot allow those who want to propagate violence, fear and hate to drag us back to the past".

His British counterpart Theresa May said the killing was "shocking and truly senseless".

The violence came in the run-up to the Easter weekend, when Republicans opposed to the British presence in Northern Ireland mark the anniversary of a 1916 uprising against British rule.