

Italian PM resigns, denounces Salvini for sinking government

Giuseppe Conte says his Interior Minister is harming nation for political gain



Political crisis: Giuseppe Conte at the Senate in Rome. ■ AFP

Serious risks
“(Salvini) has shown that he is following his own interests and those of his party,” Mr. Conte told a packed Senate, a stony-faced Mr. Salvini sitting by his side. “His decisions pose serious risks for this country.”
He described the actions

of Mr. Salvini, who declared the coalition unworkable 12 days ago and called for snap elections, as recklessness “liable to tip the country into a spiral of political uncertainty and financial instability”.
Mr. Conte, who belongs to neither of the coalition’s two parties, said he would hand in his resignation later in the day, allowing the head of State to start consultations with parties to see if a new coalition can be formed.

Failing that, President Sergio Mattarella would have to dissolve Parliament, three and a half years ahead of schedule, a move that could trigger elections as early as the autumn.
Financial markets rallied on Mr. Conte’s resignation, seemingly hopeful that snap polls could be avoided amid reports the ruling 5-Star Movement might seek an alliance with the centre-left opposition Democratic Party.

Mr. Salvini at times shook his head, rolled his eyes or nodded to League senators as the Prime Minister accused him of being “irresponsible”, “reckless”, “alarming” and “disrespectful”.

Full powers
Mr. Conte said he was worried by Mr. Salvini’s threat to call people into the country’s squares if his drive for elections were thwarted, as well as his demand for “full powers”.
“We do not need men who have ‘full powers’, but people who have institutional culture and a sense of responsibility,” he said in an hour-long speech in which he also denounced Mr. Salvini’s habit of brandishing the cross at his political rallies.
Mr. Salvini rejected Mr. Conte’s comments, saying other parties were afraid of going to elections and losing their influence.

U.S. mulls steps to boost economy

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE WASHINGTON
The White House is considering cutting taxes or reversing tariffs to head off a recession, U.S. media reported on Monday, despite President Donald Trump’s insistence the economy was in rude health.
Senior White House officials are mulling several moves to stimulate the economy, including temporarily cutting the payroll tax to increase workers’ monthly take-home pay, *The Washington Post* reported.
Also under consideration

is reversing new tariffs the Trump administration imposed on Chinese goods, according to *The New York Times*.
The discussion is still in the early stages, and officials have not brought up the idea with Mr. Trump, who would have to seek approval from Congress, the newspapers said.
The White House disputed the reports in a statement to the *Post*, saying “cutting payroll taxes is not something under consideration at this time.”
Mr. Trump on Sunday

pushed back against talk of a looming recession after a raft of U.S. data reports last week gave a mixed outlook for the economy.
“I’m prepared for everything. I don’t think we’re having a recession. We’re doing tremendously well,” Mr. Trump told reporters.
“And most economists actually say that we’re not going to have a recession,” he added.
Earlier on Monday, a survey was released showing that a majority of economists expect a U.S. recession in the next two years.

