

‘Hong Kong facing worst crisis since 1997’

Chinese official says protests are getting increasingly violent and having ‘a broad impact on society’

ASSOCIATED PRESS
SHENZHEN

China on Wednesday said Hong Kong is facing the most severe crisis since the city was handed over to Beijing by Britain in 1997.

Those protests are getting increasingly violent and having “an increasingly broad impact on society,” said Zhang Xiaoming, Director of the Liaison Office of the Central People’s Government in Hong Kong.

“It can be said that Hong Kong is facing the most severe situation it has faced since the handover,” Mr. Zhang told Hong Kong residents attending a seminar in the mainland city of Shenzhen just across the border from the Asian financial hub that has been wracked by daily protests against the administration of Chief Executive Carrie Lam.

Officials in Beijing were “highly concerned” and studying the situation to decide on measures to take, he said.

China so far has not visibly intervened in the situation, though in editorials and statements from officials it has condemned demonstrators and protest organisers as criminals, clowns and “violent radicals” and alleged that they have been inflamed by politicians from the U.S., Taiwan and elsewhere.

Speculation that the military could be deployed grew after Chinese officials pointed to an article in Hong Kong law that allows troops already stationed in the city to help with “public order maintenance” at the Hong Kong government’s request.

Ms. Lam reappeared on Wednesday at the opening of an exhibition marking the 70th anniversary of the founding of the Communist state.

“Over recent months, con-

City at a crossroads

China’s semi-autonomous city of Hong Kong has been rocked since April by increasingly violent protests that were sparked by a proposed extradition law

THE TRIGGER

April 28: Thousands march against a Bill that would allow extraditions to mainland China

There are fears that the law will allow Beijing to pursue its political enemies in Hong Kong

June 9: Despite government tweaks to soften the law, tens of thousands more protest again

It descends into violence after midnight when police, using batons and pepper spray hoses, try to disperse small groups of protesters who hurl bottles and use metal barricades

June 12: Huge crowds attempt to storm Parliament, delaying the Bill’s second reading

June 15: Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam postpones the Bill, but a fresh demonstration the next day calls for its full withdrawal



THE BILL IS DEAD

July 1: Just ahead of an annual march to mark Hong Kong’s return to China, young masked protesters take over key roads, sparking new clashes with police

Later in the day,

hundreds smash their way into Parliament and ransack the building, daubing its walls with anti-government graffiti

July 9: Lam says the extradition Bill “is dead” but protesters dismiss her comments

DEMONSTRATORS ATTACKED

July 21: Protesters are back on the streets and police fire tear gas and rubber bullets

In the Yuen Long area, masked men — suspected

to be triad gangsters — attack protesters inside a train station

July 30 44 protesters are charged with rioting

UNREST SPREADS

August 3: Demonstrators erect barricades in the tourist district of Tsim Sha Tsui

August 5: Activists disrupt the subway system, paralysing much of the city and delaying scores of international flights

148 people were arrested

August 6: China warns that “those who play with fire will perish by it”

In return :

A protester throws a tear gas canister back at the police in Hong Kong.

SOURCE : AFP

At least 14 killed, 145 injured in Taliban attack in Kabul

Explosion was triggered by a truck bomb, claim insurgents

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KABUL

At least 14 people were killed and 145 wounded in a massive bomb blast on Wednesday as fresh violence gripped Kabul even as insurgents appear to be closing in on a peace deal with the U.S.

The bloodshed in the capital comes amid an ongoing surge in attacks across Afghanistan, where some 1,500 people were killed or injured last month alone.

A huge plume of black smoke was seen rising over western Kabul following a massive explosion at the entrance to a police compound on Wednesday morning.

The Afghan Interior Ministry said the explosion was caused by a car bomb, but the Taliban, which claimed the attack, said it was a much larger truck bomb. An



Mayhem continues: An Afghan police officer inspecting the site of a blast in Kabul on Wednesday. ■ REUTERS

Afghan security official also said it was a truck bomb.

Images on social media showed toppled blast walls surrounding several largely destroyed buildings in a compound.

