



Trump says U.S. learning 'much' from Russia blast
WASHINGTON
President Donald Trump said on Monday that the U.S. is learning "much" from a deadly blast during a Russian missile test that caused elevated radiation levels. Experts have linked the blast — which killed at least five people — to the 9M730 Burevestnik nuclear-powered cruise missile. AFP

Japan 'in the dark' over S. Korea trade controls
TOKYO
Japan is "in the dark" as to why South Korea has downgraded Tokyo's trading status, Trade Minister Sung Yun-mo said on Tuesday. South Korea on Monday created a new category of trading status for Japan, which Mr. Sung said made it "hard to work closely with a country that frequently violates the basic rules." AFP

U.S. in talks with allies on Asian missile deployment
BEIJING
Senior U.S. diplomat, Andrea Thompson, said on Tuesday that the U.S. is consulting its allies as it plans to deploy intermediate-range missiles in Asia, a move China says it will respond to with countermeasures. The U.S. has said it plans to place such weapons in the Asia-Pacific following the U.S. withdrawal from the INF treaty. AFP

Clashes kill nearly 60 fighters in Syria: monitor
BEIRUT
Clashes between regime loyalists and insurgents in northwest Syria killed 59 combatants on Tuesday, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. Fighting in southern Idlib and rural Latakia claimed the lives of 29 pro-government forces as well as 30 jihadists and allied rebels. AFP

Saudi-UAE 'rift' weakens fight against common foe

Houthi control vast swathes of Yemen

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
RIYADH
Riyadh and Abu Dhabi put on a display of unity over Yemen, but the capture of Aden by UAE-backed separatists exposes simmering divisions that analysts say weaken their joint campaign against Iran-linked rebels.
The seizure of the presidential palace in the southern port city on Saturday dealt a fresh blow to Saudi Arabia, which has led a costly four-year military intervention that has failed to defeat the Houthi rebels while triggering a humanitarian crisis.
With handshakes and smiles, the crown prince of Abu Dhabi held talks with

Hong Kong airport remains shut as Carrie Lam bemoans 'chaos'

All check-in operations were suspended; Chief Executive rules out resignation

REUTERS
HONG KONG

Flights leaving Hong Kong were disrupted for a second day on Tuesday, plunging the former British colony deeper into turmoil as its stockmarket fell to a seven-month low, and its leader said it had been pushed into a state of "panic and chaos".
Ten weeks of increasingly violent protests have roiled the Asian financial hub as thousands chafe at a perceived erosion of freedoms and autonomy under Chinese rule.
The protests, which China this week likened to terrorism, present President Xi Jinping with one of his biggest challenges since he came to power in 2012.
Check-in operations were suspended at 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday, a day after an unprecedented airport shutdown, as thousands of black-clad protesters jammed the terminal, chanting, singing and waving banners.
"Take a minute to look at our city, our home," Chief Executive Carrie Lam said, her voice cracking, at a news conference in the government headquarters complex, which is fortified behind 6-foot-high water-filled barricades.
"Can we bear to push it into the abyss and see it smashed to pieces?"
The protests began as opposition to a now-suspended Bill that would have allowed suspects' extradition to mainland China, but have swelled into wider calls for democracy.
"Sorry for the inconvenience, we are fighting for the future of our home," read one protest banner at the airport.



Terminal woes: A woman shouting at the crowd as she tries to enter the departure area of the Hong Kong international airport, access to which was blocked by protesters. *AFP

Demonstrators say they are fighting the erosion of the "one country, two systems" arrangement that enshrined some autonomy for Hong Kong since China took it back from Britain in 1997.
They want Ms. Lam to resign. She said she would stay.
"My responsibility goes beyond this particular range of protest," she said, adding that violence had pushed the territory into a state of "panic and chaos".
"I, as the Chief Executive, will be responsible to rebuild the Hong Kong economy, to engage as widely as possible, listen as attentively as possible to my people's grievances and try to help Hong Kong to move on."
Ms. Lam did not respond to requests to clarify if she had the power to withdraw the Extradition Bill and satisfy a key demand made by the protesters, or if she needed Beijing's approval.

