Trump abruptly fires hardliner NSA John Bolton

Strongly disagreed with many of his suggestions, as did others in the administration, the U.S. President said in a tweet

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN

U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton, considered the most hawkish among senior Trump administration officials, left his post on

Mr. Bolton, the third National Security Adviser in the current administration, had a long list of differences with U.S. President Donald Trump on a range of security and foreign policy issues including Iran, North Korea and Afghanistan, leading to his departure around midday on Tuesday

"I informed John Bolton last night that his services are no longer needed at the White House," Mr. Trump said in a tweet.

"I disagreed strongly with many of his suggestions, as did others in the Administration, and therefore I asked John for his resignation, which was given to me this much for his service," he said, adding that he would name a new NSA next week.

'Different versions'

Mr Bolton's account of his departure differed from that of his former boss.

"I offered to resign last night and President Trump said, 'Let's talk about it tomorrow," read a tweet from Mr. Bolton, that followed Mr Trump's tweet.

"I will have my say in due course. But I have given you the facts on the resignation. My sole concern is U.S. national security," Mr. Bolton is reported as saying in the Washington Post.

The differences between the two were known before Mr. Bolton took on the job in April 2018, with Mr. Bolton, an erstwhile UN Ambassador, taking a trademark hawkish approach to foreign policv in contrast to Mr. Trump's isolationist and



Revolving door: John Bolton, left, listening to President Donald Trump, far right, during an event in Florida. • AP/FILE

proach. One month prior to joining the administration, Mr. Bolton, who is a declared proponent of regime change in Iran, wrote an op-ed calling for a pre-emptive strike on the country. Shortly after he took over as NSA, the U.S. withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the international deal to limit Iran's nuclear programme. More

reportedly support direct talks between Mr. Trump and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani.

On North Korea, Mr. Bolton did not reportedly approve of the bonhomie between the regime's leader Kim Jung-un and Mr. Trump, and on Russia, Mr. Bolton reportedly did not support Mr. Trump's repeated calls for Russia to rejoin the G-7.

between Mr. Trump and his NSA came to the surface once more. The two men were at odds with each other on a settlement the U.S. was finalising with the Taliban and Mr. Bolton reportedly worked on Mr. Trump to stop him from closing the deal. Mr. Trump said on Monday that he had called off a last minute gathering at Camp David with the Taliban and Afghan President Ashraf Ghani after the Taliban claimed responsibility for an attack that killed 12 people, including an American soldier.

Approximately an hour before news of Mr. Bolton's departure broke, the White House Press Office had said that Mr. Bolton, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin would address a joint press briefing, suggesting that Mr. Bolton's departure was not anticipated. A White

Bolton had left the White House after Mr. Trump's tweet and would not attend the press briefing, the Associated Press reported.

Mr. Pompeo and Mr. Mnuchin addressed the press on strengthening counter-terrorism designations, but ended up taking questions on their Mr Bolton's departure. "I'm never surprised, and

I don't mean that on just this issue," Mr. Pompeo said when asked if he was surprised by Mr. Bolton's The Secretary of State had

significant differences with Mr. Bolton, and he alluded to these during the press brief-Mr. Bolton's departure

could see an easing of tensions between the U.S. and Iran.

Asked if Mr. Trump could meet Mr. Rouhani at the United Nations General Assembly later this month, Mr.

U.S. President says talks with Taliban are 'dead'

The insurgent group vows to fight on

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

The Taliban on Tuesday vowed to continue fighting against U.S. forces in Afghanistan after President Donald Trump said talks with the insurgents were "dead", saying Washington would regret abandoning negotiations.

The renewed war of words between the two sides raised the spectre of violence in Afghanistan as Mr. Trump and the Taliban pledged to take the fight to each other following the precipitous collapse in talks.

"We had two ways to end occupation in Afghanistan, one was jihad and fighting, the other was talks and negotiations," Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid

"If Trump wants to stop talks, we will take the first way and they will soon re-

The Taliban's statement came hours after Mr. Trump said the U.S. was walking away from negotiations after nearly a year of talks that aimed to pave the way for an American withdrawal from Afghanistan following 18 years of war. "They are dead. As far as I am concerned, they are dead," Mr. Trump said.

The announcement followed Trump's dramatic cancellation of a top-secret plan to fly Taliban leaders in for direct talks at the Camp David presidential facility outside Washington.

Driving another nail into the coffin of what had appeared to be nearly finalised negotiations, Mr. Trump said a military onslaught on the guerrillas was at its fiercest level in a decade. "Over the last four days, we have been hitting our Enemy harder than at any time in the last ten years!" he tweeted.

After latest protests, Hong Kong leader tells U.S. not to 'interfere'

'Any change in economic ties will threaten mutual benefits'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE HONG KONG

Hong Kong's embattled leader warned the U.S. on Tuesday not to "interfere" with her government's response to the city's pro-democracy movement.

