

# Hong Kong cracks down on protesters

Pro-democracy activists arrested and later released on bail; organisers call off today’s protest march

**REUTERS**  
HONG KONG

Hong Kong authorities on Friday charged pro-democracy activist Joshua Wong with organising an illegal protest as they tighten a clampdown on unrest that has plunged the Asian financial hub into its biggest political crisis in more than two decades.

Mr. Wong, who led pro-democracy demonstrations five years ago that foreshadowed the latest turbulence, is the most prominent activist to be arrested since protests escalated in mid-June over fears China is exerting greater control over the city.

Police arrested several other activists and blocked plans for a mass demonstration on Saturday, in a show

of force a day before the fifth anniversary of China’s decision to rule out universal suffrage in the former British colony.

The bespectacled Mr. Wong, who was 17 when he became the face of the student-led Umbrella Movement, as the 2014 pro-democracy protests were called, has not been a prominent figure in the latest protests, which have no identifiable leaders.

He was released from jail in June after serving a five-week term for contempt of court.

Mr. Wong and fellow activist Agnes Chow were charged with unlawfully organising a public meeting outside police headquarters on June 21. They were re-



**Pressure tactics:** Activists Joshua Wong and Agnes Chow, right, after getting bail in Hong Kong. ■GETTY IMAGES

leased on bail and the case was adjourned until November 8.

“Two months ago I served all of my jail sentence and left prison. Unfortunately, under the chilling effects generated by Beijing and Hong Kong governments, we

are strongly aware how they arrest activists no matter whether they behave progressively or moderately,” he told reporters.

“All we ask for is just to urge Beijing and Hong Kong governments to withdraw the Bill, stop police brutality

and respond to our calls for a free election.”

Andy Chan, a founder of the pro-independence Hong Kong National Party that was banned last September, was arrested at Hong Kong airport on Thursday on suspicion of participating in riots and attacking police, police said.

Mr. Wong’s pro-democracy group, Demosisto, said the arrests were an attempt to scapegoat individuals in a movement that has built momentum without public figureheads.

The Civil Human Rights Front, the organiser of previous protests, cancelled a mass demonstration planned for Saturday after the police refused permission.

## INTERVIEW | ANDRÉ ARANHA CORRÊA DO LAGO

# ‘Amazon fire-fighting is Brazil’s internal problem’

**SUHASINI HAIDAR**  
**KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE**  
NEW DELHI

As fires rage through Brazil’s Amazon forests, the government led by President Jair Bolsonaro has rejected criticism of its handling of the situation and rebuffed a pledge by the G-7 to fund \$20 million for the fire-fighting operation, named “Operation Green Brazil”.

In an interview, Brazilian Ambassador André Aranha Corrêa do Lago says coping with the fires is a challenge, but must be seen as Brazil’s internal problem.



**THE WAY THE ISSUE WAS TAKEN TO THE G-7 WAS A KIND OF AFFRONT TO SOVEREIGNTY OF BRAZIL**  
ANDRÉ ARANHA CORRÊA DO LAGO  
Brazilian Ambassador

**How long will it take to douse the fires and how much is it likely to cost?**  
■ The whole world is looking at this issue because of the severity of the fires, but also because the Amazon is the largest tropical forest left in the world. So the solidarity over the tragedy has been stronger than anyone expected. What we feel in Brazil, as we evaluate the cost and damage, is that it is also necessary to see the context in which these fires are occurring. This is the dry season in Brazil and many fires do occur each year at this time although there have probably been more fires this year. We are taking all measures to control them; our President [Bolsonaro] gave a national address pledging zero tolerance on illegal deforestation, and people deliberately setting fires.

**Why did Brazil reject the G-7 pledge of \$20 million to deal with the fires?**  
■ I think we have to consider the bigger picture: the fires are not a surprise and they are not happening for the

first time. Brazil is a country well capable of dealing with this issue and we have the most experience in tackling these fires. We have already established many international mechanisms to be able to access resources that are needed for this kind of challenge. The way the issue was taken to the G-7 was a kind of affront to Brazil’s sovereignty, as if no one in Brazil was dealing with it, when in fact Brazil is a leader in combating deforestation and forest fires. When the G-7 was discussing the problem in our country, they should have ensured that Brazil was also invited to the session.