Operations disrupted
Airport authorities suspended check-in operations as the fifth day of a sit-in by protesters grew increasingly heat-

ed. "Terminal operations at Hong Kong International Airport have been seriously disrupted as a result of the public assembly at the airport," the airport authority said.
Some passengers challenged protesters over the delays as tempers began to fray, while the demonstrators, using a Chinese term of encouragement, chanted, "Hong Kong people — add oil!"
Flag carrier Cathay Pacific warned: "There is potential for further flight disruptions at short notice."
The airline, whose British heritage makes it a symbol of Hong Kong's colonial past, is also in a political bind.
China's civil aviation regulator demanded it suspend staff who joined or backed the protests from flights in its airspace.
Other Chinese airlines have offered passengers wanting to avoid Hong Kong a free switch to nearby destinations, such as Guangzhou, Macau, Shenzhen or Zhuhai.

Probe excess use of force: UNHRC chief

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
GENEVA

The UN rights chief on Tuesday voiced concern over force used against protesters during massive demonstrations in Hong Kong and called for an impartial probe amid increasingly violent unrest in the key financial hub.
UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet is "concerned by the ongoing events in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the escalation of violence that has taken place in recent days," her spokesman Rupert Colville told reporters in Geneva.
The UN rights chief, he said, was calling for a "prompt, independent, impartial investigation" into alleged excessive force by police against the protesters.

U.S. delays tariffs on some Chinese goods, drops others

Duty on cellphones, laptops will be effective from Dec. 15

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON

The U.S. is delaying tariffs on Chinese-made cellphones, laptop computers and other items and removing other Chinese imports from its target list altogether in a move that triggered a rally on Wall Street.
The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative said on Tuesday that it is still planning to go ahead with 10% tariffs on about \$300 billion in Chinese imports, extending the import taxes on just about everything China ships to the U.S. in a dispute over Beijing's aggressive trade policies. Most of the levies are scheduled to kick in September 1.
But the agency says it would delay the tariffs to December 15 on some goods, including cellphones, laptop computers, video game con-



A staff working on a phone production line of a factory in Dongguan, China. *AP

soles, some toys, computer monitors, shoes and clothing. And it's removing other items from the list based "on health, safety, national security and other factors."
The news sent the Dow Jones Industrial Average up more than 460 points in mid-morning trading. Shares of Apple, Mattel and shoe brand Steve Madden shot up on the news.

Separately, China's Ministry of Commerce reported that top Chinese negotiators spoke by phone with their U.S. counterparts, Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, and plan to talk again in two weeks.
Speaking to reporters in New Jersey, Mr. Trump said he was delaying the tariffs so that they would not affect the critically important Christmas shopping season. He also noted that the stock market rallied on the news.
The U.S. and China are fighting over American allegations that Beijing steals trade secrets and forces foreign companies to hand over technology. The tactics are part of China's drive to become a world leader in advanced technologies such as AI and electric cars.

Despite Iran's hope, Britain yet to release oil tanker

It was seized near the British territory of Gibraltar

REUTERS
DUBAI/LONDON

The British territory of Gibraltar is yet to release an Iranian oil tanker seized by Royal Marines in the Mediterranean despite an Iranian report that it could do so on Tuesday, an official Gibraltar source said.
The commandeering of the Grace 1 on July 4 exacerbated frictions between Tehran and the West and led to retaliatory moves in Gulf waterways used to ship oil.

The deputy head of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organisation, Jalil Eslami, said on Tuesday that Britain was thinking of freeing the Grace 1 following an exchange of documents.
"The vessel was seized based on false allegations," Mr. Eslami said in comments reported by state news agency IRNA. "We hope the release will take place soon."
Iran's semi-official Fars news agency, quoting unidentified Gibraltar authori-

ties, said the tanker would be freed by Tuesday evening. However, a senior source in the government of British overseas territory denied that would happen on Tuesday.
Although Grace 1 was seized by British forces, Britain said investigations into the tanker Grace were a matter for Gibraltar. The territory has denied Iran's claim that the action was taken on the orders of Tehran's long-time foe Washington.

