

QUICK HITS

Tokyo Court Denies Ghosn's Bail Plea Again

Tokyo: A Tokyo court rejected on Thursday another appeal by lawyers of Nissan's former chairman Carlos Ghosn to have him released on bail. The lawyers had appealed a rejection by the Tokyo district court two days earlier of their request that Ghosn, held at a Tokyo detention centre since his arrest on November 19, be granted bail. AP

Greece's Tsipras Wins Confidence Motion

Athens: The Greek parliament late on Wednesday renewed its support for Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, a leftist, after he asked for a vote of confidence when his coalition with the nationalists broke up on January 13 following a spat over the agreement reached with neighbouring Macedonia to rename that country. The vote ended with 151 votes in favour of the government after two days of debate in which the leader of the leftist Syriza party defended the Prespa agreement with Macedonia as a stabiliser of the region and stressed the need to complete his mandate to promote his social agenda after the end of the financial aid programme by the EU. IANS

4 Americans Killed in IS Attack in Syria

Washington: A suicide bombing claimed by the Islamic State killed at least 16 people, including two US service members and two American civilians, in northern Syria on Wednesday, just a month after President Donald Trump declared that IS had been defeated. The dead included a number of fighters with the Syrian Democratic Forces, who have fought alongside the Americans against the Islamic State, according to the UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. One of the US civilians killed was an intelligence specialist working for the Defense Intelligence Agency. The other was an interpreter, who was a contractor. AP

Musk Quotes \$1b to Build Tunnel in Australia

Sydney: Tesla CEO Elon Musk has quoted \$1 billion to build a commuter tunnel under Australia's Blue Mountains, which divide Sydney from the country's vast western interior. He was responding via Twitter to a query by New South Wales (NSW) member of parliament Jeremy Buckingham, who described Sydney as choking with traffic and asked how much it would cost to build a 50km underground tunnel. "About \$15 million per kilometre for a two-way high-speed transit," Musk responded. "So probably around \$750 million plus maybe \$50 million per station." IANS

Oppn Leader Says Referendum an Option, Snubs May

Labour Party's Jeremy Corbyn refuses to meet PM until she takes no-deal 'off the table'



Britain's Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn during a visit to Hastings, south east England, on Thursday—AP

London: British Prime Minister Theresa May was consulting Opposition parties and other lawmakers on Thursday in a battle to put Brexit back on track after surviving a no-confidence vote, though there was little immediate sign of a breakthrough from talks branded a "stunt" by the main Opposition leader. European Union countries were stepping up preparations for a disorderly British exit on March 29 after the UK parliament rejected May's Brexit withdrawal deal with the bloc.

May said she would hold talks "in a constructive spirit" with leaders of Opposition parties and other lawmakers in a bid to find a way forward for Britain's EU exit. The government confirmed that May will meet a Monday deadline to publish a Plan B, and that lawmakers will have a full day to debate it—and, crucially, amend it—on January 29.

There was little sign of a breakthrough in uniting Parliament's feuding Brexit factions, whose conflicting demands range from a postponement of Britain's departure date to a new referendum on whether to leave the EU or remain.

Jeremy Corbyn, leader of the main Opposition Labour Party, said he wouldn't meet with May until she took a no-deal Brexit "off the table". "To get a deal that can command a majority in parliament, Theresa May has to ditch the red lines and get serious about proposals for the future," Corbyn said during a speech to supporters in the English seaside town of Hastings.

"Last night's offer of talks with party leaders turned out to be simply a stunt, not the serious attempt to engage with the new reality that's needed," he said.

Green Party lawmaker Caroline Lucas, who met with May on Thursday morning, said the prime minister was "in a fantasy world" if she thought the deal could be transformed by Monday. "Parliament is gridlocked," she said. AP

May said she would hold talks "in a constructive spirit" with leaders of Opposition parties and other lawmakers in a bid to find a way forward for Britain's EU exit.

The government confirmed that May will meet a Monday deadline to publish a Plan B, and that lawmakers will have a full day to debate it—and, crucially, amend it—on January 29.

There was little sign of a breakthrough in uniting Parliament's feuding Brexit factions, whose conflicting demands range from a postponement of Britain's departure date to a new referendum on whether to leave the EU or remain.

