

ELSEWHERE



**U.S. Defense Secretary in Kabul to find way ahead**

KABUL  
U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper arrived on Sunday in Afghanistan, where stalled peace talks with the Taliban and persistent violent attacks by the insurgent group have complicated the Trump administration's pledge to withdraw U.S. troops. AP

**Hariri approves reforms to resolve economic crisis**



BEIRUT  
Lebanon's Prime Minister Saad al-Hariri has agreed to implement reforms to ease an economic crisis that has sparked nationwide protests, sources said, with a Cabinet meeting expected on Monday to approve them. REUTERS

**Zubin Mehta takes final bow with Israeli orchestra**



JERUSALEM  
Star conductor Zubin Mehta, 83, took the stage in Tel Aviv on Sunday for a final performance as music director of the Israel Philharmonic, retiring after 50 years with the orchestra. He earned a standing ovation from the packed house. AFP

## Chaos in Hong Kong as protesters defy ban

Tear gas, petrol bombs shatter calm

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
HONG KONG  
Hong Kong riot police and protesters exchanged tear gas and petrol bombs on Sunday as an illegal anti-government march that attracted tens of thousands descended into chaos, with hundreds of shops trashed and Chinese banks and metro stations targeted.  
After two weeks of relative calm, the major rally showed that the pro-democracy campaign has not lost support and that hardcore protesters will continue to

# Brexit to happen on October 31 despite PM's delay request: govt.

Johnson sent an unsigned letter to the European Council, seeking Brexit extension

REUTERS  
LONDON  
The British government insisted on Sunday the country will leave the European Union on October 31 despite a letter that Prime Minister Boris Johnson was forced by Parliament to send to the bloc requesting a Brexit delay.  
The Brexit maelstrom has spun wildly in the past week between the possibility of an orderly exit on October 31 with a deal that Mr. Johnson struck on Thursday and a delay after he was forced to ask for an extension late on Saturday.  
Mr. Johnson's defeat in the British Parliament over the sequencing of the ratification of his deal exposed the Prime Minister to a law passed by those opposed to a no deal departure, demanding he request a delay until Jan. 31.  
Mr. Johnson sent the request note as required, but unsigned, and added another signed letter arguing



against what he cast as a deeply corrosive delay. One of his most senior Ministers said Britain would still leave the bloc on October 31.  
"We are going to leave by October 31. We have the means and the ability to do so," Michael Gove, the Minister in charge of no-deal Brexit preparations, told Sky News.  
"That letter was sent because Parliament required it to be sent... but Parliament can't change the Prime Minister's mind, Parliament can't change the government's policy or determination."  
**The three letters**  
In yet another twist to the running Brexit drama, Mr. Johnson sent three letters to Donald Tusk, the President of the European Council.  
First, a brief cover note from Britain's EU envoy explaining that the government was simply complying with the law; second, an unsigned copy of the text that the law, known as the Benn Act, forced him to write; and a third letter, in which Mr.

Johnson said he did not want an extension. "I have made clear since becoming PM and made clear to Parliament again today, my view, and the Government's position, that a further extension would damage the interests of the U.K. and our EU partners, and the relationship between us," Mr. Johnson said in the third letter, signed "Boris Johnson".  
Mr. Tusk said he had received the request from Mr. Johnson and would start consulting EU leaders on how to react.  
Labour Party accused Mr. Johnson of acting as if he was above the law, and said he could end up in court.  
Scotland's highest court is due to consider on Monday a legal challenge that had sought to force Mr. Johnson to comply with the Benn Act. Under that law, Mr. Johnson was obliged to write to the EU seeking a delay if Parliament had not approved either a withdrawal deal or a no-deal exit by October 19.  
At least four people were killed and nearly 50 injured on Sunday after police fired on thousands of Bangladeshi Muslims protesting a Facebook post by a Hindu who allegedly defamed the Prophet Mohammed, officials said.  
Mob attacks over Facebook posts perceived to be blasphemous have emerged as a major headache for security forces in Bangladesh, where Muslims make up some 90% of the country's 168 million people.  
Some 20,000 Muslims demonstrated at a prayer ground in Borhanuddin town on the country's largest island of Bhola to call for the execution of the young Hindu man, who was arrested on Saturday over charges of inciting religious tension.  
Police said they opened fire in self-defence after some of the crowd threw rocks at their officers. "At least four people were killed and up to 50 people were injured," police said.