Protesters took to the streets again on Sunday, marching to the American consulate to call on Congress to pass a Bill expressing support for the pro-democracy movement. The proposed law could undermine Hong Kong's special U.S. trade privileges by mandating regular checks on whether authorities were



Boo anthem: Pro-democracy supporters at a FIFA World Cup qualifying match at the Hong Kong Stadium. • GETTY IMAGES

respecting the Basic Law that underpins the city's semi-autonomous status.

But pro-Beijing CEO Carrie Lam said that any change to its economic relationship with the U.S. would threaten "mutual benefits".

Meanwhile, Hong Kong fans booed their own national anthem and sang in protest against Beijing's rule at a World Cup qualifying match in Hong Kong stadium.

Spy who exposed 'Putin's role' in U.S. polls extracted

The informant inside Kremlin was instrumental in charting CIA's conclusion on Russia's interference

ADAM GOLDMAN DAVID E. SANGER

Decades ago, the CIA recruited and carefully cultivated a midlevel Russian official who began rapidly advancing through the governmental ranks. Eventually, American spies struck gold: the longtime source landed an influential position that came with access to the highest level of the Kremlin.

As U.S. officials began to realise that Russia was trying to sabotage the 2016 presidential election, the informant became one of the CIA's most important – and highly protected - assets. But when intelligence offi-



Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Kremlin. • AFP/FILE

cials revealed the severity of Russia's election interference with unusual detail later that year, the news media picked up on details about the CIA's Kremlin sources.

about safety made the ardu-

ous decision in late 2016 to offer to extract the source from Russia. The situation grew more tense when the informant at first refused, citing family concerns – prompting consternation at CIA headquarters and sowing doubts among some U.S. counterintelligence officials about the informant's trustworthiness. But the CIA pressed again months later after more media inquiries. This time, the informant The move brought to an

end the career of one of the CIA's most important sources. It also effectively blinded U.S. intelligence officials to the view from inside Russia as they sought clues about Kremlin interferences in U.S. elections.

CNN first reported the 2017 extraction on Monday. Other details – including the source's history with the agency and the cascade of doubts set off by the inforon interviews with current and former officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity. Officials did not disclose the informant's identity or new location, both closely held secrets. The person's life remains in danger, offi-

mant's subsequent refusal -

have not been previously re-

ported. This article is based

cials said, pointing to Moscow's attempts last year to assassinate Sergei V. Skripal, a former Russian intelligence official. The Moscow informant was instrumental to the CIA's most explosive conclusion about Russia's interference: that President Putin ordered and orchestrated it himself. NY TIMES

ELSEWHERE



if re-elected: Netanyahu

JERUSALEM Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu issued a deeply controversial pledge on Tuesday to annex the Jordan Valley in the occupied West Bank if re-elected in September 17 polls. AFP

More than 30 pilgrims dead in Iraq stampede

More than 30 pilgrims died and dozens were injured on Tuesday in a stampede at a major shrine in the Iraqi city of Karbala on the Shiite holy day of Ashura. AFP

Soon, flights will link Jaffna to Indian cities

They will run from Palaly airport to Kochi, Mumbai and New Delhi

Sri Lanka's Civil Aviation Authority is gearing up to operate commercial flights from the island's northern city of Jaffna to select Indian cities. Preparations are on to commence flights from midaccording October, officials.

Flights will operate from Palaly airport in Jaffna Peninsula to Kochi, Mumbai and New Delhi. "We are working according to the directive from the Transport and Civil Aviation Ministry," a senior official from the Civil Aviation Authority told The Hindu.

A "technical team" from

India is scheduled to visit Sri ing greater trade activity. Lanka next week to study the facilities in the airport, according to Colombo-based official sources.

The development of the Palaly airport, some 20 km north of Jaffna town, has been on the cards for some years now. Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe has, on multiple occasions, spoken of proposals to upgrade the facility into an international airport, by expanding its current run way to accommodate large passenger aircrafts. An upgraded airport is expected to boost investment prospects in the war-battered Northern Pro-

vince, in addition to facilitat-

sistance from India, for the "joint development" of the airport, was discussed in the past, no official agreement or document has so far been signed in this regard.

In September 2018, then Minister for Transport and Civil Aviation Nimal Siripala De Silva told Parliament that India had no role in the project, contradicting earlier messages that came out both from Colombo and Delhi.

Recently, Arjuna Ranatunga, who helms the Ministry now, said the government would spend LKR 3 billion to convert Palaly from a regional to an international airport.

News of flights from their Though possible grant as- city to India has brought cheer among laffna resi dents, particularly the business community. "This is a great initiative and very welcome in our city. The direct connectivity will certainly boost trade and open up more avenues for investment," said K. Vignesh, chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and Industries of Yarlpanam [Jaffna].

However, he pointed to two "drawbacks". "It seems that the initial flights will connect Jaffna to New Delhi, Mumbai and Kochi. But we would really benefit from a connection to Chennai," he told The Hindu

50 U.S. States launch probe into Google's trade practices

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN

Attorneys-General of 50 U.S. States and territories announced on Monday that they were launching an investigation into Google's trade practices and whether they are threatening competition and harming consumers.