Jeremy Corbyn, leader of the main Opposition Labour Party, said he wouldn't meet with May until she took a no-deal Brexit "off the table". "To get a deal that can command a majority in parliament, Theresa May has to ditch the red lines and get serious about proposals for the future," Corbyn said during a speech to supporters in the English seaside town of Hastings.

"Last night's offer of talks with party leaders turned out to be simply a stunt, not the serious attempt to engage with the new reality that's needed," he said.

Green Party lawmaker Caroline Lucas, who met with May on Thursday morning, said the prime minister was "in a fantasy world" if she thought the deal could be transformed by Monday. "Parliament is gridlocked," she said. AP

Hitachi Freezes UK Nuclear Project

Tokyo | London: Japan's Hitachi decided on Thursday to freeze a 3 trillion yen (\$28 billion) nuclear power project in Wales as Britain scrambles for a way to exit the European Union, dealing a blow to UK plans for the replacement of ageing plants.

The suspension comes as Hitachi's Horizon Nuclear Power failed to find private investors for its plans to build a plant in Anglesey, which was expected to provide about 6% of Britain's electricity. "We've made the decision to freeze the project from the economic standpoint as a private company," Hitachi said in a statement, adding that it had booked a write-down of 300 billion yen.

Hitachi had called on the British government to boost financial support for the project to appease investor anxiety, but turmoil over the country's impending EU exit limited the government's capacity to compile plans, people close to the matter have previously said.

Hitachi had banked on a group of Japanese investors and the British

Stalled

- Brexit turmoil limited govt capacity to help project
- Britain faces power supply crunch in 2020s
- UK govt says will pursue alternative funding models
- Horizon keeps option open to resume development

government each taking a one-third stake in the equity portion of the project, the people said. The project would have been financed one-third by equity and rest by debt.

"It is now clear that further time is needed to develop a financial structure for the Horizon project and the conditions for building and operating the nuclear power stations," Hitachi said.

MAXIMISING VALUE

The UK government said that despite negotiations with Hitachi, they failed to reach an agreement. The focus for the government was about driving down costs and maximising value for consumers and the taxpayer. Reuters

US Huawei Probe in Advanced Stage: Report

Govt looking into allegations of theft of trade secrets from co's US business partners

Washington: US authorities are in the "advanced" stages of a criminal probe that could result in an indictment of Chinese technology giant Huawei, a report said on Wednesday.

The Wall Street Journal, citing anonymous sources, said the department of justice is looking into allegations of theft of trade secrets from Huawei's US business partners, including a T-Mobile robotic device used to test smartphones.

However, Huawei noted that "Huawei and T-Mobile settled their disputes in 2017 following a US jury verdict finding neither damage, unjust enrichment nor willful and malicious conduct by Huawei in T-Mobile's trade secret claim".

The move would further escalate tensions between the US and China after the arrest last year in Canada of Huawei's chief financial officer Meng Wanzhou, who is the daughter of the company founder. The case of Meng, under house arrest awaiting proceedings, has inflamed US-China and Canada-China relations.



Two Canadians have been detained in China since Meng's arrest and a third has been sentenced to death on drug trafficking charges—moves observers see as attempts by Beijing to pressure Ottawa over her case.

Huawei, the second-largest global smartphone maker and biggest producer of telecommunication equipment, has for years been under scrutiny in the US over purported links to the Chinese government. AFP

China's Top Trade Negotiator to Visit US

Beijing: China's top trade negotiator will travel to the US for talks later this month ahead of a March deadline to avoid bruising tariff hikes, the commerce ministry said on Thursday.

Vice Premier Liu He will visit Washington on January 30-31 for the negotiations, the ministry said, following up on talks between lower-level officials in Beijing earlier this month.

President Donald Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping agreed to a three-month trade war truce in December, suspending US

plans to increase tariffs on Chinese goods to give negotiators space to find a solution.

Liu and US officials will "hold negotiations on economic and trade issues and work together to push forward and implement the important consensus" reached by Xi and Trump, ministry spokesman Gao Feng told reporters.