IS is regaining strength in Iraq and Syria

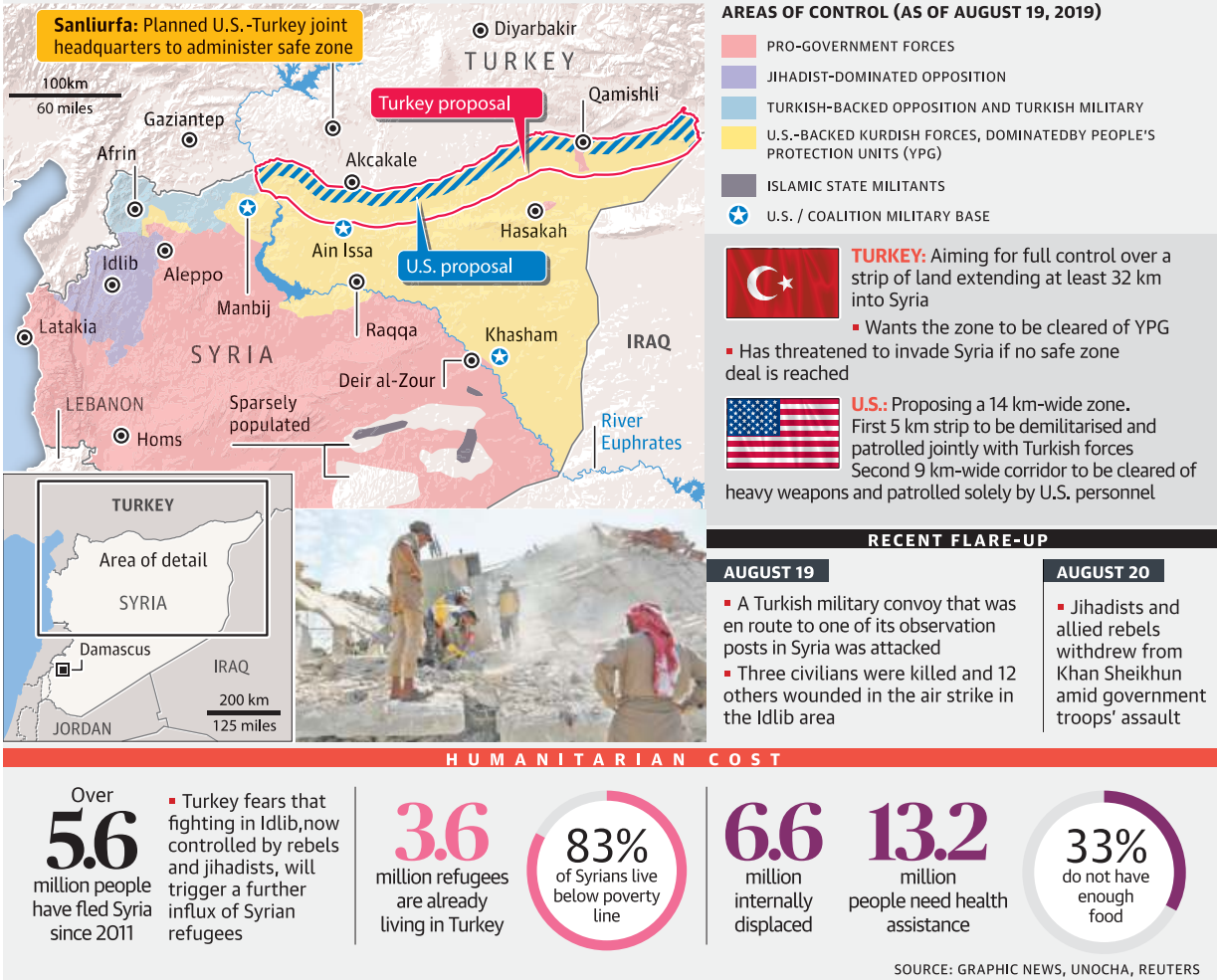
Group is carrying out guerilla attacks, retooling financial networks just five months after it was ousted

ERIC SCHMITT ALISSA J. RUBIN WASHINGTON

Five months after U.S.-backed forces ousted the Islamic State from its last shard of territory in Syria, the terrorist group is gathering new strength, conducting guerilla attacks across Iraq and Syria, retooling its financial networks and targeting new recruits at an allied-run tent camp, U.S. and Iraqi military and intelligence officers said.
Though President Donald

A 'safe zone' on the Syria-Turkey border?

The U.S. and Turkey are planning to establish a “safe area” in northern Syria for refugees fleeing conflict in the war-torn country



ELSEWHERE



Criticism over army chief unwarranted: Sri Lanka
COLOMBO
Sri Lanka on Tuesday brushed aside as “unwarranted and unacceptable” international criticism of its decision to name Shavendra Silva, 55, a war veteran accused of human rights violations, as its army chief. REUTERS

Brazil bus hijacker, armed with toy gun, shot dead
RIO DE JANEIRO
A hijacker armed with what turned out to be a toy gun was shot dead by police in Rio de Janeiro on Tuesday after he held a busload of passengers hostage for several hours on a bridge in peak-hour traffic. AFP

‘China backing discord campaign in Hong Kong’

Twitter and Facebook suspend accounts linked to campaign that targeted pro-democracy movement

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE HONG KONG

Twitter and Facebook have accused the Chinese government of backing a social media campaign to discredit Hong Kong’s pro-democracy movement and sow political discord in the city.
The American tech giants announced on Monday they had suspended nearly 1,000 active accounts linked to the campaign. Twitter said it had shut down about 2,00,000 more before they could inflict any damage.
“These accounts were deliberately and specifically attempting to sow political discord in Hong Kong, including undermining the legitimacy and political positions of the protest move-