**Can the environment ever be a sovereign issue? You may say the Amazon is an internal issue since it is in Brazil but the forests there are called the lungs of the world...**  
■ The issue of sovereignty has been discussed for a long time about the Amazon. Parts of the forest are in different countries and we are each conscious of the treasure we have, and we are all sensitive to the need for

its sustainable development so that it benefits the local populations that live there. We have 20 million people living in the Brazilian Amazon and we need to find activities for them that are compatible with its preservation. Although we are a developing country we have the most extraordinary institutions to study the Amazon and understand how to preserve it. So for the G-7 to believe they can just give a certain amount of money and that will solve the problem is to disrespect the years of work and negotiations that Brazil has undertaken for the Amazon. It has not that we refuse all aid, but it has to be done with some thought.

**Is there space for cooperation with India?**  
■ The Brazilian-preserved Amazon is larger than all of India. Can you imagine what it takes to have capacity and equipment to fight fires in an area the size of India? India and Brazil are very close on all discussions on climate change and in financing for the developing world, particularly in the BASIC group. Very few countries know as much about how Brazil is working on this problem as India because we have a constant dialogue on it.

**PM Modi is travelling to Brazil later this year... Will this be one of the areas of cooperation we will see movement on?**  
■ We have so many areas of cooperation from trade and investment to education and science and technology. On environmental issues and global finance, we are both convinced of the power of multilateralism. Brazil and India are united on this.

## ELSEWHERE



**Iran tanker is now headed to Lebanon, says Turkey**  
ISTANBUL

Turkey said on Friday that Iranian tanker Adrian Darya, at the centre of a row between the U.S. and Tehran, was headed to Lebanon’s waters after changing course several times, although Beirut said it was not informed of the plan. **REUTERS**

**China expels WSJ scribe who wrote on Xi’s cousin**  
BEIJING

China has not renewed the press credentials of Chun Han Wong, who worked for the *Wall Street Journal’s* Beijing bureau since 2014, for writing a critical article in July about President Xi Jinping’s cousin. It amounts to the effective expulsion of the journalist. **AFF**

# ‘Mental care to curb gun violence’

White House staff scramble to create more psychiatric hospitals

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
WASHINGTON

When shots rang out last year at a high school in Parkland, Florida, leaving 17 people dead, President Donald Trump quickly turned his thoughts to creating more mental institutions.

When back-to-back mass shootings in Dayton, Ohio, and El Paso, Texas, jolted the nation earlier this month, Mr. Trump again spoke of “building new facilities” for the mentally ill as a way to reduce mass shootings.

“We don’t have those institutions any more and people can’t get proper care,” Mr. Trump lamented at a New Hampshire campaign rally not long after the latest shootings.

Now, in response to Mr. Trump’s concerns, White



House staff members are looking for ways to incorporate the President’s desire for more institutions into a long list of other measures aimed at reducing gun violence.

**‘Outdated thinking’**  
It’s the latest example of White House policy aides scrambling to come up with concrete policies or propo-

sals to fill out ideas tossed out by the President. And it’s an idea that mental health professionals say reflects outdated thinking on the treatment of mental illness.

As the White House looks for ways to fight gun violence, officials have looked at Indiana as one potential model in addressing mental illness. The State opened a new 159-bed psychiatric hospital in March, Indiana’s first in more than 50 years.

Paul Gionfriddo, president and chief executive of the advocacy group Mental Health America, said Mr. Trump is pursuing a 19th century solution to a 21st century problem. “Anybody with any sense of history understands they were a complete failure. They were money down the drain,” said Mr. Gionfriddo.

# U.S. launches command for space warfare

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump has launched a new Pentagon command dedicated to warfare in space, as the U.S. sees China and Russia pressing hard to erode its advantage in the newest military frontier.

“This is a landmark day, one that recognises the centrality of space to America’s security and defence,” Mr. Trump said.

“SpaceCom will ensure that America’s dominance in space is never threatened.”

While the U.S. Air Force already has a dedicated space warfare operation, SpaceCom will heighten its importance and foster specialised systems and training for space showdowns.

# Lankan court orders remains of Easter attacker relocated

Body was buried in a Hindu cemetery after Muslims refused space

**MEERA SRINIVASAN**  
COLOMBO

A Sri Lankan court on Friday directed the police to exhume the remains of an Easter Sunday terror suspect from a cemetery in the eastern district of Batticaloa, following residents’ protests amid tenuous communal relations in the multi-ethnic district.

Earlier, Muslims of Katankudy town in Batticaloa had rejected burial space for Mohamed Nazar Mohamed Azad, who authorities said blew himself up at the local Zion Church, killing dozens including children in the April 21 Easter Sunday serial

blasts. Over 250 people died and scores were injured in the bombings in and around Colombo and in Batticaloa.

