Biden fights off rivals over healthcare

Democratic frontrunner invokes Obama's name and policy to attack opponents Warren and Sanders

ALEXANDER BURNS

The leading Democratic presidential candidates split sharply over the issue of healthcare in a debate on Thursday night, exposing the gulf between former Vice President Joe Biden's careful moderate politics and the transformational liberal ambitions of Senators Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Bernie Sanders of Vermont

Mr. Biden, facing all of his closest competitors for the first time in a debate, quickly took the initiative to challenge Ms. Warren and Mr. Sanders for supporting a "Medicare for All"-style healthcare system that would displace the existing forms of private insurance. Cloaking himself in the accomplishments of the Obama administration, Mr. Biden branded Ms. Warren as seeking to upend the progress of the Affordable Care

"I know the Senator says she's with Bernie - well, I'm



Senator Bernie Sanders, former V-P Joe Biden and Senator Elizabeth Warren. • REUTERS

for Barack," Mr. Biden jabbed, attacking the cost of a single-payer programme: "How are we going to pay for

Ms. Warren and Mr. Sanders, flanking Mr. Biden onstage, pushed back in tandem, dismissing Mr. Biden's criticism and promising that government-managed

health insurance system would ultimately be less expensive for consumers than the private insurance they currently buy. Ms. Warren credited former President

Barack Obama with having "fundamentally transformed healthcare in America" but said the country needed to go further.

Cost factor

"The richest individuals and the biggest corporations are going to pay more, and middle-class families are going to pay less," she said.

But asked twice by a moderator whether she would acknowledge that the taxes of middle-income Americans would go up under her proposal, she declined to respond directly.

The back and forth among the three leading contenders over healthcare was a continuation of the discussion that dominated the first two debates and illustrated the fierce divisions in the party over what approach best honours Obama's legacy building upon the Affordable Care Act or replacing it entirely with a single-payer

In a tart exchange that channelled their profound philosophical differences, Mr. Sanders held up Canada as a country that provided universal coverage for a lower total cost, prompting Mr. Biden to jump in: "This is America."

Mr. Sanders fired back: "Americans don't want to pay twice as much as other countries."

The remaining field of candidates arrayed themselves around the same philosophical dividing line, most of them aligning more closely with Mr. Biden.

Senator Amy Klobuchar derided Mr. Sanders' singlepayer Bill as a "bad idea," while Mayor Pete Buttigieg accused Mr. Sanders and Ms. Warren of seeking to take away choice from consum-

While Mr. Biden remains

the front-runner in the Democratic race, he has yet to produce the kind of commanding debate performance that might excite undecided Democrats or put to rest their unease about his readiness for a contest with President Trump. NY TIMES

Carrie Lam promises housing reforms, jobs

Hong Kong hill shines in protest light



Olive branch: Demonstrators holding up their mobile phone at the Peak, a tourist spot in Hong Kong. •AP

REUTERS

HONG KONG Hong Kong pro-democracy protesters took to the hills to form flashlight-carrying human chains on Friday, using the colourful Mid-Autumn Festival as a backdrop to the latest in more than three months of sometimes violent unrest.

The peaceful protests, on a day when families traditionally gather to gaze at the moon and eat mooncakes, came after Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam promised to focus on housing and jobs to

try to end the turmoil. "Housing and people's livelihoods are the main priorities," Ms. Lam said. "The government will add to housing supply measures which will be continuously put in place and not missed.'

Hong Kong has some of the world's most expensive real estate and many people say the city's housing policy is unfair, benefiting the rich while forcing the less welloff to live with their parents or rent "shoe box" apartments at exorbitant prices.

Google search to show original news reporting

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Original reporting will be highlighted in Google's search results, the company said as it announced changes to its algorithm.

The company has come under increasing criticism, mainly because of its algorithms that newspapers have often blamed for plummeting online traffic and the industry's decline.

Explaining some of the changes, Google's vice president of news Richard Gingras said stories that were critically important and labour intensive would be promoted. Articles that demonstrated "original, indepth and investigative reporting," would be given the highest possible rating by reviewers.

These reviewers – about 10,000 people whose feedback contributes to algorithm – will also determine the publisher's reputation for original reporting, promoting outlets that have been awarded Pulitzer Prizes, for example.

U.S. House subpoenas envoy to U.S.-Taliban talks

Panel wants Khalilzad to explain to it how the talks went off the rails

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN WASHINGTON DO

Frustrated by the absence of a clearly communicated strategy on Afghanistan and a lack of responsiveness to invitations issued by it, the U.S House of Representatives' Foreign Affairs Committee has subpoenaed the U.S. envoy to the U.S.-Taliban negotiations, Zalmay Khalilzad, to testify before it on Thursday.

"More than 2,000 American troops have died in Afghanistan, and I'm fed up with this administration keeping Congress and the American people in the dark on the peace process and how we're going to bring this long war to a close," HFAC Chairman Eliot Engel said via a statement.