But Liu's trip could run into complications after a Wednesday report said US authorities were in the advanced stages of a criminal probe that could result in an indictment of Chinese telecom giant Huawei. AFP

Facebook Removes more Pages and Accounts with Russia Links

Ishita Palli

Facebook said on Thursday it had removed hundreds of Russia-initiated pages, accounts and groups that it judged to be involved in coordinated inauthentic behaviour on its Facebook and Instagram platforms.

Facebook's head of cybersecurity policy, Nathaniel Gleicher, said in a blog post it had unearthed two separate operations which originated in Russia, with one active in multiple countries across eastern Europe and the other specific to Ukraine.

The company said it had taken down about 364 Facebook pages and accounts run by the first Russian network and operating in Baltic Sea states, Central Asia,

The company said it had separately removed 107 Facebook pages, groups and accounts and 41 Instagram accounts that originated in Russia and operated in Ukraine

the Caucasus, and Central and Eastern Europe, adding that these pages were linked to employees of Russian news agency Sputnik.

The company also said that based on a tip from US law enforcement, it had separately removed 107 Facebook pages, groups and accounts and 41 Instagram accounts that originated in Russia and operated in Ukraine.

US Legislation Steps Up Pressure on Huawei, ZTE; China Calls it 'Hysteria'

Washington | Beijing: A bipartisan group of US lawmakers introduced Bills on Wednesday that would ban the sale of US chips or other components to Huawei Technologies, ZTE Corp or other Chinese telecommunications companies that violate US sanctions or export control laws.

The proposed law drew sharp criticism from China where the foreign ministry called the US legislation "hysteria", intensifying a bitter trade war between Beijing and Washington.

The Bills were introduced shortly before the Wall Street Journal reported federal prosecutors were investigating allegations that Huawei stole trade secrets from T-Mobile US and other US businesses.

The Journal said that an indictment could be coming soon on allegations that Huawei stole T-Mobile technology, called Tappy, which mimicked human fingers and was used to test smartphones.

Foreign ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying urged US lawmakers to block the Bills. "I believe the action of these few representatives are an expression of extreme arrogance and an extreme lack of self-confidence," Hua said. "Actually the whole world can see very clearly that the real intent of the United States is to employ its state apparatus in every conceivable way to suppress and block out China's high-tech companies," she added.

The legislation is the latest in a long list of actions taken to fight what some in the Trump administration call China's cheating through intellectual property theft. Reuters

Day 27 Pelosi Asks Trump to Delay State of Union Address

WHAT'S NEW

The shutdown is bringing an outpouring of generosity to TSA agents and other federal employees who are working without pay

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi called on President Donald Trump to delay his State of the Union address, scheduled for January 29. Pelosi cited security concerns.

Now it's serious: Craft beer makers are putting new releases on hold and stopping shipments across state lines, as a federal agency regulates alcohol production and distribution

The president has signed a bill to give some 800,000 federal workers back pay whenever the government reopens

It is now plainly evident that the shutdown is affecting air travel, and when that happens, damage to the overall US economy will shortly follow

JONATHAN GRELLA
US Travel Association spokesman

It is becoming more and more obvious that the Radical Democrats are a Party of open borders and crime. They want nothing to do with the major Humanitarian Crisis on our Southern Border

DONALD TRUMP
US President

WHAT'S NEXT?

The economic blow is being felt not only by federal workers but also by businesspeople, households and travellers. And while the hit to the overall economy so far remains slight, economists foresee real damage if the shutdown drags into February or beyond.

WHAT REMAINS CLOSED

Nine of the 15 Cabinet-level departments have not been funded, including agriculture, homeland security, state, transportation, interior and justice

Some iconic national park facilities are shuttered as are the Smithsonian museums and the National Zoo in Washington

Nearly everyone at Nasa is being told to stay home

WHO'S AT WORK & NOT PAID

460,000 employees are working without pay, including at FBI, TSA and other federal law enforcement offices