Afghan authorities said at least 10 civilians and four police officers had been

killed. Another 145 people, including 92 civilians, were wounded.

The attack came after the Taliban warned Afghans on Tuesday to keep away from the presidential election due in September. The Taliban has ordered its fighters to “stand against” the polls.

S. Korea to pay more to keep U.S. troops on ground: Trump

Over 28,500 soldiers guard against threats from N. Korea

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump said on Wednesday that South Korea has agreed to pay the U.S. “substantially more” for protection against North Korea and that talks have begun to further increase payments.

Mr. Trump tweeted the U.S. “has been paid very little” for decades but last year “South Korea paid \$990,000,000.”

South Korea and the U.S. in March signed a deal to increase Seoul’s payments for



Donald Trump addressing U.S. troops in Osan Air Base on June 30. ■ REUTERS

U.S. troop deployment there from \$850 million in 2018 to \$924 million in 2019. The White House, when asked about the apparent discre-

pancy between Mr. Trump’s tweet and those figures, said it would look into it.

Mr. Trump’s financial demands have triggered worries in South Korea that he might withdraw some of the 28,500 U.S. troops.

South Korea’s Foreign Ministry said on Wednesday that the cost-sharing talks had not officially started. But it said that both sides during National Security Adviser John Bolton’s visit to Seoul last month agreed that the talks should proceed in a “rational and fair direction.”

ELSEWHERE



‘N. Korean launches were warning to U.S., S. Korea’

SEoul North Korean leader Kim Jong-un said Pyongyang’s latest missile launches were meant as a warning to Washington and Seoul over their joint military exercises, state news agency KCNA reported on Wednesday. AFP

Army spies charged for attack on scribe in Lanka

COLOMBO Sri Lanka on Wednesday charged two army spies for a decade-old serious assault of a newspaper editor. Rivira editor Upali Tennakoon and his wife survived the attack in January 2009 as they drove to work in Colombo. AFP

Trump visits victims in Ohio amid protests

REUTERS
DAYTON

U.S. President Donald Trump met in Ohio on Wednesday with victims and first responders from one of last weekend’s two deadly mass shootings that shocked the country, even as critics and protesters accused him of inflaming tensions with anti-immigrant and racially charged rhetoric.

Mr. Trump visited Miami Valley Hospital in Dayton, Ohio, where the victims were treated after nine people and the suspect were killed in a rampage early on Sunday.

Crowds of protesters outside the hospital set up a “baby Trump” blimp balloon, chanted “Do Something!” and held signs reading



Protesters outside the Miami Valley Hospital in Ohio. ■ REUTERS

“Hate not welcome here,” “Stop this terror,” and “You are why.”

Later, Mr. Trump will visit the Texas city of El Paso, on the border with Mexico, where 22 people were killed at a Walmart store on Saturday.

The back-to-back massacres, occurring 13 hours apart, have reopened the national debate over gun safety.

Kong) administration has become completely untrustworthy and this is just so said for Hong Kong,” Ms. Mo said.

Lawyers’ march

Protesters have come from all professions and age groups. On Wednesday, several hundred lawyers sought a meeting with Secretary of Justice Teresa Cheng and staged a silent protest. The authorities have refused to

open a dialogue with protesters and there was no immediate response from Ms. Cheng’s office.

Margaret Ng, a lawyer, said they wanted to meet Ms. Cheng to seek an assurance that there was no political motive in prosecution of those detained. More than 500 people have been arrested since the protests began and dozens have already been charged with rioting.

Is ‘Bernie or Bust’ the future of American Left?

Sanders’ popularity has helped swell the ranks of the Democratic Socialists of America

MARC TRACY
AUDRA MELTON
ATLANTA

Three years ago, the Democratic Socialists of America had 5,000 members. Just another booth at the campus activities fair, another three-initialled group an uncle might mention over lunch.

