



TWITTERATI

"At this point, the bigger national scandal isn't the president's lawbreaking behavior — it is the Democratic Party's refusal to impeach him for it"

ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ, DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSWOMAN, ON ALLEGATIONS OF TRUMP PRESSURING UKRAINE TO PROBE JOE BIDEN'S SON

TOP OF THE WORLD



Jeremy Corbyn

UK Party to guide stance on Brexit, says Corbyn

Brighton: British opposition Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn said Sunday his party would guide him on how to campaign in a second Brexit referendum, pledging to offer voters a choice between staying in the European Union and a "credible" deal. At the start of Labour's annual conference in the English seaside resort of Brighton, Corbyn was again under pressure by party members and even some of his top team to unequivocally back remaining in the EU in any new vote. But so far the Labour leader has struck a neutral stance.

PAKISTAN 26 killed as bus rams into mountain

Peshawar: A bus rammed into a mountain Sunday after the driver lost control while taking a turn on a hilly road in Pakistan's northwest, killing at least 26 people, including children, and injuring 13 others, police said. The accident happened in the Babuser Top area. The bus was going towards Rawalpindi from Skardu city and there were 40 passengers, including 16 Pakistan Army personnel, the *Express Tribune* reported. Rasheed Arshad, a spokesman for the Gilgit-Baltistan chief minister, confirmed that 26 bodies, among them women and children, have been retrieved.

BANGLADESH Rohingya couple killed in gunfight

Dhaka: A Rohingya couple was shot dead during a gunfight in a border town camp hours after they were detained by Bangladesh police, officials said Sunday, the latest killings amid growing tensions between the refugees and authorities. Police in Teknaf town said the refugee couple — Dil Mohammad, 32, and his 26-year-old wife Jaheda Begum — were members of a Rohingya "bandit group". Authorities claim the gang killed a local ruling party official, Omar Faruk, in a refugee settlement in southeastern Bangladesh last month.

DAYS AFTER ATTACK ON SAUDI OIL FACILITIES

Tehran to present Gulf security plan at UN, Pompeo says US aims to avoid war

REUTERS GENEVA, SEPTEMBER 22

IRANIAN PRESIDENT Hassan Rouhani will present a plan for creating security in the Gulf in cooperation with other countries in the region when he attends the United Nations General Assembly in New York this week.

Meanwhile, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Sunday the United States aims to avoid war with Iran and the additional troops ordered to be deployed in the Gulf region are for "deterrence and defense".

Speaking to Fox News Sunday, Pompeo added that he was confident US President Donald Trump would take action if such deterrence measures fail and that this was well understood by the Iranian leadership.

Pompeo said Washington was taking measures to deter Tehran, but he added that Trump would take necessary action if Tehran failed to change its behavior. "If that deterrence should continue to fail, I am also confident that President Trump would continue to take the actions that are necessary," he said.

Saudi Arabia and the United States accuse Iran of attacking



Iran's President Hassan Rouhani at an event just outside Tehran, on Sunday. AP

Saudi oil facilities on September 14, the largest-ever such assault on the world's top oil exporter.

Iran denies involvement in the attack, which was claimed by Yemen's Houthi movement, a group aligned with Iran and currently fighting a Saudi-led alliance in Yemen's civil war.

"This year we will present a plan to the world at the United Nations that the Islamic Republic of Iran in cooperation with the countries of the region can create security for the Persian Gulf

and the Oman sea with the help of the countries of the region," Rouhani was cited as saying on his official website.

US President Donald Trump on Friday approved sending American troops to bolster Saudi Arabia's air and missile defences after the attacks on Saudi oil sites. Rouhani said the presence of foreign forces in the region would create insecurity for oil and shipping.

Saudi Arabia has described the strikes on the Abqaiq and Khurais facilities as a test of whether there is global will to preserve international order, and will seek to form a united front at the United Nations General Assembly.