Muslims across the island vehemently condemned the terror attack and refused to allow burial of the suspects’ remains in any of their burial grounds, saying, “They are not Muslims.”

According to *Sunday Times*, the District Secretary of Batticaloa told reporters recently that the authorities decided to bury the remains of the alleged suicide bomber at a Hindu cemetery in Kalliyankaadu.

However, residents and some local politicians prot-

ested, saying the move hurt their sentiments. Protesters took to the streets until police fired tear gas at them, and the situation on the ground remained volatile over the past week.

On Friday, the Batticaloa Magistrate’s Court ordered that the remains of the alleged bomber be exhumed from the Kalliyakandu cemetery, and be buried elsewhere before Sept. 2, local media said. “The remains will be exhumed on Monday and kept in a mortuary until the government agent finds a suitable place to bury them,” police spokesman Ruwan Gunasekera told *Reuters*.

# What’s Boris Johnson’s Brexit strategy?

PM has narrowed the lawmakers’ opportunities to reject his Brexit plans

**STANLEY JOHNNY**

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s move to “prorogue” or suspend Parliament for five weeks has triggered furious responses from opposition leaders. The decision comes at a time when Britain is inching closer towards the October 31 deadline for Brexit.

**What is prorogation?**  
Typically, prorogation means bringing a parliamentary session to an end by the monarch on the advice of the government. In this case, Queen Elizabeth II approved Mr. Johnson’s request to suspend Parliament between

September 9-12 and October 14. Usually, Parliament is prorogued every year. But the current session began in 2017 – Theresa May, Mr. Johnson’s predecessor, didn’t recommend prorogation last year due to Brexit talks. In the new session, to be opened by the Queen on October 14, the government can present a new legislative agenda.

**What does it mean?**  
By suspending Parliament, Mr. Johnson has effectively narrowed the lawmakers’ opportunities to reject his Brexit plans. The MPs, who are currently on recess, are supposed to be back in Par-



Boris Johnson

liament on September 3. Before the suspension of Parliament, they were scheduled to be in session till September 16. This would have been crucial time for rebel MPs to come up with legislation against a no-deal Brexit, which Mr. Johnson has not ruled out. Now that Parliament will be closed on either September 9 or 12, the time available for MPs in the cur-

rent session to legislate against a potential no-deal Brexit has shrunk.

Usually, MPs go on recess in the third week of September every year for their party conferences and reconvene in early October. This year, the plan was to take break

## EXPLAINER

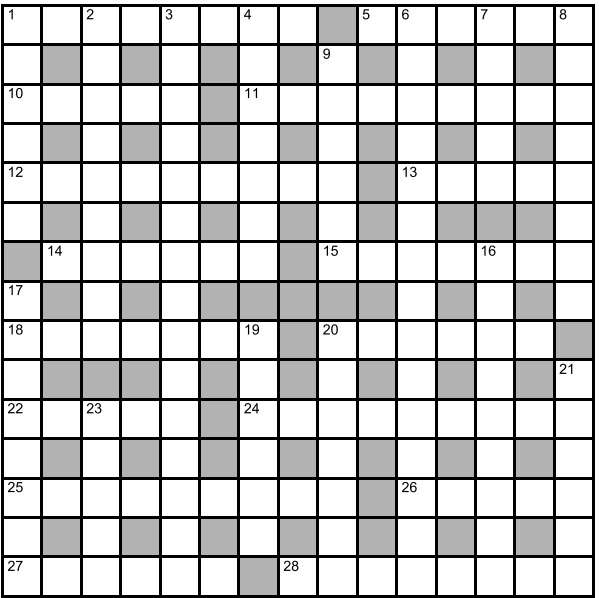
from September 17 to October 8 so that they will have at least three weeks to discuss Brexit plans before the October 31 deadline. But after Mr. Johnson’s move, the Queen will reopen Parliament on October 14. There’s an EU summit on October 17-18 in which Mr. Johnson could seek a fresh Brexit deal.

After the summit, if he has a new deal, he will present it

to the lawmakers, which means the MPs will get only nine working days to either pass or reject the deal.