Today, dues-paying DSA members exceed 56,000. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, a rising star of American politics, is one. So are a couple of dozen local elected officials across the country. Sen. Bernie Sanders, a presidential candidate, is not, but he may as well be: he identifies as a democratic socialist and enjoys a totemic status with the group’s members. Mr. Sanders’ popularity

during his unsuccessful 2016 run for the Democratic presidential nomination helped swell DSA’s ranks. But a very different figure is primarily responsible for the group’s staggering growth: President Donald Trump, who recently associated “radical socialism” with the “destruction of the American dream”. In fact, the majority of current DSA members signed up in the past two years.

“Trump scared a lot of people,” said Maria Svart, the national director. “So they joined.”

Most of the roughly 1,000 DSA delegates who gathered at the convention last weekend to set organisation policy doubtlessly share Ms. Svart’s resoundingly nega-



Bernie Sanders

tive view of the President. And nearly as many would agree with her that Mr. Sanders, an independent senator from Vermont, is the one to beat him. The group endorsed Mr. Sanders in March.

But if Mr. Sanders is not the nominee? The group

passed a resolution on Friday saying it will not officially endorse anyone else. For the DSA, it is “Bernie or Bust.” The vote does not mean DSA members cannot vote for a non-Sanders nominee in November 2020, of course, nor even that DSA cannot mobilise swing-State votes for such a nominee, as it did in 2016 when it did not endorse Hillary Clinton.

Unifying figure

Yet the vote was a reflection of this charged moment for left-wing activists as well as the singular role Mr. Sanders plays in the minds of many members. “Bernie is a uniquely unifying figure in the DSA,” said Thea Riofrancos, of the Providence, Rhode Is-

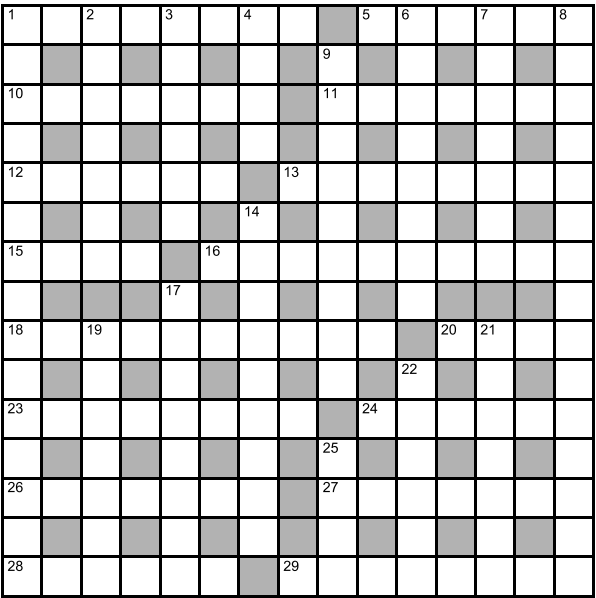
land chapter.

Several DSA members made the persuasive case that Mr. Sanders’ 2016 campaign fundamentally shifted the Democratic Party leftward, particularly on the signature issue of single-payer “Medicare for All.”

And Winnie Wong, a campaign adviser for Mr. Sanders, who said she was attending the convention as a rank-and-file member and observer, not a delegate, in turn, credited the DSA for helping popularise Medicare for All, a policy it endorsed at its 2017 convention.

“I am extremely happy that the activist base of the DSA is energized around making sure we move the goal posts,” she said. NY TIMES

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12699



ACROSS

- 1 Reserved beach around the tip of Triplicane (3-5)
- 5 Mend carried out retaining middle fold of tomb (6)
- 10 Sentimental Frenchman endlessly lauding dancing (7)
- 11 Revised report about one French mime (7)

- 12 Spell ‘canter’ incorrectly (6)
- 13 Writing on the wall: “German count healthy individual” (8)
- 15 Flower in the eye (4)
- 16 Interpreting prisoner’s deceptive plan to trap Russian (10)
- 18 Aim to retain central hero as Number 1 (10)
- 20 The old, oddly thin, elusive subject (4)
- 23 In a month trophy goes to a new resident (8)
- 24 Resident Editor to follow market (6)
- 26 Exaggerate what’s plain about airconditioning (7)
- 27 Copy lass’ abrupt, odd Caribbean music (7)
- 28 Madman — last one in station, say (6)
- 29 Newspaper editing site’s revised “Pesky Doc” (4,4)