The Committee, which is currently controlled by De-



Zalmay Khalilzad. File

mocrats, has responsibilities for legislation and oversight related to U.S. Foreign policy and the State Department,

and this is the first subpoena for the Committee in the current Congress It had invited Mr. Khalil-

zad to testify before it in Fe-

bruary, April as well as earlier this month, when Mr. Engel wrote to Mr. Khalilzad, saying, "I do not consider your testimony at this hearing optional." In March, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo declined to confirm that he would compel Mr. Khalilzad to testify before the Committee, adding that while he was happy to share the State Department's strategy on Afghanistan, details of negotiations had to stay within "a very small circle".

"For months, we haven't been able to get answers on the Afghanistan peace plan, and now the President is saying the plan is dead. We need to hear directly from the Administration's point person on Afghanistan to understand how this process went off the rails," Mr. Engel said, adding that he expected to see Mr. Khalilzad in the hear-

Taliban team arrives in Moscow

ASSOCIATED PRESS ISLAMABAD

A Taliban negotiating team, led by Mullah Sher Mohammad Stanikzai, has arrived in Moscow, just days after the collapse of talks with the U.S.

Moscow has often been accused of aiding the Taliban as a safeguard against an IS affiliate linked to the Central Asian terrorist group, the Islamic Movement of Afghanistan.

'Cautiously optimistic' on Brexit deal: Johnson Mr. Johnson's upbeat

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE LONDON

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said on Friday he was "cautiously about striking a Brexit deal ahead of his first face-to-face talks with EU chiefs next week.

Mr. Johnson is due to meet European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker and the EU's chief Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier in Luxembourg on

tone on striking a divorce deal with the EU in time for Britain's scheduled October 31 departure date is in marked contrast with the mood from Brussels. Irish Prime Minsiter Leo

Varadkar said the gap between London and Brussels remained "very wide". On the talks with Mr. Juncker and Mr. Barnier, he

said, "I am cautiously optimistic. Whatever happens, we'll come out on Oct. 31."



Greta Thunberg takes climate protest to Trump

Swedish teenager Greta Thunberg, who has inspired worldwide student strikes against climate change, led a protest outside the White House on Friday to press the U.S. government to make climate commitments. REUTERS

At least 10 dead in Rio hospital blaze

RIO DE JANEIRO At least 10 people died in a fire at Badim hospital in Rio de Janeiro, with reports suggesting that a short circuit in a generator could have sparked the blaze. The fire sent medical staff into a flurry to try to evacuate scores of patients. AFP

Four Sikh men drown in sewage tank in Italy

CO₂ fumes from manure cause of death

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Four Indian-origin Sikh men who was emptying the tank drowned in a sewage tank on a cattle farm in northern Italy due to the carbon dioxide fumes coming out from the cow manure, according to media reports.

The incident happened on Thursday at a cattle farm in Arena Po near Pavia, a city in south Milan, ANSA news agency reported on Thursday. Out of the deceased, two

were brothers - Prem, 48, and Tarsem Singh, 45 – who were running the farm. The other two were work-

ers, identified as Arminder Singh, 29, and Manjinder Singh, 28.

Initial investigations re-

veal that the three men jumped to rescue a worker to use the manure as a fertiliser on the farm's fields, the BBC reported.

Investigators suspect that

the four died due to the carbon dioxide fumes coming from the cow manure, the report said. The victims' wives raised

the alarm when the men failed to turn up for lunch. They rushed to the scene

and spotted one body in the sewage. The women then called in firefighters, who emptied the tank to recover all the bodies, the report

Italian media reported that the farm is one of the biggest in the Pavia region.

A warm reception for *Moothon* at TIFF

Nivin Pauly ventures into uncharted zones in a quest to find oneself in the film

NAMRATA JOSHI

On the face of it filmmakeractor Geetu Mohandas' sophomore film Moothon (The Elder One) is about the search for the lost elder brother that takes young Mulla all the way from the pristine, idyllic and tranquil home in the islands of Lakshadweep to the chaotic, violent, ruthless and ugly underbelly of Mumbai.

It is also a metaphorical, inner quest to find oneself by facing up to life's vagaries. As Ms. Mohandas herself put it, in a lively session with the audience at the Scotiabank theatre in downtown Toronto, it is about "the sense of identity and the crises within".

However, at the heart of



The first look of Moothon. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Moothon lies an unforeseen, uncommon and extraordinarily tender love story that makes actor Nivin Pauly venture into hitherto uncharted zones. He is on top of things, be it expressing the ecstasy in finding an abundance of love amidst a shoal of fish or resorting to the religious/cultural practice of self flagellation to express the pain of

surreptitious, forbidden passion. "I can't get a hold of myself," he says, as a visibly broken and tormented Akbar who has nowhere to hide in the islands. The only option is to run away, from home and also from himself.

