Pakistan candidate gets life term in drug case days before poll

AFP | Islamabad

A candidate for the party of Pakistan's ousted former prime minister Nawaz Sharif has been jailed for life by an anti-narcotics court, just days before a general election.

Hanif Abbasi, seen as a strong candidate for the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) in Wednesday's poll, was sentenced in a rare late-night session Saturday.

Japan heatwave kills over a dozen, **12.000** rushed to hospital

AFP | Tokyo

Japan's severe heatwave killed at least 15 people and sent more than 12,000 to hospital in the first two weeks of July, official figures show as the temperature neared 40 degrees C (104 F) in many cities on Sunday.

Twelve people died of heatstroke in the week ending July 15 after three perished in the preceding week, according to latest data.

More than 9,900 people were rushed to hospital during the week to mid-July, jumping from 2,700 in the previous week, the Fire and Disaster Management Agency said.

Death toll in **Vietnam flooding** rises to 19

AFP | Hanoi

 ${
m F}$ lash floods in Vietnam have now claimed at least 19 lives, the government said Sunday, as residents in affected areas sought safety in higher ground.

Boasting a long coastline, tropical Vietnam is battered by floods and storms every year, with hundreds of lives lost from the annual monsoon barrage.

25 injured in Iran earthquakes

AFP | Tehran

series of moderate A series of mouthern and western Iran injured an estimated 25 people, state television said.

Two quakes struck a remote region near the town of Lar in the southern Hormozgan province shortly after 0500 GMT, according to the US Geological Survey.

Kabul airport attack leaves 14 dead

VP Abdul Rashid Dostum was unharmed after blast hits an area near the airport shortly after his arrival

AFP | Kabul

suicide bomber killed at Aleast 14 people and wounded 60 at the entrance to Kabul international airport on Sunday, officials said, as scores gathered to welcome home Afghan Vice President Abdul Rashid Dostum from exile.

Senior government officials, political leaders and supporters were leaving the airport after greeting the powerful ethnic Uzbek leader and former warlord when the explosion happened.

"This is the first time I have seen a suicide attack," one witness told AFP.

"People were collecting husaid, shaking as he spoke. "What is going on in Afghanistan?"

in an armoured vehicle, was were among the casualties. unharmed, said his spokesman Bashir Ahmad Tayanj.

60 wounded, adding that nine lived since May 2017. members of the security forces the dead.

foot, interior ministry spokes- ern Afghanistan, his traditional man Najib Danish said, adding power base.



man flesh with their hands," he Afghan security forces help an injured colleague after a suicide attack in Kabul

Dostum, clad in a Western suit that civilians, including a child, and sunglasses and travelling and security force members

Dostum, who is linked to a catalogue of human rights abuses in Kabul Police spokesman Afghanistan, was mobbed like a Hashmat Stanikzai said 14 celebrity as he left the chartered people had been killed and plane from Turkey, where he has

comes amid violent protests in The suicide bomber was on several provinces across north-

Thousands of Dostum's supporters have taken to the streets ment. We will continue our are not going to stop our protests in recent weeks, shuttering election and government offices and blocking sections of highways to demand the release of a pro-government militia leader and call for Dostum's return.

Expectations of the return did and traffic police were among the subject of much speculation, protesters vowing Sunday to continue demonstrating until the burly leader of the Uzbek ethnic minority tells them otherwise.

"We don't trust the govern- the streets for 20 days now. We protests unless General Dos- unless our demands are met." tum tells us to stop," Ehsanullah Qowanch, a protest leader in Ashraf Ghani, an ethnic Pashtun, Faryab province, told AFP.

for the release of Nezamuddin north and secure Uzbek support Qaisari -- a district police chief before next year's presidential His return, which has been little to quell the unrest, with and Dostum's provincial repelection, which he is widely exresentative in Faryab -- whose pected to contest. arrest earlier this month ignited the protests.

Khan, said: "We have been on ture of a political rival.

A survivor of Afghan-

istan's 30 years of

war and known for

making and breaking

alliances, Dostum is

the self-styled leader

of the Uzbek minori-

ty in a country where

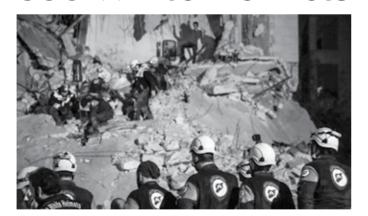
ethnic loyalty has

become a key force

Observers say President gave the green light for Dostum Qowanch also repeated calls to come home to stabilise the

Dostum left Afghanistan in May 2017 after he was accused Another protester, Massoud of organising the rape and tor-

Israel evacuates 800 White Helmets



White Helmet volunteers have rescued thousands of civilians caught up in fighting in the Syrian conflict

AFP | Amman

an regime forces to Jordan for med al-Kaved said. resettlement in Britain, Canada and Germany, Amman said

responders which rescues risk to their lives'." the wounded in the after-

Jordan "authorised the United Nations to organise the Tsrael has evacuated 800 passage of 800 Syrian citizens .White Helmets rescuers through Jordan to be resettled and their family members in western countries," foreign threatened by advancing Syri- ministry spokesman Moham-

"The government gave the permission after Britain, Germany and Canada made a le-Founded in 2013, the Syr- gally binding undertaking to ia Civil Defence, or White resettle them within a spec-Helmets, is a network of first ified period of time due to 'a

An Israeli government math of air strikes, shelling source confirmed Israel's milor explosions in rebel-held itary had rescued 800 people who were taken to Jordan.

Thai boys rescued from cave to be ordained in Buddhist ceremony

AFP | Mae Sai, Thailand

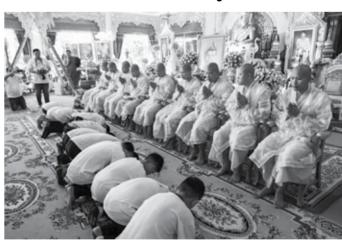
Most members of the Thai youth football team rescued from a flooded cave will have their heads shaved, don robes and be ordained in a Buddhist ceremony this week, officials said yesterday.

The "Wild Boars" are enjoying their first few days home after being discharged from hospital and speaking to the media about their harrowing ordeal inside the Tham Luang cave near the Myanmar border.

The 12 boys, aged 11 to 16, and their coach went into the cave complex on June 23 after practice and were trapped by floods

from monsoon rains. They survived on water dripping from rocks for nine days before being found emaciated on a muddy ledge by rescue divers, who helped extract the team a week later in a risky mis-

prising recovery after a week in hospital, and on their first day out they prayed for good fortune in a traditional ceremorescue efforts



Some of the 12 Thai boys who were dramatically rescued from deep inside a cave after being trapped for more than a fortnight, bow before novice Buddhist monks during a religious ceremony at a temple in Chiang Rai

Now they will go a step fur- already been in the monkhood ther and spend time living in a and was said to have helped monastery before returning to keep the boys calm inside the normal life, a common practice cave. in Buddhist-majority countries like Thailand.

days," Prachon Pratsakul, the their heads shaved on July 24 All made a speedy and sur- Chaing Rai governor, told re- and attend a robe ceremony the porters in a briefing at the Mae next day. Sai district office.

ordained as novices and one August 4. ny and mourned a former Thai ordained as a monk which is navy SEAL who died during the Coach Ek," he said, referring to Sam-on, will not join them as he Ekkapol Chantawong, who has is Christian, the governor said.

Praphun Khomioi, Chiang Rai's Buddhist office chief, said "They will ordain for nine that the "Wild Boars" will have

They will then stay in differ-"There will be about 11 boys ent monasteries until leaving

One of the children, Adul