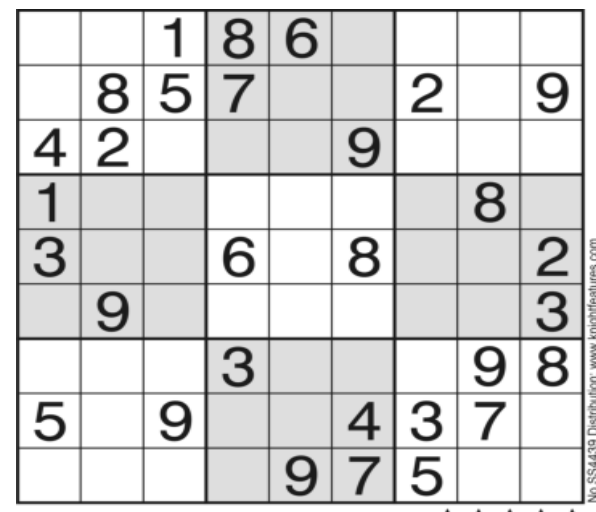
DOWN

- 1 What a mystery solver or you would look for (9,2,2,2)

(set by Gridman)

- 2 Nuts pushed French friend into huge wave (7)
- 3 Second force leaves nothing to piece together (6)
- 4 Force starts to dwell in nice temperature (4)
- 6 Begin shooting — around it, people may gather in winter (4,4)
- 7 Swallow one drink (7)
- 8 If all equipments are in disrepair, _ _ _ (7,4,4)
- 9 Tyrannised by spreading dope about the reporters (9)
- 14 Page introducing pages (5,4)
- 17 Snow lander to avoid trail (3-5)
- 19 Old standard-bearer like lingo (7)
- 21 Model, once buxom (7)
- 22 Put into use odd deep trick (6)
- 25 Somehow chose to ignore second iteration (4)

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12698

MAHARAJ	RIPOFF							
ABINE	AUA	EF						
ROBIN	CONTRALTO							
RIE	AUS	LR						
INTEGER	PENSIVE							
AUU	AJ	NI						
GEES	NOTTIPPING							
E	DR							
BRAIN	WAVE	VISTA						
RTU	AGE	PF						
OUTGROW	SENDOFF							
KATA	U	IN	FA					
ENCOUNTER	RISHI							
RHR	E	E	OR					
METEOR	DESERTS							

Solution to yesterday’s Sudoku

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

FAITH

His inscrutable ways

Saints and sages in search of realisation claim in one voice that the ways of the Lord always remain inscrutable. Manikavachagar hails Him as “Ullam kavar kalvan,” the thief who steals the heart. Is it not the greatest fortune to have the heart stolen thus by Him? This is what sages steeped in meditation want to attain.

This profound truth realised by the Gopis is translated in simple terms in the Bhramara Gita or the Ode to the bee, pointed out Nochur Sri Venkataraman in a discourse. Though their words flow as Ninda Stuti, it is all praise for Krishna who is none other than the Supreme Truth. “The Lord belongs to all and none can own Him. Even Mahalakshmi, His divine consort has to put up with His fickle ways. He is adept in stealing the hearts of people which He does as easily as He steals butter. Now their hearts are not available for worldly objects. How easily Krishna has abandoned them who had given up everything that is theirs, sons, husbands, etc for His sake, they ask. His various deeds in His avatars only confirm His atrocious conduct, they say. Did He not have Bali bound in the most ungrateful manner after receiving his worship and gifts? Did He not kill Vali the monkey king like a cruel hunter in a deceitful manner, hiding behind the trees? How pitiless of Him to cut off Surpanakha’s nose who was in love with Him? He is a dangerous person as one can see what effects He has unleashed on them. He comes and goes as He wills. Led by His false professions they have been ensnared by His love and now suffer Viraha tapa.”

But their Viraha tapa is a state that leads to realisation. There can be no separation between the Lord and His bhakta, since He is always present in the heart, mind, breaths, the pancha bhutas, senses and organs.