"We are not someone who will violate the borders of others just as we will not allow anyone to violate our borders," Rouhani said at a ceremony commemorating the anniversary of the start of the Islamic Republic's 1980-1988 war with Iraq, according to his website.

AUSTRALIA OFFERS 'LIMITED' SUPPORT

AUSTRALIA IS not getting involved with the United States in its pursuit of aims in relation to Iran, beyond a commitment to freedom of navigation in the Straits of Hormuz. That's what Prime Minister Scott Morrison said after talks with US President Donald Trump.

"There was no discussion about anything else," Morrison, who made a state visit to the White House Friday, told journalists, as per a transcript.

"There was an appreciation of our involvement in that particular operation which was I remind everyone is about freedom of navigation in the Straits of Hormuz. That's what that is about. The other matters that are being pursued by the United States are matters they're pursuing." In August, Australia joined the International Maritime Security Construct (IMSC) in support of freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz.

13-year-olds arrested over protests in Hong Kong

MIKE IVES & ELAINE YU HONG KONG, SEPTEMBER 22

THE HONG KONG police arrested two 13-year-olds on the fringes of antigovernment demonstrations over the weekend, including a girl accused of burning a Chinese national flag, the authorities said on Sunday.

The arrests on Saturday appear to be further signals that the local police are taking an increasingly hard line against the pro-democracy demonstrators who have roiled the city for three and a half months.

Protesters have taken to destroying symbols of Chinese state authority, including flags, in recent months, but the latest arrest comes less than two weeks before Oct. 1, the foremost political holiday in the Chinese calendar and one which Beijing takes pains to ensure is celebrated without incident.

The arrests came amid a weekend of protests. On Sunday, demonstrators vandalized a shopping mall in northern Hong Kong. Some protesters there also stomped on and spray painted a Chinese flag. The police said protesters also damaged a nearby subway station, but planned transportation disruptions to and from the Hong Kong airport never materialized.

The two minors were arrested on Saturday during a long day of street clashes in which protesters threw bricks and firebombs and the police fired multiple rounds of tear gas in Yuen Long, a satellite town near Hong Kong's border with the Chinese mainland. NYT

What to expect at UNGA: 600 meetings, many conflicts

Against a backdrop of crises — from the warming planet to economic uncertainty to conflicts that threaten to further entangle America in the Middle East — a key question will be 'what is US policy?'

TENSIONS WITH IRAN After the September 14 attack on oil facilities in Saudi Arabia US officials are expected to present what they have described as evidence that Iran carried out the attack with drones and cruise missiles. Iran has denied the accusation. A meet between the US and Iran looks unlikely

KEY CLIMATE MEET The climate crisis is at the top of the agenda. About 60 heads of state plan to speak at the Climate Action Summit on Monday, and officials aim to announce initiatives that include net-zero carbon emissions in buildings. The United States has no such plans

TRADE WAR TALKS The US and China governments recently



NYT

paused their escalating tariff battle, suggesting they are seeking a more productive atmosphere for resumed trade negotiations after weeks of acrimony. But some officials are pushing for Trump to address other issues considered sensitive by China, including the pro-

democracy protests in Hong Kong and the detentions of over 1 million Muslims

JAPAN-S. KOREA FREEZE A protracted feud between Japan and South Korea, rooted in the legacy of Japan's wartime occupation, has led to downgraded trade

relations and the end of an intelligence-sharing agreement. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan and President Moon Jae-in of South Korea are not expected to meet with each other. Whether Trump can induce a conversation remains unclear

ON VENEZUELA REGIME Foreign ministers from 18 nations, including the US, planned to meet on Monday to discuss what can be done regarding Maduro, who has presided over the biggest economic collapse in Venezuela's history and a regional crisis caused by the exodus of millions of people. The push will focus on convincing the EU to expand economic sanctions against Maduro's loyalists, including freezing assets in Europe. NYT

