

## WORLD

## Honduran forces fire on students, 5 hurt: officials



Five students of the National Autonomous University of Honduras received bullet wounds during a demonstration against the country's president

### Tegucigalpa

Honduran military police opened fire on protesting students at a university on Monday, wounding at least five, campus and hospital officials said.

Hundreds of students at the National Autonomous University of Honduras were demanding the resignation of the country's president, Juan Orlando Hernandez, after demonstrations against him intensified last week when three people were killed in protests.

"About 40 military police entered the university campus without authorization," Armando Sarmiento, director of institutional development at the Tegucigalpa-based university, told AFP.

They pursued the students "shooting them with live rounds," Sarmiento said.

Five students received bullet wounds, but all were out of

danger, said Laura Schoenherr, spokeswoman for the Escuela Hospital.

FUSINA, a combined national security force, said in a statement that the students had attacked with "modified Molotov cocktails to make them more lethal."

Four "alleged students" were wounded, FUSINA added, along with two soldiers burned by the Molotov cocktails.

Police had initially fired tear gas, prompting students to throw stones, after which the riot police chased the students and opened fire with rifles.

Protests against Hernandez intensified last week after starting more than a month ago when doctor and teacher unions held strikes against health and education laws in the Central American country.

Troops patrolled the streets of Tegucigalpa last Friday after three people were killed in violent protests against Hernandez.

# Pompeo hopes for Afghan peace deal 'before Sept 1'

● The next round of talks between the Taliban and the US are set to begin on June 29 in Doha

● The Taliban have insisted that foreign troops must leave, and refused to speak with the Afghan government

### Kabul, Afghanistan

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said yesterday he hopes for a peace deal with the Taliban "before September 1", speaking as he made his first visit to Kabul since Washington launched talks with the insurgents last year.

Pompeo met with President Ashraf Ghani as well as General Scott Miller, who leads NATO's Afghanistan mission and the US war effort in the country, as well as other high-level Afghan officials during the unannounced one-day visit to the Afghan capital.

He said peace was Washington's "highest priority". Last September the US began a fresh push to bring the Taliban to the negotiating table to end America's longest war.

"I hope we have a peace deal before September 1, that's certainly our mission set," Pompeo said during the visit.

US officials have previously said they are hoping for a deal before the upcoming Afghan presidential elections, which



Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, center left, walks with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's Chief of Staff Abdul Salam Rahimi, as he arrives at the Presidential Palace in Kabul, Afghanistan yesterday, during an unannounced visit.



**Iran and Afghanistan share a 900 kilometre (600 mile) border and have long had a complex relationship. Iran nearly went to war with the Taliban regime in 1998, and quietly backed the US invasion of 2001.**

have already been delayed twice and are now set for September.

The next round of talks between the Taliban and the US are set to begin on June 29 in Doha.

The talks have centred on four issues: counter-terrorism, the foreign troop presence, an intra-Afghan dialogue, and a permanent ceasefire.

The Taliban have insisted that foreign troops must leave, and refused to speak with the Afghan government in Kabul, whom they deem "puppets".

### Iran factor

Pompeo said the US is nearly ready to conclude a "draft text" outlining Taliban promises nev-

er to allow Afghanistan to be used as a base for international terrorism again.

"In light of this progress we've begun discussions with the Taliban regarding foreign military presence which today remains conditions-based," he said.

"And while we've made clear to the Taliban that we're prepared to remove our forces, I want to be clear we've not yet agreed on a timeline to do so."

But Tehran has more recently sought to build relations with the Taliban, mindful of preserving interests in the neighbouring country.

## Ethiopia holds funeral service for murdered army chief

### Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Ethiopia yesterday held a funeral service for its army chief who was assassinated by his bodyguard over the weekend, an incident believed linked to an alleged coup bid in northern Amhara state.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed wept and mourners wailed as the coffin of Seare Mekonen, draped in the Ethiopian flag, was carried to the front of a room filled with soldiers in military fatigues, in footage carried by state media.

Ethiopia has been left reeling after this weekend's violence, a massive blow to Abiy who has embarked on an ambitious project of economic and political reforms in the nation.

statement.

A total of 250 million Egyptian pounds (\$15 million) was seized in the raids, according to the ministry video.

The government did not detail the type of businesses targeted, but said they were affiliated with the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood group.

They were part of a plan along with groups "claiming to represent civil political forces" which sought to carry out "violent acts and unrest against the state", according to the interior ministry.

## Egypt raids businesses over funding plot

### Cairo, Egypt

Egyptian authorities raided 19 businesses yesterday accused of funding a plot to overthrow the state, the interior ministry said.

Footage broadcast on Egyptian television showed police officers raiding the firms in the capital Cairo and the cities of Alexandria and Ismailia.

The busts were in response to the businesses allegedly funding a plot "intent on overthrowing the state and its institutions" this month, the interior ministry said in a

## IS head in Yemen captured by special forces: coalition

### Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Saudi and Yemeni special forces have captured the head of the Islamic State group's branch in Yemen, the Saudi-led military coalition backing the country's government announced yesterday.

The leader identified as Abu Osama al-Muhajir was caught in an early June raid along with other members of the jihadist group including its chief financial officer, coalition spokesman Turki al-Maliki said in a statement.

Saudi special forces in cooperation with their Yemeni counterparts "conducted a successful operation that resulted in the capture of the leader of the Daesh (IS) branch in Yemen -- Abu Osama al-Muhajir," Maliki said.

"A house kept under close surveillance proved the presence of the terror group's leader, and other elements, along



Saudi Special Forces arrested the head of ISIS in Yemen, Abu Osama Al Muhajir, in a joint raid with Yemeni forces. (Courtesy of the National/SPA)

with three women and three children."

Maliki did not specify the location of the house or where the raid was conducted, but said there were no civilian casualties.

IS has lost its self-styled "caliphate" across large parts of Syria and Iraq but is said to run camps and has a number of ac-

tive fighters across Yemen.

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), considered by the US as the radical group's most dangerous branch, is also active in Yemen.

Last month, four suspected Al-Qaeda members were killed in a suicide attack claimed by IS in Bayda province, a local official said.

## French restaurant run by Argentine chef crowned world's best

### Singapore, Singapore

French restaurant Mirazur run by Argentine chef Mauro Colagreco was yesterday crowned the world's best restaurant at an awards ceremony put on by British trade magazine Restaurant.

In second spot in the World's 50 Best Restaurants was Noma in Copenhagen, and in third was Asador Etxebarri in Spain.

In fourth place was Bangkok's Gaggan, whose owner-chef Gaggan Anand has won praise for his modern spin on his native Indian cuisine.

Restaurant magazine, owned by William Reed Media, launched the awards in 2002 and they are now as coveted by restaurants as Michelin stars, although the methodology used to select the best restaurants has faced criticism.