Saudi-UAE 'rift' weakens fight against common foe

Woman dead in Sydney knife rampage

REUTERS
SYDNEY

A man went on a stabbing rampage in Sydney on Tuesday, killing a woman and wounding another before he was restrained by members of the public, police said, adding that they were not treating it as a terrorist incident.
The 21-year-old man, who police did not name, was carrying a knife and a computer thumb drive containing information about deadly attacks in North America and New Zealand, police said.
Video images on Twitter showed him yelling and waving what appeared to be a long-bladed knife. He was later restrained by passers-by.

Epstein's death shifts federal focus to possible conspirators

Recruiters and staff who lined up victims for him under lens

ASSOCIATED PRESS
NEW YORK

In the wake of Jeffrey Epstein's suicide, federal prosecutors in New York have shifted their focus to possible charges against anyone who assisted or enabled him in what authorities say was his rampant sexual abuse.
Two days after the 66-year-old financier's death in a New York jail, where he was awaiting trial on sex trafficking charges, Attorney General William Barr warned on Monday that "any co-conspirators should not rest easy."
"Let me assure you that this case will continue on against anyone who was



underage girls and lined up victims for him.
Police reports, FBI records and court documents show Epstein relied on an entire staff of associates to arrange massages that led to sex acts.
If any Epstein assistants hoped to avoid charges by testifying against him, that expectation has been upended by his suicide.
"Those who had leverage as potential cooperators in the case now find themselves as the primary targets," said Jacob S. Frenkel, a former federal prosecutor. "They no longer have anyone against whom to cooperate."

Italy's parties pitch for allies ahead of key vote

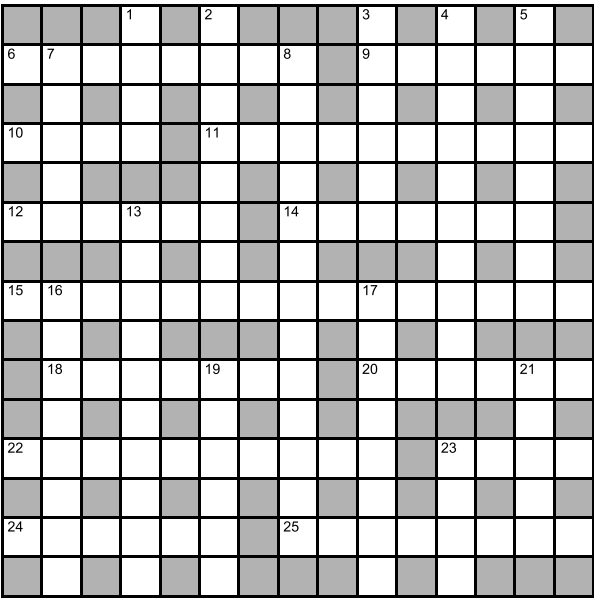
Salvini is pressing for early elections

ASSOCIATED PRESS
ROME

Italy's political leaders were scrambling to line up allies and alliances on Tuesday as Interior Minister Matteo Salvini pressed his demands for early elections as soon as possible in the hope of snagging the premiership with his anti-migrant, Euro-skeptic agenda.
Mr. Salvini, who is also Deputy Premier, leads the government's junior coalition member. His party's popularity has soared in local elections and European Parliament voting since he became Interior Minister, and he wants to seize the momentum and go to elections in October, more than 3 years ahead of time.

Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte must offer his resignation to the Italian President if the no-confidence vote succeeds.
The 5-Star Movement, who are senior coalition partners and who chose Mr. Conte to be premier after 2018 elections, is weighing whether to ally with opposition Democrats. That strategy aims to delay any early elections, after Italy makes expected painful budget cuts to avoid triggering automatic sales tax hikes which would alienate voters.
Former Premier Matteo Renzi, a Democratic leader, argues that such a deal would let Italy make crucial budget cuts in line with EU rules before year's end.