**What is next?**  
Mr. Johnson’s plan is clearly to cut short the time available for MPs. With a reduced timeframe, he will try to force his Brexit legislation through Parliament. Once Parliament reconvenes, Mr. Johnson would ask the lawmakers either to support his plan or get ready for a no-deal exit. When Theresa May was the Prime Minister, MPs rejected her Brexit deal thrice. They failed to come up with an alternative plan either. MPs won’t have many options this time. The threat of no-deal will be hanging over them with the clock ticking fast.

## THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12719



- **ACROSS**
- 1 Mournful detective beginning to imbibe in bar (8)
- 5 Exposing a Republican in endless bout of overindulgence (6)
- 10 Poorest performance at the end in Final (5)
- 11 Fights with endless expertise and courage to protect workers (9)

- 12 Wanting money, nasty son breaks box and takes away all the cash (6,3)
- 13 Dame, a little risqué, naughtily showing skin (5)
- 14 Conspire to suppress one model’s statement of grievance (6)
- 15 Whip rogues slyly smuggling cocaine (7)
- 18 Unpredictable rogue consumed by rage around college (7)
- 20 Execute man beginning to agitate in base (6)
- 22 Not many understanding? That is an art film (5)
- 24 Rages about corrupt rat – it infuriates (9)
- 25 Return in the future – beg your pardon? (4,5)
- 26 Eerie moon angrily kills one ruler of Islamic country (5)
- 27 Recruits from New Orleans not accepted (6)
- 28 Real nasty fellow kicked out (8)
- **DOWN**
- 1 Patrol around gangster’s mansion (6)

- (set by Dr. X)
- 2 Tripper scoring ecstasy in party caught by clerk (9)
- 3 Hit tantalising shot over point but an unexpected disappointment at the end (1,5,2,3,4)
- 4 Yahoo holds summit, wants power to release secret information (4,3)
- 6 Heavily equipped like a shark? (5,2,3,5)
- 7 Emotional wife abandons champion (5)
- 8 Fine spirit, special, comparable with rum at first (8)
- 9 Precious stones the husband lost in upsetting narrative (6)
- 16 Criticize worker, fellow making traditional English fare (5,4)
- 17 Ordinary cod, one swimming in lake (8)
- 19 Reptile in train enters toilet (6)
- 20 Manage to get into Dubai, frantically abandoning a country in Africa (7)
- 21 Stellar paintings put up in a sale every so often (6)
- 23 Was sorry about stifling man’s protest (5)

## SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12718								
I	N	D	E	T	E	R	M	I
U	N	T	O	A	O			
U	N	C	H	I	D	E	B	O
L	L	H	O	E	S	C	R	
T	H	E	O	R	I	S	E	R
R	A	A	A	B	U	E		
A	I	R	F	L	O	W	T	R
V	S	R	A	E	L	I	E	B
O	E	O	R	I	S	E		
L	I	V	E	G	L	I	T	T
E	E	T	W	E	W	N	N	
T	E	R	R	O	R	I	S	E
I	D	N	T	A	E			
B	E	Y	O	N	D	T	H	E

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

## FAITH

# Spiritual knowledge

Studying under a guru is the only way to acquire spiritual knowledge. Mere bookish knowledge is not enough. It will not help us understand the nature of the atma, and will not pave the way for ultimate liberation. Saints and jnanis have shown us the importance of learning under a guru.

Saint Vallalar, in his *Deivamani Malai*, says that he has not kept the company of scholars. He has not thought of how to study whatever is needed for philosophical enrichment. Here Vallalar’s words remind one of verses in the *Thirukkural*, said M.A. Manickavelu in a discourse. Thiruvalluvar explains the quality of learned men. He says that a poet behaves in such a way, that once he departs, he is missed by everyone he met. Truly learned men are sweet natured and are a pleasure to talk to. They impart knowledge that will see us through the difficulties of life. It is the company of such people that he has not had, rues Vallalar. Gnansambandar says that those who are well read, those who have had the opportunity to listen to important things, those who are service-minded – all such people worship Lord Siva.

Lord Siva, in His manifestation as Dakshinamurthy, sat under a banyan tree, and taught the Sanakadi rishis. But He taught through His silence. Thirunavukkarasar says that he has not studied the Sastras and is caught in ignorance. Why have I taken this birth, asks Thirunavukkarasar, and prays for Lord Siva’s grace. Manickavachagar tells himself, “You have not understood God’s nature.” Thirunavukkarasar says that jnanis find only one fruit enjoyable, and that is God Himself. Sundarar says that he learnt many things, which are of no use in achieving liberation, but he did not acquire knowledge about God. Thus, the Nayanmars, through their many verses, show us the importance of jnana.