Writing on the wall: Students looking at a wall decorated with sticky notes supporting the Hong Kong protests. ■ REUTERS

ment on the ground,” Twitter said, referring to the accounts it shut down.
Smear posts
Facebook said some of the posts from accounts it banned compared the protest

esters in Hong Kong with Islamic State militants, branded them “cockroaches” and alleged that they planned to kill people using slingshots.
Hong Kong is in the grip of an unprecedented political crisis that has seen millions

of people take to the streets demanding greater freedoms.
China’s communist rulers have warned they may be prepared to deploy force to quell the nearly three months of unrest, and likened violent protesters to “terrorists”.
Reliable evidence
The Chinese government is seeking to sway public opinion about Hong Kong, according to Twitter and Facebook.
“We have reliable evidence to support that this is a coordinated State-backed operation,” Twitter said.
Twitter and Facebook are banned in China, part of the government’s so-called

“Great Firewall” of censorship. Because of the bans, many of the fake accounts were accessed using “virtual private networks” that give a deceptive picture of the user’s location, Twitter said.
“However, some accounts accessed Twitter from specific unblocked IP addresses originating in mainland China,” it said.
Facebook said it had acted on a tip-off from Twitter, removing seven pages, three groups and five Facebook accounts that had about 15,500 followers.
Asked in Beijing about the closure of the accounts, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said: “I am not aware of the specific situation.”

Malaysia bans Zakir Naik from public activities

He apologises for his racist remarks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA KUALA LUMPUR

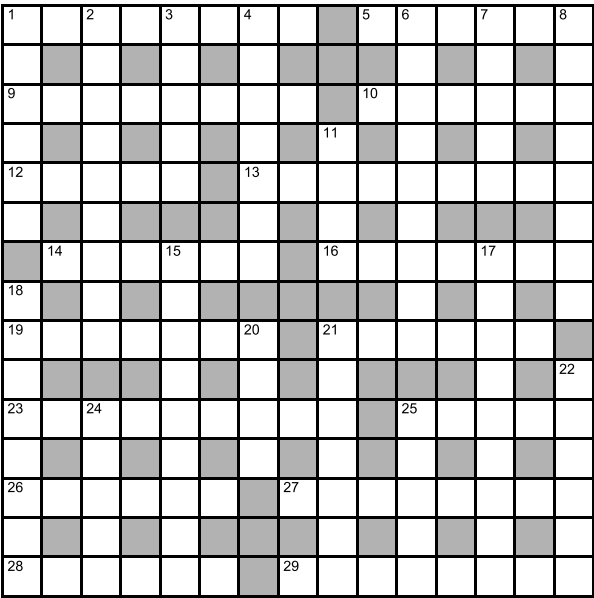
Zakir Naik on Tuesday apologised to Malaysians for making racist comments, after the radical televangelist was grilled for 10 hours by police. He has been banned from any public activities in the multi-ethnic country.
The official Bernama news agency reported that Naik, wanted by Indian authorities since 2016 for alleged money laundering and inciting extremism through hate speeches, issued an apology for the hurt caused by his controversial remarks against Malaysian Hindus and Chinese during a talk on August 8.
Malaysian Prime Minister



Zakir Naik

Mahathir Bin Mohamad Mahathir on Sunday said it was “quite clear” that Naik wanted to participate in racial politics.
“He is stirring up racial feelings. The police will have to investigate whether it is causing tension; obviously, it is,” he said.

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12710



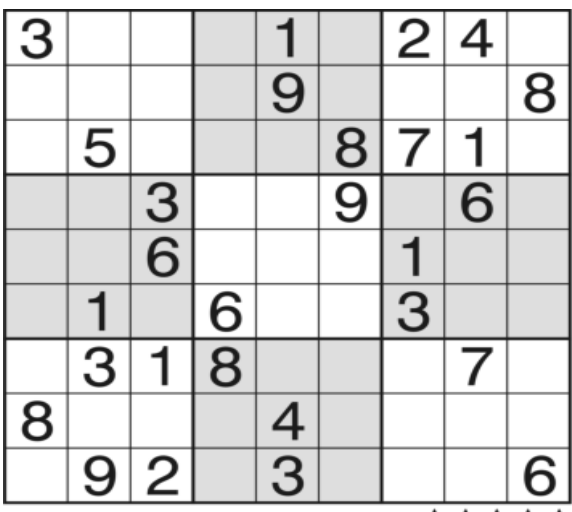
ACROSS
1 Liberal parting financial return for sound recording (8)
5 Sharp male supplanted Tesla with new and keen insight (6)
9 One that runs musical show on a hill (8)
10 Curtailed prank to return knitted fabric (6)
12 Nearly produce electromotive force with salt solution (5)