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12704



- **ACROSS**
- 6 After regular losses armed defiance ends with a bloody front (3-5)
- 9 One out of force veteran too many (6)
- 10 Present is special in what way? (4)
- 11 Desire to travel wide including Ulster perhaps (10)

- (set by Buzzer)
- 12 Was OK to cut corners when off to make a date (3,3)
- 14 Stonework of Madonna bearing child (7)
- 15 Confusing predicament exchanging currencies right (5-4,6)
- 18 Dog like a pointer that is jumping around (4-3)
- 20 Field dimensions restricted around centre (6)
- 22 Pioneer led in field having no clear description (3-7)
- 23 Couple having to part with hug and kiss? Bad luck (4)
- 24 Sorely missing pay without reduction (2,4)
- 25 A test win on tour, most golden (8)
- **DOWN**
- 1 Some recipe to make wafer (1,3)
- 2 Cold drink that's gulped cold, one taken from one serving (3,5)
- 3 Covers performances from 2-5 included (6)
- 4 Site of battle where Nadal's grit comes alive (10)
- 5 What to wish one suffering a sudden expulsion? (5,3)
- 7 Being out of this world, present mostly in spirit (5)
- 8 It's a pleasure to skip (4,7,2)
- 13 Couple of cricketing terms for 'finished' (4,3,3)
- 16 Hand signals when steering becoming a problem (8)
- 17 Humour for the most part, personal and degenerate (4,4)
- 19 Rubbish heap raked very loudly (6)
- 21 Breathing apparatus during dips sapping power and energy (5)
- 23 Trouble underpins justice in prison (4)

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12703

P	A	G	E	B	O	Y	M	O	P	P	E	T	S
L	A	O	A	O	U	V	T						
A	G	L	O	W	K	I	N	E	S	C	O	P	E
N	L	E	E	A	S	K	A						
C	A	S	T	R	A	T	E	D	Y	I	E	L	D
K	T	A	D	Y	A	R	M	O	U	T	H		
G	O	A	D	Y	A	R	M	O	U	T	H		
S	E	A	L	S	K	I	N	T	O	R	T		
H	E	A	L	S	K	I	N	T	O	R	T		
O	P	E	R	A	N	E	U	T	R	I	N	O	S
O	P	E	R	A	N	E	U	T	R	I	N	O	S
P	H	I	L	I	P	P	I	C	A	D	A	U	N
L	C	A	A	E	O	L	S						
A	R	S	E	N	A	L	O	U	N	N	A	G	E

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

5	2	3	6	8	7	9	4	1
9	6	8	4	3	1	7	5	2
7	1	4	2	5	9	3	8	6
1	3	6	5	2	4	8	7	9
4	9	7	8	1	6	5	2	3
2	8	5	9	7	3	1	6	4
6	7	2	1	9	5	4	3	8
8	5	1	3	4	2	6	9	7
3	4	9	7	6	8	2	1	5

FAITH

Revelations to Azhvvars

Pillai Lokachariar gives a list of many of Lord Narayana's avatars. Among the other avatars in Pillai Lokachariar's list is one called the Dadibhakta avatara. Dadi means curd. We might think it is a reference to the Krishna avatara. But Pillai Lokachariar mentions the Krishna avatara separately. So it is not clear what the Dadibhakta avatara is.
The Azhvvars sometimes talk of incidents that do not find mention in the Puranas, said M.A. Venkatakrishnan in a discourse. Thirumangai Azhvar talks of one such incident. He has praised the deity of Sirkazhi, where the Lord is seen in His Trivikrama form. In one of his verses, praising this deity, Thirumangai Azhvar talks of the sage Romasa, so called because his body was covered with hair. The story about this sage is a peculiar one. Brahma was proud of the fact that none lived as long as he did. The Lord wanted to teach him a lesson. It so happened that a sage by name Romasa did penance with a view to being blessed with longevity. The Lord granted him his wish and added that for every hair that fell off his body, the life of a Brahma would end, and the sage himself would be alive until all his hair fell off. The life span of Brahma stretches to aeons compared to human life. And if one hair on the sage's body was equal to the life span of one Brahma, then one can imagine how huge the sage's life span would be!
This story about Romasa, however, is not to be found in any Purana. The Puranas were written by sages, who were blessed by Brahma. But Brahma is not immortal, as one Brahma is replaced by another. But the Azhvvars were blessed by Lord Narayana Himself, and their verses came because of His blessings. So, the Lord must have revealed to the Azhvvars incidents that even the sages did not know of.