340,000 workers have been furloughed

Some federal contractors have also discontinued their services



TIPS, TRIVIA & TRENDS YOUR DAILY DIET OF FUN AND FACTS

PIA Bans Entertainment on Flights to Saudi Arabia

Pakistani International Airlines (PIA) has banned in-flight entertainment for pilgrims travelling to Jeddah and Madina and will only play Quranic verses and naats for them, an official of the national carrier said on Thursday. The decision was taken "in light of the peoples' sentiments", PIA spokesman Mashood Tajwar told PTL. "The decision to play Quranic verses and naats (recitation of poetry praising the Prophet) during taxiing and landing for flights to Jeddah and Madina has been taken in light of the peoples' sentiments," Tajwar said. No other music will be available in the in-flight entertainment



system, he said, adding that the impression that the PIA has banned music on all routes is incorrect. "This is only for Jeddah and Madina as the people go there on holy journey. Therefore playing music/songs on these routes is not appropriate," Tajwar said, adding passengers of other flights will have access to the in-flight entertainment system available on the aircraft. The PIA has also decided to welcome passengers on board with the Qasada Burda Sharif (Islamic hymn) playing in the background instead of soft music. PTI

With millions of YouTube views and hits on Spotify and iTunes, a group of young nun rockers play one of their biggest gigs next week, and thousands of Catholics, including the pope himself, will lap it up. It may be rock and roll, but Twisted Sister they ain't, and sex and drugs are not an option for the Sisters of the Servants of the Plan of God. They play their brand of melodic rock in their traditional habits. "We're young sisters," says 37-year-old guitarist Sister Ivonne of the band, which includes members from Chile, Japan, Ecuador, China and Costa Rica. Known as "Siervas" or Servants, the band plays catchy Christian songs that sound indistinguishable from many of their peers in mainstream rock. With a half-dozen slickly produced videos on YouTube, Siervas has built an international following. Their "Trust in God" music video, which features the nuns playing on a helipad atop a Lima skyscraper, went viral on YouTube with nearly two million views. AFP

Rock and Roll Nuns to Perform for Pope



Known as "Siervas" or Servants, the band plays catchy Christian songs that sound indistinguishable from many of their peers in mainstream rock. With a half-dozen slickly produced videos on YouTube, Siervas has built an international following. Their "Trust in God" music video, which features the nuns playing on a helipad atop a Lima skyscraper, went viral on YouTube with nearly two million views. AFP

China's Moon Cotton Experiment Ends in Freezing Lunar Night

A cotton seedling that sprouted on the moon has been left to die as China's historic lunar lander continues a freezing night-time nap that will last as long as two Earth weeks, scientists said. The Chinese space agency announced earlier this week that the seed had germinated inside a special canister aboard the Chang'e-4 probe, after the spacecraft on January 3 made the first landing on the far side of the moon. The mini biosphere—which operated for over 212 hours—was shut down as planned on Saturday, said Chongqing University, which designed the experiment. Temperatures inside the ecosystem were expected to plunge below minus 52 degrees Celsius, and the organisms will be "in a frozen state", the university said in a statement on Tuesday. A lunar night lasts for about two Earth weeks, after which the probe is expected to wake up, the statement said. AFP

