

Hong Kong protests ‘near terrorism’: China

Protesters apologise after chaotic airport violence; flights resume after two days of disruptions

REUTERS
HONG KONG

China said Hong Kong’s protest movement had reached “near terrorism” on Wednesday, after a night of ugly clashes at the city’s airport where demonstrators set upon and detained two men they suspected of being government sympathisers.

Flights out of the financial hub resumed after two days of disruptions caused by thousands of protesters swarming the terminal at one of the world’s busiest airports, forcing the cancellation of hundreds of departures.

China’s Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office in Beijing called the behaviour at the airport no different to terrorism and said it must be severely punished.

Ten weeks of increasingly violent clashes between police and protesters have plunged the city into its worst crisis since it reverted



City in turmoil: A Hong Kong policeman takes a fall during a scuffle with protesters. • AFP

from British to Chinese rule in 1997.

“We’re deeply sorry about what happened yesterday,” read a banner held up by a group of a few dozen demonstrators in the airport arrivals hall.

In chaotic scenes that would once have been unthinkable for Hong Kongers,

a peaceful sit-in at the airport turned violent late on Tuesday as protesters confronted and held a man they believed was an undercover Chinese agent.

Later, the seizure by protesters of a reporter from China’s *Global Times* newspaper, a nationalistic tabloid run by the ruling Communist

Party’s official *People’s Daily*, and their harassment of the man they believed to be a mainland agent drew China’s strongest language yet.

Bus loads of riot police arrived in response, clashing with furious demonstrators before withdrawing once the man was removed..

Protesters, who occupied

the airport for five days, mostly withdrew by daybreak.

It’s not clear whether the ugly scenes have eroded the broad support the movement has attracted in Hong Kong, while the city’s faltering economy has also taken a hit in recent months.

“We promise to reflect and to improve,” protesters said in one message distributed on social-media app Telegram.

Tricky, says Trump

In addition to Beijing’s condemnation, the *People’s Daily* called for “using the sword of the law” to restore order, and mainland social media users lauded the detained reporter as a hero.

On Tuesday, U.S. President Donald Trump described the volatile situation as “tricky”, and said China’s government had moved troops near the border with Hong Kong.

Chinese state media voice support for police

People’s Daily calls for ‘sword of the law’

REUTERS
HONG KONG/BEIJING

Chinese state media called on Beijing on Wednesday to deal with protests in Hong Kong more decisively after a reporter from one of China’s largest government-backed newspapers was caught up in overnight clashes.

Ten weeks of violent clashes between police and pro-democracy protesters, angered by a perceived erosion of freedoms, are posing one of the biggest challenges for Chinese President Xi Jinping since he came to power in 2012.

A front-page commentary on the overseas edition of the Communist Party’s official *People’s Daily* newspaper said on Wednesday Hong Kong had reached a critical juncture. “Using the sword of the law to stop violence and restore order is overwhelmingly the most important and urgent task for Hong Kong!” it said.

Another commentary by a Shenzhen University researcher, published by the *China Daily*, said the Central government should deal with Hong Kong issues more decisively.

Cathay Pacific fires two pilots

The airline is under pressure from China’s aviation regulator

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
HONG KONG

Cathay Pacific said on Wednesday it has sacked two pilots, as the Hong Kong carrier comes under huge pressure from Beijing to clamp down on staff supportive of anti-government rallies.

“One is currently involved in legal proceedings. The other misused company information on Flight CX216/12 August,” the airline said in a statement.

Cathay Pacific Chief Executive Rupert Hogg warned staff on Monday that they could be fired for supporting



The airline needs to submit manifests of staff on flights going to the mainland. • AP

“illegal protests”.

The airline said last week it had suspended a pilot accused of rioting after allegedly participating in protests.

It also said it had fired two

ground staff, without specifying why. Local media reported that they were accused of leaking the travel details of a Hong Kong police football team that was travelling to the mainland.

Cathay has struggled to find middle ground in the increasingly bitter standoff between protesters and authorities. The airline is now subject to new regulations announced last week by Beijing’s aviation regulator. The rules require the airline to submit manifests of staff working on flights going to the mainland or through its airspace.