"This is a company that dominates all aspects of advertising on the internet and searching on the internet," Texas AG Ken Paxton, who is leading the coalition, said on the steps of the U.S. Supreme Court, here in Washington DC, on Monday. He also made it clear that at pretion and not a lawsuit.

'Stifled competition' "There is nothing wrong

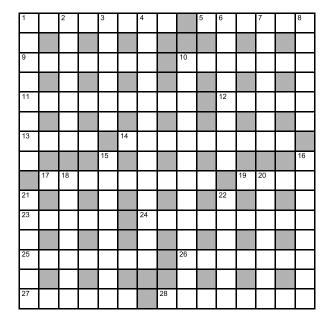
with a business becoming the biggest game in town if it does so through free market competition," Mr. Paxton said, adding that there is evidence that Google's business practices stifled competition, violated users' privacy, "put Google in control of the flow and dissemination of online information" and un-

dermined consumer choice. Louisiana Attorney General, who was also present at the Court on Monday, said there was an "absolutely ex-

sent this was an investiga- istential threat in our virtual marketplace". Alabama and California – the home of Google – have not joined the investigation, while Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia have joined 48 states in the investigating coalition.

Regulators have turned up the heat on big technology companies and the Google probe is but the latest sign of this. New York will lead a group of eight States and the District of Columbia in investing whether Facebook "stifled competition and put users at risk", New York Attorney General Letitia James announced last Fri-

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12727



CM YK

ACROSS

- 1 I too roar vehemently for musical work (8)
- 5 Scratches daughter discarded are aplenty (6)
- 9 Bond provided female agent
- 10 Diva upset with almost bitter counsellor (7)

- 11 Giant's bad sign of acts of searches (9)
- 12 Amma's first hint of things to come: home (5) 13 Indian film director's beams
- 14 Military-style decoration Oriental man and I stripped
- 17 Manage a fight with small cars
- 19 God of riches drops many odd
- 23 Harebrained woman goes for model that is cheap (5)
- 24 Cosies up, holding odd lead figure (9)
- 25 Praise good sizzling oil fry (7) 26 Told about dead repeatedly (7)
- 27 Swear about entertaining new solution (6)
- 28 Raise hospital section at the back (8)
- 1 They go around with other hungry, ferocious dogs (8)

DOWN

(set by Gridman) 2 Cost of leaving - leaving

- luxury car in a US city (7)
- 3 God in different role as flier
- up to be intelligent (6,7) 6 Prevented old boy, oddly vain,

4 One who needn't have to grow

- with a boy (8) 7 Hal's yell? (4,3)
- 8 Show or block? (6) 10 Went over a sailor, ill-
- mannered, in soldiers' training area (7,6)
- 16 Inclined to let worried desi to plod around confusedly (8)

15 Admire song about daughter

first - it's elegantly feminine

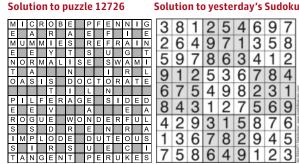
wrong sign? (7) 20 A limit I set for soldiers' group

18 If you do, do you right a

- 21 Magistrate, lacking tear-off, is devious - disgrace! (6)
- 22 Given to jesting, Jack's out of one's eye (6)

SUDOKU





FAITH

Kamban on Narasimha

Tamil poet Kamban, in his Ramayana, devotes a big section

to the Lord's avatara as Narasimha. This is his novel introduction in the story of Rama, for it is not to be found in Valmiki's Ramayana, said M.A. Venkatakrishnan, in a discourse. Valimiki Ramayana talks of the Vamana avatara. Rama and Lakshmana accompany Viswamitra, to protect his yaga. When they see Siddasrama, they are curious about it. Viswamitra tells them that it used to be the place where Vamana did penance, and he also tells the princes about the Vamana avatara. However, there is no such description of the Narasimha avatara, although Acharyas have pointed out that there is a subtle mention of the Narasimha avatara. When Vibhishana comes to Rama's camp seeking admission, Rama wants to befriend him. But the monkey army is opposed to the idea, because they are afraid that the rakshasa may harm Rama. The Lord then tells them that none can harm Him. Even if all the yaksas and demons join hands and attack Him, they will not be able to hurt Him. He says He can kill them all with the tip of His fingers (angulya agrENa). Acharyas have taken this as a reference by Rama to His avatara as Narasimha, where He tore up Hirnayakasipu with His nails. Nampillai says this is a recollection by Rama of an earlier avatara of His, namely, the Narasimha avatara. While there is only an indirect reference to Narasimha avatara in Valmiki Ramayana, Kamban wrote 275 verses, recording the Narasimha avatara in detail. There are many Visishtadvaitic tenets evident in Kamba Ramayana. The very name Kamban is a name that Narasimha bears. Kamba means pillar and Narasimha was the One who emerged from a pillar. So, not only did Kamban display an affinity for the Lord's Narasimha avatara but he also bore a name that belongs to Narasimha.