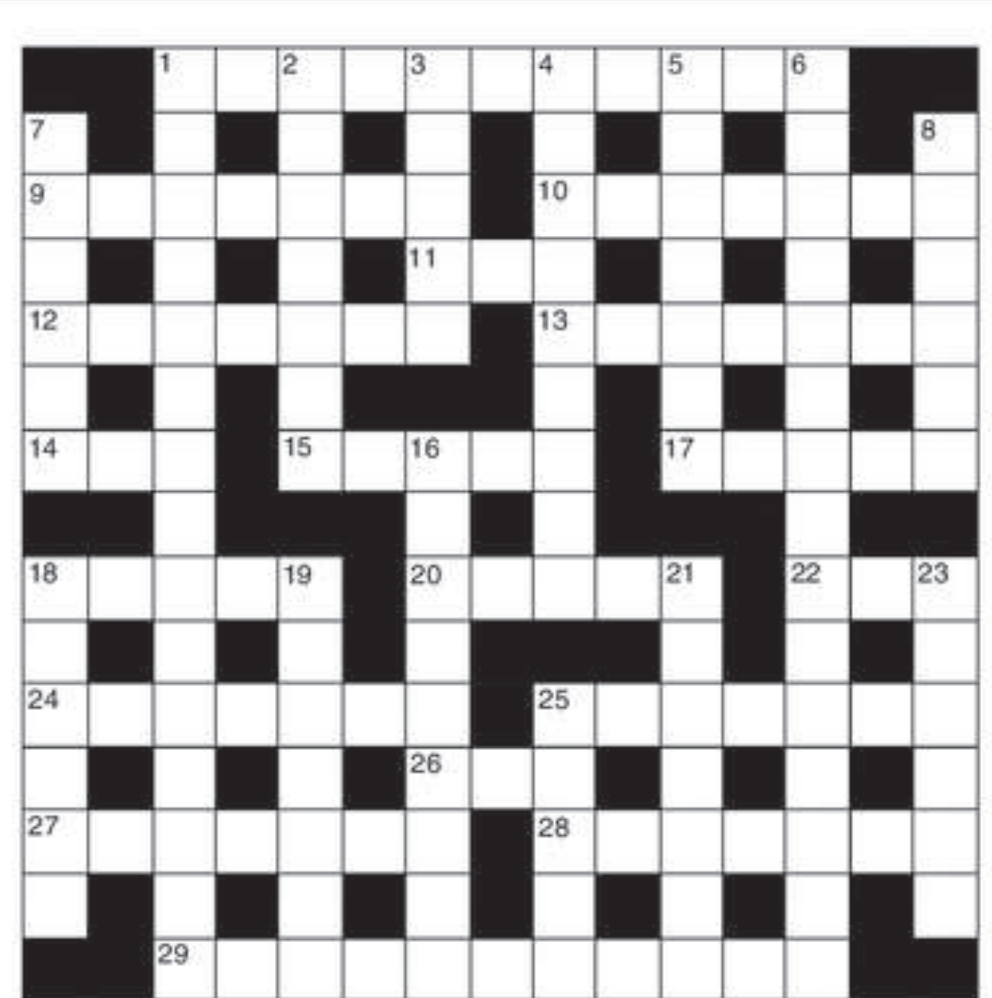


Youngest US Congresswoman to give Colleagues Twitter Lessons

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the youngest woman to serve in the US Congress, is set to give her Democratic colleagues in the House of Representatives lessons on how to use Twitter in a more effective way. Ocasio-Cortez, 29, will be leading the discussion along with fellow Democrat, representative Jim Himes of Connecticut, on Thursday to "discuss how they use Twitter as an effective and authentic messaging tool to connect with their constituents" and "the importance of digital storytelling". CNN quoted a notice sent to Democratic House members, as saying on Wednesday, Ocasio-Cortez has 2.4 million followers on her campaign Twitter handle, surpassing House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's 2 million followers on her official account. Earlier this month a video of Ocasio-Cortez gleefully dancing when she was in college surfaced on Twitter, where the poster of the clip described the Congresswoman as a "clueless nitwit". Ocasio-Cortez shot back at critics by posting a video on Twitter of her dancing in front of her congressional office with the caption, "I hear the GOP (Republicans) think women dancing are scandalous. Wait till they find out Congresswomen dance too!" The video has garnered 20.5 million views. IANS

Crossword

7307



- ACROSS**
- 1 He or she, for example, winner of bronze medal? (5,6)
 - 9 Go back? Eugene regrets in part doing just that (7)
 - 10 Old bit of Chilterns, represented by their leader (7)
 - 11 Sack bunch of Texans? On the contrary (3)
 - 12 Twice torrential water starts dreadful flood (7)
 - 13 Hormone transformed bird (7)
 - 14 Tight-lipped parent (3)
 - 15 Model's tough question (5)

- 17 Engineer tours CERN Collider, say (5)
- 18 Note that comes and goes (5)
- 20 Bette drops male layabout (5)
- 22 Troublemaker erases odd bits of bitmap (3)
- 24 Fault tired me out (7)
- 25 Ducks in Kerry disrupted nests of other birds (7)
- 26 Withdraw cluster of precious diamonds (3)
- 27 Old timer prepared group of students in rotation (7)
- 28 Dumb fanatic at hotel offers beauty treatment (3,4)