ELSEWHERE



Guaido warns Maduro on moves to advance polls

CARACAS

Venezuela’s opposition leader Juan Guaido warned President Nicolas Maduro on Tuesday that any attempts to bring forward parliamentary elections would end in “disaster” for the government. **AFP**

Twitter to let users follow interests, people

SAN FRANCISCO

Twitter users will be able to follow a small number of interests by this year end in the same way they follow people, the company said on Tuesday. They can follow certain topics on a curated list. **AFP**

Facebook listened to users’ private conversations: report

It says the transcriptions were made with permission



Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook’s CEO, at the firm’s annual conference in San Jose. • AP

Facebook did not respond to a request for comment.

The contractors were testing the ability of the social network’s artificial intelligence to interpret messages, and the only users affected were those on Facebook

Messenger app who had opted to have their voice chats transcribed.

Bloomberg said the contractors working on the project were “rattled” by listening to private audio whose origin wasn’t disclosed and which sometimes contained vulgar content.

The contractors also weren’t told the reason why they were doing the transcribing, the news agency reported.

Apple and Google have in recent weeks said they’ve halted the practice, while Amazon gives users the option of blocking the collection of their voice by Alexa.

Khamenei meets Yemen rebels

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TEHRAN

Iran’s supreme leader has held talks with a senior Yemeni rebel official just days after the long-running intervention against the rebels by its regional foes Saudi Arabia and the UAE suffered a major setback.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei hosted Houthi rebel spokesman Mohammed Abdul Salam at his Tehran residence on Tuesday after UAE-backed Southern Transitional Council (STC) seized Yemen’s second city Aden on Saturday.

Mr. Khamenei renewed his support for the rebels, who control the Yemeni capital Sanaa and much of the north.

Spies are watching our scientists, says Kremlin

‘Avoid meetings with foreign colleagues’

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MOSCOW

Foreign spies keen to get their hands on Russian research are monitoring Russian scientists around the clock, the Kremlin said on Wednesday, after experts denounced a new security decree as a Soviet throwback.

The Kremlin’s comments came after scientists criticised a Ministry directive calling on researchers not to meet foreign colleagues one-on-one and requesting filed reports after every encounter – even a cup of coffee.

“Of course we must be somewhat vigilant, because foreign special services are

on alert,” said President Vladimir Putin’s spokesman Dmitry Peskov when questioned on the decree.

Scientific espionage

“There is such a thing as scientific and industrial espionage,” Mr. Peskov said. “It exists 24/7 and is targeting our scientists, especially young scientists.”

He noted, however, that some of the decree’s provisions “sound excessive”, adding that Russia “should not be bound by some rules that won’t lead to anything good.”

The document imposes significant red tape on any visits by foreigners into Russian institutes.

3 Malaysian Ministers want Naik expelled

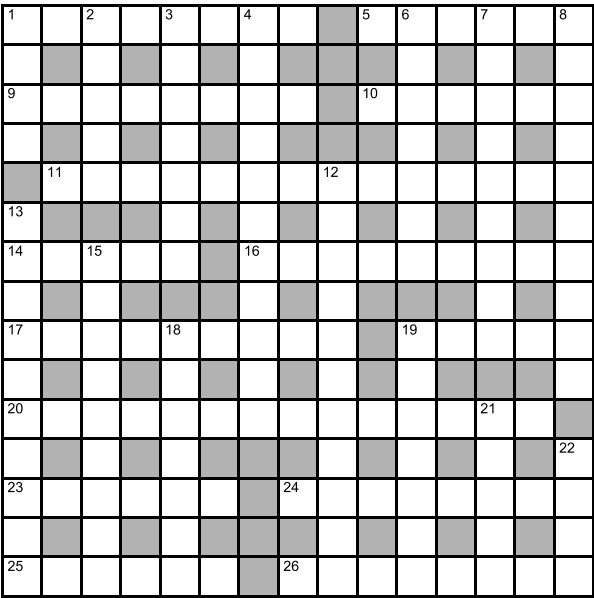
REUTERS
KUALA LUMPUR

Malaysia’s Cabinet discussed the permanent residency of Indian Islamic preacher Zakir Naik on Wednesday, with three Ministers – M. Kulasegaran, Gobind Singh Deo and Xavier Jayakumar – demanding his expulsion for his alleged racial remarks.

Naik, who lives in Malaysia and faces charges of money laundering and hate speech in India, has come under fire for his comments that Hindus in Malaysia had “100 times more rights” than the Muslim minority in India.

Muslims make up about 60% of Malaysia’s population.