Burqas, 'illegal' Islamic videos could land Uyghurs in China's de-radicalisation centres

PRASHANT RANGNEKAR KASHGAR, SEPTEMBER 22

WEARING A burqa or watching "illegal" Islamic videos could land you in trouble in China's restive Xinjiang province where the government is running a number of 'Vocational Training Centres' to re-educate thousands of Uyghur Muslims, who Beijing thinks have radicalised. Miherban Ximih, 28, a Uyghur

One day, the (cyber) police called me saying I was watching illegal videos. I was given the option to go court and accept punishment, or join vocational centre"

ILXAT TURSUN, 28 AT A TRAINING CAMP, SPEAKING THROUGH AN OFFICIAL INTERPRETER

Muslim from Asku prefecture in Xinjiang, has been lodged at the Wensu County's Vocational Training Centre since June 2018 for wearing burqa. Ximih's mother-in-law and her husband Ilyim Kader were sentenced to 17 years in jail for "inciting people".

Fearing Ximih could have also been "influenced by extremist ideas", authorities sent her to the vocational centre to undergo de-radicalisation. These centres have come under intense criti-

cism from human rights bodies.

Timorjiong Eqbal, 22, who hails from Kashgar, said he was "influenced by extremist ideas". He has been at the Kashgar Vocational Training Centre, larger than the Wensu centre, since September 2018.

China has justified these centres citing the violent attacks by extremists. A White Paper on the centres by the Chinese government said Xinjiang is a "key battlefield" against extremism. PTI



During a protest in Cairo. Reuters

On Day 2 of Egypt protests, police fire tear gas, live rounds

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA CAIRO, SEPTEMBER 22

EGYPTIAN SECURITY forces clashed with hundreds of anti-government protesters in the port city of Suez on Saturday, firing tear gas and live rounds, said several residents who participated in the demonstrations.

A heavy security presence was also maintained in Cairo's Tahrir Square, the epicentre of Egypt's 2011 revolution, after protests in several cities called for the removal of general-turned-president Abdel Fattah el-Sisi.

Such demonstrations are rare after Egypt effectively banned protests under a law passed following the 2013 military ouster of Islamist ex-president Mohamed Morsi.

On Saturday, protesters headed to downtown Suez for the second night in a row, where they were met by security forces barricading the streets and armoured vehicles. Another resident, who also preferred to remain anonymous, said the tear gas was so thick it had reached her apartment block a few kilometres away from the downtown area.

"My nose started burning up. The smell was seeping through the balcony. I also saw some youth run and hide in our street," the woman said.

On late Friday, hundreds of Egyptians poured through the streets of Cairo, chanting slogans including "Leave, Sisi!".

At least 74 people were arrested after clashes between the crowds and police in the capital, a security source told AFP.

The protests came after

EXPLAINED E.

Trading in turmoil

AN IMMEDIATE consequence of the violence was visible in Egypt's stock exchange, which was suspended after the index saw a sharp drop.

The protests have also been attributed to a harsh austerity regime, with a significant increase in the number of Egyptians below the poverty line. Egypt's economy has nevertheless been viewed in a positive light, with trading suspended in 2016 after the index saw a 5 per cent rise attributed to investor confidence. Analysts are now unsure if the index will stabilise or snowball amid protests.

Mohamed Aly, an exiled businessman and opponent of Sisi posted calls online for demonstrations against Sisi. He urged the pressure on Saturday in an explosive-filled video, imploring Egyptians to join a "million-man march" next Friday. "This is a people's revolution... We have to link up together as one... and organise going down to the major squares," he said in a Facebook appeal to his followers.

Lanka president forms 5-member panel to probe Easter Sunday bombings

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA COLOMBO, SEPTEMBER 22



MAITHRIPALA SIRISENA

SRI LANKAN President Maithripala Sirisena has appointed a five-member committee to investigate allegations of intelligence inputs being ignored and related errors that led to the Easter Sunday bombings, killing over 258 people.