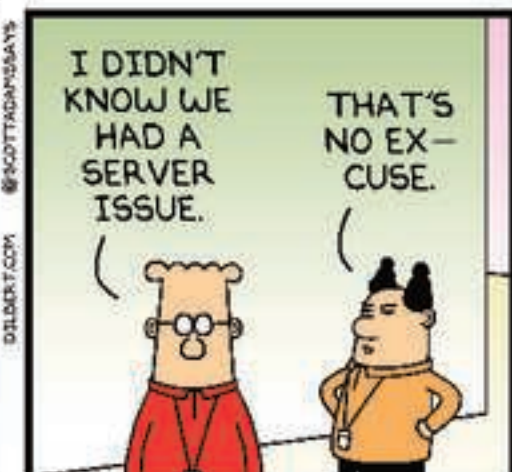
29 Confident Belfast (banks excluded) blocks duress somehow (4-7)

- DOWN**
- 1 Order crew under canvas to produce tablets (3,12)
 - 2 Ring up criminal about circle, exclusive circle (2-5)
 - 3 Fear concerning old man running round (5)
 - 4 Nuts help me over period that's temporary (9)
 - 5 Dispatched opponents at bridge to open beer (4,3)
 - 6 Part of UK essentially reunited? (8,7)
 - 7 Strasbourg politician upset about rubbish briefly (3,3)
 - 8 Amateur lecturer is a handsome young fellow (6)
 - 16 I can still broadcast a little bit (9)
 - 18 Reserved the majority of French stuffing (6)
 - 19 High-ranking officer reported to be hawish (7)
 - 21 Again request instrument concert leader rejected (7)
 - 23 Mind what tipsy chef's holding (6)
 - 25 Roman twin's uncle, American storyteller (5)

- SOLUTION TO No. 7306**
- ACROSS:** 1 Sympathy, 5 Entrap, 9 Farthest, 10 Tissue, 12 Tile, 13 Periodical, 15 Green-fingered, 19 Identity cards, 23 Handspring, 25 Idiot, 28 Choral, 29 Culinary, 30 Pomade, 31 Menswear.
- DOWN:** 1 Safety, 2 Moral, 3 Ashy, 4 Has-been, 6 Naiad, 7 Rest-cures, 8 Preclude, 11 Hi-fi, 14 Heat, 15 Green room, 16 Fly, 17 Germ, 18 Nightcap, 20 Tart, 21 Consume, 22 Player, 24 Shard, 26 Drake, 27 Hiss.
- © The Daily Mail

Dilbert

by S Adams

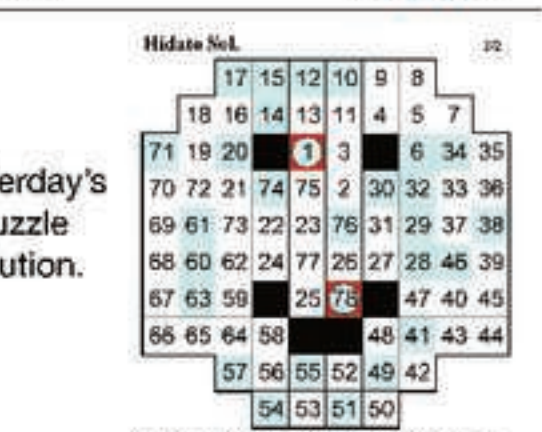


HIDATO FIND THE PATH - SOLVE THE PUZZLE

Complete the grid so that numbers 1 - 90 connect horizontally, vertically or diagonally.



www.hidato.com



7 LITTLE WORDS

Find the 7 words to match the 7 clues. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in each solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete this puzzle.

- CLUES**
- 1 where goods are stored (9)
 - 2 large country houses (6)
 - 3 hamlet's inhabitant (8)
 - 4 satisfies, as thirst (6)
 - 5 square gum pieces (8)
 - 6 related to the joints (9)
 - 7 travel with short layovers (11)

GER	STO	CH	LAS	ART
ICU	ICL	OOM	OP	SLA
CKR	STL	LAR	KES	VI
WHI	VIL	ETS	LLA	EST

Yesterday's Answers: 1. PINATA 2. STEEP 3. GLOSSA 4. TACTLESS 5. AMAZE 6. AVAST 7. WHITOUT