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12705



ACROSS

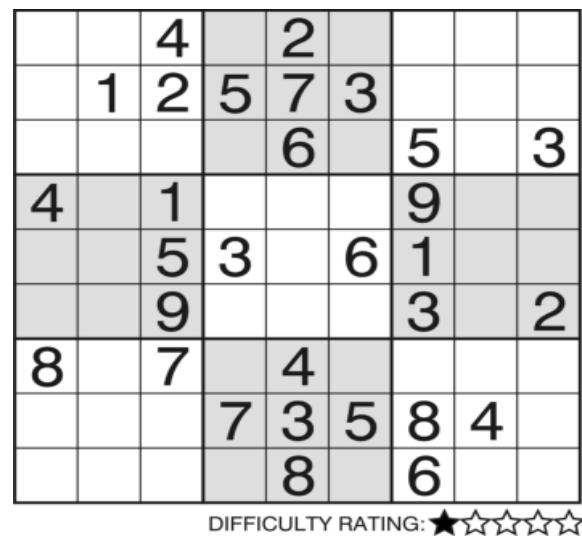
- 1 Language trouble eases after the entry of the American uncle (8)
- 5 Challenge the goal (6)
- 9 All of the inert compound found inside an English city (8)
- 10 Ancient Romans conveying where it originally was (2,4)

- (set by Neyartha)
- 11 Male sheep reportedly with a base at a meteorological observation post (7,7)
 - 14 Language spoken in the large and noisy party with no limits (5)
 - 16 Grovelling with soiled livery in the pig pen (9)
 - 17 Job location (9)
 - 19 Set off to find a good leader for the navy of an African country (5)
 - 20 Animal on the ark with seeds for some trees (5,9)
 - 23 Language of the abdicating king upsets the guru allowed to return at first (6)
 - 24 Measured the short Norse god with a prominent frame (8)
 - 25 English writer getting letters from Simpson’s Ayers Rock address (6)
 - 26 Formal apology in a clue? Pam solved it! (3,5)
 - 4 Metal worker to cook this after the Frenchman hiding behind the forest trees is caught (11)
 - 6 Language enabling transformations is not new (7)
 - 7 Drawing out the thing embedded in the damaged ceiling (9)
 - 8 Travelling time for the judge taking part in a medieval joust (10)
 - 12 Tension influenced by weight could alter one’s appearance (6,5)
 - 13 Pet shop has pivoted to supply some fertilizer components (10)
 - 15 Brown turns up with a partner to go around the old city, as might be expected (9)
 - 18 One settling a score with rage seen around the outskirts of Vellore (7)
 - 19 West Indian leaders ignored the brief bewitching representation of the sea floor (7)
 - 21 Language discovered by Tesla before reaching a capital city from the south (5)
 - 22 Language of some podiatrists (4)

DOWN

- 1 State of the leading actor visiting extended relatives (4)
- 2 Son climbs up with the sparkling white wine to the European composer (5)
- 3 Language discovered by a sailor in a retreat between Massachusetts and Hawaii (7)

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12704

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

Solution to yesterday’s Sudoku

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

FAITH

Krishna the strategist

In the Mahabharata, behind every episode we find the Lord’s planning, said V.S. Karunakarachariar, in a discourse. Satrajit was the father of Satyabhama, who married Lord Krishna. Satrajit owned the rare gem called Syamantaka given to him by Surya. Satrajit would not part with it. A plot was hatched to do away with Satrajit, and steal the gem. Satadhanva killed him, while Akrura and Kritavarma stood guard. When Krishna and Balarama came to know that Satadhanva was behind the murder, they gave chase. Satadhanva went up to Mithila (Nepal). However, when they caught up with him and killed him, they found that the gem was not with him. Krishna returned to Dwaraka, but Balarama stayed back, and Duryodhana came to him to learn how to use the mace in fighting. Krishna kept checking on Duryodhana’s progress, and when Duryodhana’s lessons were complete, He went to Balarama and asked him to return. Why did Krishna wait for so long to call His brother back home? The reason was that only when Duryodhana was a skilled fighter would he dare to challenge the Pandavas, and war would break out. And the war was necessary to establish righteousness in the world.

In the same way, Subhadra’s marriage to Arjuna was also brought about by Krishna. Balarama wanted Subhadra to marry Duryodhana, but she wanted to marry Arjuna. Arjuna turned up in the guise of a sanyasi, and Balarama, not recognising him, suggested that he stay near Subhadra’s palace. Krishna opposed the idea, aware that if He opposed a plan, Balarama would stubbornly go ahead with it. All this eventually facilitated the marriage of Subhadra and Arjuna. Thus, it was Krishna who did all the behind the scenes work, and ensured the success of His plans.