Ms. Mohandas jostles with interesting ideas – that of a rare fluidity when it comes to matters of both gender and sexuality, "The idea was not to see gender but love," she said in the audience inte-

The film marks a unique collaboration of talent from Kerala and Bollywood. It has been co-produced by Anurag Kashyap, Ajay G. Rai of Jar Pictures, Vinod Kumar and Alan McAlex. Besides Mr. Pauly, Dileesh Pothan and Sanjana Dipu, it also stars Sobhita Dhulipala and Shashank Arora.

The film left the audience wondering about the ambiguous end, with Ms. Mohandas adding to their curiosity by putting primacy on their own individual interpretation than imposing any given "reading" of the ending.

(The writer is in Toronto at the invitation of TIFF)

Two Rohingya shot dead in Bangladesh

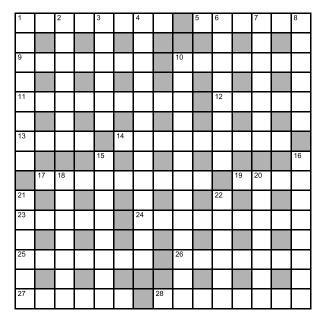
AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Two more Rohingya men were shot dead by officers on Friday in a southern Bangladesh border town. police said, amid a clampdown on the refugees after the killing of a ruling party official.

Police said the pair were accused of the murder of Omar Faruk, a youth wing official of the Awami League party, who was shot in the head by suspected Rohingya criminals late last month.

With the latest deaths, six Rohingya men allegedly involved in Faruk's killing have been shot dead in alleged gunfights with police, according to a count by AFP and police sources.

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12730



ACROSS

- 1 Particular pieces cut up by boy
- 5 Short-tempered agent takes small bite (6)
- 9 Get angry about university involved in ruckus (5,2)
- 10 Valueless year with Russian manuscript (7)

- 11 Put on top, per spouse's arrangement (9) 12 Other star repeatedly disrobed
- Greek character (5) 13 Every other veep not to blow

off (4)

- 14 Desi spoiling child no main concern (4,5)
- 17 Ousts humble petitioners in the absence of in-charge (9)
- 19 Tamil leader's regret is genuine (4)
- 23 Be uneconomical with a free
- 24 What examinees may appreciate - what may resolve a tie (5,4)
- 25 Sneaky about gallery that is dignified (7)
- 26 Start without leading trader a couple of learners out to top
- 27 Part of Pennsylvania very wooded (6) 28 Enquire about takes RAF put
- DOWN 1 Bear is up - almost. Heartily

given to gushing... (8)

out (3,5)

2 Is it barred for babies? Yes and

(set by Gridman)

- 3 What a judge does sometimes a waiter does many times (6)
- 4 Nearabout? (13) 6 Patronage catapults me in post
- 7 Upstart leaves locale unfinished after blame's up
- 8 Last of many means to turn a
- 10 Talks of already dispatched food allowances not right

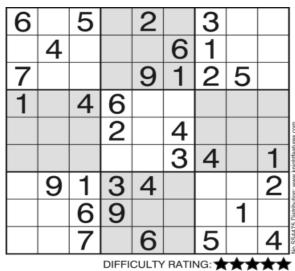
15 One finally accepts exotic

hamper containing English

lackey (3-3)

- collectibles (8) 16 Mocking remark about fortunate setter (8)
- 18 Straighten out poor nuns' endless talk in French (7) 20 Tailor Rani met for garments
- 21 Distorts dance by topstar (6) 22 Staff gets retinue without one
- new slogan (6)

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12729 Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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FAITH

Negative becomes positive

Vallalar, in his Deivamanimalai, says that Lord Shanmukha treated his (Vallalar's) drawbacks as good qualities. Manickavachagar expresses a similar sentiment, said M.A. Manickavelu, in a discourse. Manickavachagar says that his faults are like hills, and he prays to Lord Siva to treat these sins as good qualities! The story of Thiruneelanakka Nayanar shows how the Lord is kind, and appreciative of even little gestures of love that we show Him. He forgives what others see as faults or sins. Thiruneelanakka Nayanar lived in Sathamangai. He was well versed in the Vedas and his knowledge helped him see that the Vedas enjoined worship of Lord Siva. Every day he not only served the Lord, but also His devotees.

One day, he went to the temple with his wife to worship the Lord. After he completed the puja, Thiruneelanakka Nayanar, prostrated before the Lord. Even as he continued worship, a spider dropped onto the Linga. His wife, noticing this, blew away the spider. She acted like a mother, who, if she notices a spider on her baby, will blow it away from the child. But, Thiruneelanakka Nayanar, felt that what she had done was offensive to the Lord. He scolded her and said that by blowing on the linga, some of her saliva might have fallen on it, thereby polluting it. He performed expiatory rites, and left for home, leaving his wife behind in the temple.

That night, in his dream, the Lord appeared. The Lord showed the Nayanar His divine form. On the side where the lady had blown, there were no boils. But everywhere else, the Lord's form was covered with boils, caused by the spider. Thus, the Lord showed that He was not offended even when the saliva of a devotee touched Him, for He knew of the love behind that gesture.