13 Clever bishop’s tirade about hostile institute (9)
14 Ninja guards withheld animal (6)
16 Instrument to smuggle ecstasy with ocean herb (7)
19 Electronic design is delicate (7)
21 Hundred and two engineers getting away to Java, maybe? (6)
23 Kit a valet misplaced being chatty (9)
25 Departed consuming first tropical refreshment (5)
26 Screen document covering temperature resistance (6)
27 Buy large net, building equipment primarily to get chemical substance (8)
28 European breaking box to build (6)
29 Perhaps a shot of energy thus protecting force? (8)

DOWN
1 Nationalist leaving ring with black oriental bird (6)
2 US native with ordinary beverage (9)
3 Idle for the most part, entering engineering degree, show great emotion (5)

(set by Lightning)
4 Caught at fight beside public house with iron rod (7)
6 Essentially searching for a river eel distributed in underwater ecosystem (5,4)
7 Drink tea following medical officer (5)
8 Musical symbols a tenor included in principle (8)
11 Tax he removed with old statesman (4)
15 Capable of joining with one, set off via tunnel (9)
17 Well-organised, passed net with proficiency (9)
18 Hit provided one with century, expressing supreme happiness (8)
20 Leave former lover with appeal (4)
21 Attache questioned smuggling bills for exchanging money (7)
22 Engineering other changes for this purpose (6)
24 Not doing well in the French city (5)
25 Covering segment of play erratically (5)

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12709
G D F R B B M
DOZE OILER ARAB
O A O O O R I
EDITED NECKBAND
T H I D G E
DISRAELI OGRESS
R O E L U
DAGWOOD DITTERS
T L O D G L O R Y
WEDDED O E L L O R Y
AERONAUT COOKIE
R W I S A W R
KISS DAISY EROS
N Y S E S D N

Solution to yesterday’s Sudoku
8 3 7 9 5 6 2 4 1
9 5 4 1 2 3 8 6 7
6 2 1 4 7 8 5 9 3
2 7 9 5 3 1 4 8 6
3 6 5 2 8 4 1 7 9
4 1 8 7 6 9 3 2 5
5 8 2 3 9 7 6 1 4
1 9 6 8 4 5 7 3 2
7 4 3 6 1 2 9 5 8

FAITH

Endorsing values

In Gokula, where Krishna grows up, the atmosphere has been idyllic and playful; but in Mathura as a Kshatriya, He and Balarama are expected to be formally educated and the Bhagavata Purana narrates the Gurukula term of the brothers under sage Sandipani. It is held that the boys spend sixty four days in the ashram when they quickly master all the sixty four arts and branches of learning. The Lord is a ‘Sarvajna,’ says Narayana Bhattatiri to emphasise that He is the essence of omniscience and the source of all knowledge and that perhaps formal learning may be superfluous for the Lord. But this episode only highlights the importance of learning under a guru, pointed out Sri Dushyanth Sridhar in a discourse. It reinforces the efficacy of the tradition where knowledge is handed down from master to disciple since days of yore.
After completion of studies, Krishna and Balarama, as grateful disciples, wish to show their gratitude to the Guru for his instruction. This is the Guru Dakshina that a disciple is expected to offer to the master and it has to be done in the bhava of service. The sage asks for the restoration of his son who had disappeared in the waters of Prabhasa Tirtha. The guru’s wish, an impossible task for any ordinary disciple, could be achieved by none other than the Lord. With great determination, Krishna and Balarama go to the ocean. The ocean king pays obeisance to them and informs them that the boy has been taken away by a demon named Panchajanya. Krishna kills the demon, but the boy is not with him. Krishna then enters the kingdom of Yama and finds the boy there. Yama is happy to welcome Krishna and the Lord brings the boy back to the hermitage of Sandipani. He turns the demon into a conch named Panchajanya.