According to an extraordinary gazette notification on Saturday, the committee would comprise two appeal court judges, two retired high court judges and a retired administrator.

The panel will investigate allegations of disregarding of prior intelligence inputs on the Easter attacks and related errors which

stopped authorities from taking preventive action.

On April 21, nine suicide bombers carried out a series of blasts that tore through three churches and as many high-end hotels in Sri Lanka's capital Colombo, killing 258 people.

The new five-member committee was constituted following local Catholic church Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith's demand for an independent investigation.

SCIENTISTS TO DELIVER SOMBRE SPEECHES, ACCOMPANIED BY MOURNFUL TUNES OF ALPHORNS

Dressed in black, the Swiss hold a high-altitude funeral march for glacier

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA MELS, SEPTEMBER 22

DOZENS OF people dressed in black went on a "funeral march" up a steep Swiss mountainside on Sunday to mark the disappearance of an Alpine glacier amid growing global alarm over climate change.

Around 250 people including children joined the solemn two-hour climb up the side of Pizol mountain in Switzerland to the foot of the rapidly melting ice formation, situated at an altitude of around 2,700 metres (8,850 feet) near the Liechtenstein and

Austrian borders. "We're here to bid farewell to Pizol," Swiss glaciologist Matthias Huss said in a sombre speech after arriving at the glacier, one of the most studied in the Alps.

Eric Petrini, the chaplain of the Mels municipality where Pizol is located, called on "God's help to tackle the enormous challenge of climate change".

The speeches were accompanied by the mournful tones of alphorns — a 3.6-metre (12-foot), pipe-shaped wooden instrument. Some marchers also laid down flowers for the glacier.

Pizol "has lost so much substance that from a scientific

perspective it is no longer a glacier," Alessandra Degiacomi, of the Swiss Association for Climate Protection, told AFP ahead of the event.

Sunday's march took place as the UN gathered youth activists and world leaders in New York to mull the action needed to curb global warming.

It came after Iceland made global headlines last month with a large ceremony and the laying of a bronze plaque to commemorate Olkajokull, the island's first glacier lost to climate change.

But unlike Iceland, Sunday's ceremony does not mark the first disappearance of a glacier from



During the 'wake' for the Pizol glacier on Sunday. AP

the Swiss Alps. "Since 1850, we estimate that

more than 500 Swiss glaciers have completely disappeared, in-

cluding 50 that were named," glaciologist Huss, who works at the ETH technical university in Zurich, told AFP before the march.

Pizol may not be the first glacier to vanish in Switzerland, but "you could say it is the first to disappear that has been very thoroughly studied." The logs kept since scientists began tracking the glacier in 1893 paint a bleak picture of recent rapid changes to the climate.

Pizol has lost 80-90 per cent of its volume just since 2006, leaving behind a mere 26,000 square metres (280,000 square feet) of ice, or "less than four football fields," Huss said.

Pizol, which sits at a relatively low altitude, was never very big.

According to Glacier Monitoring Switzerland, or GLAMOS, it, like nearly 80 per cent of Swiss glaciers, has been considered a so-called glacieret.

It has figured among some 4,000 glaciers — vast, ancient reserves of ice — dotted throughout the Alps, providing seasonal water to millions and forming some of Europe's most stunning landscapes.

But Huss and other ETH scientists recently cautioned more than 90 per cent of the Alpine glaciers could disappear by the end of this century if greenhouse

gas emissions are not reined in.

Regardless of what actions humans take now, the Alps will lose at least half of their ice mass by 2100, according to their study, published in April.

And in a subsequent study published earlier this month, the researchers indicated that the Alps' largest glacier, the mighty Aletsch, could completely disappear over the next eight decades.

Sunday's "funeral" for Pizol provides an occasion to point out that climate change is not only melting glaciers but is endangering "our means of subsistence", according to the organising groups, including Greenpeace.