## Rohingya agree to move to Bay of Bengal island

Dhaka plans to relocate 1,00,00 refugees



A place to call home: Rohingya Muslims at a market inside the refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. • REUTERS/FILE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
DHAKA  
Thousands of Rohingya living in Bangladesh refugee camps have agreed to move to an island in the Bay of Bengal, officials said on Sunday, despite fears the site is prone to flooding.  
Dhaka has long wanted to move 1,00,000 refugees to the muddy silt islet, saying it would take pressure off the overcrowded border camps where almost a million Rohingya live.  
Some 7,40,000 Rohingya fled Myanmar in August 2017 in the face of a military crackdown, joining 2,00,000 refugees already in makeshift tent settlements at Cox's Bazar.  
Bangladesh's Refugee Commissioner, Mahbub Alam, said officials overseeing the relocation would be posted to Bhashan Char island in the next few days.  
"Approximately 6,000-7,000 refugees have already expressed their willingness to be relocated to Bhashan Char," Mr. Alam told AFP from Cox's Bazar, adding that "the number is rising".  
He did not say when the refugees would be moved, but a senior Navy officer involved in building facilities on the island said it could start by December, with 500 refugees sent daily.  
Bangladesh has been planning since last year to relocate Rohingya to the desolate flood-prone site, which is an hour by boat from the mainland.  
Rights groups have warned the island, which emerged from the sea only about two decades ago, might not be able to withstand violent storms during the annual monsoon season.  
**Dangerous site**  
In the past half a century, powerful cyclones have killed hundreds of thousands of people in the Meghna river estuary where the island is located.  
Rohingya leaders would be taken to Bhashan Char to view the facilities and living conditions, Mr. Alam said.  
Safety facilities built on the island include a nine-foot high embankment along its perimeter to keep out tidal surges during cyclones, and a warehouse to store months-worth of rations, he added.  
Rohingya father-of-four Nur Hossain, 50, said he and his family agreed to relocate after they were shown video footage of the shelters. "I have agreed to go. The camp here (at Leda) is very overcrowded. There are food and housing problems," Mr. Hossain said.  
There was no immediate comment from the UN, although Bangladeshi officials said they expect a delegation would visit the island in the next few weeks.  
"A climate of fear is being created in the camps, which may have prompted some Rohingya to agree to shift to the island," an activist said.

## Kurds leave besieged Syria border town

U.S. forces withdraw from Sarrin, their largest base in northern Syria

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
ISTANBUL  
Turkey on Sunday said Kurdish fighters were withdrawing from the border town of Ras al-Ain under an agreement brokered with the United States.  
"A convoy of approximately 55 vehicles entered Ras al-Ain and a convoy of 86 vehicles departed in the direction of Tal Tamr," the Turkish defence ministry said in a statement and simultaneously distributed pictures of the evacuation.  
The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces withdrew



Pulling out: A convoy of ambulances evacuating fighters, injured SDF members and civilians from Ras al-Ain, Syria. • AFP  
fully from the Turkish-besieged border town of Ras al-Ain in northern Syria Sunday, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights war monitor said.  
Turkey's Defence Ministry said one Turkish soldier was

killed on Sunday in an attack by Kurdish fighters in the Tal Abyad border area.  
Meanwhile, the Syrian Observatory for the Human Rights said that the U.S. forces withdrew from Sarrin, their largest base in northern Syria on Sunday, a monitor said.  
On Sunday, more than 70 U.S. armoured vehicles escorted by helicopters drove past the northern Syrian town of Tal Tamr carrying military equipment. Some flew the American flag as they made their way eastwards, he said.

## Trump drops his golf resort as G-7 venue

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
WASHINGTON  
Responding to stinging criticism, President Donald Trump has abruptly reversed his plan to hold the next year's Group of Seven world leaders' meeting at his Doral golf resort in Florida.  
Mr. Trump announced a rare backtrack on Saturday night after facing accusations that he was using the presidency to enrich himself by hosting the international summit at the private resort owned by his family.

# Trump campaign rakes in cash as Democrats struggle

It has put its digital operation at the centre of the President's re-election bid

MATTHEW ROSENBERG  
KEVIN ROOSE  
On any given day, President Donald Trump's campaign is plastering ads all over Facebook, YouTube and the millions of sites served by Google, hitting the kind of incendiary themes – immigrant invaders, the corrupt media – that play best on platforms where algorithms favor outrage and political campaigns are free to disregard facts.  
Even seemingly ominous developments for Mr. Trump

become fodder for his campaign. When news of an impeachment inquiry against Mr. Trump broke, the campaign responded with an advertising blitz aimed at firing up the President's base.  
The campaign slapped together an "Impeachment Poll" (sample question: "Do you agree that President Trump has done nothing wrong?"). It invited supporters to join the Official Impeachment Defense Task Force ("All you need to do is DONATE NOW!"). It pro-

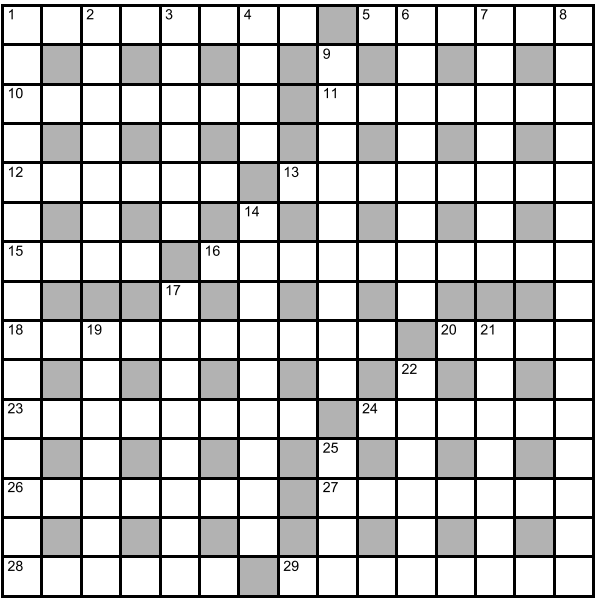


Supporters sporting 'Trump 2020' hats in Dallas. • AP  
duced a slick video laying out the debunked conspiracy theory about former Vice-President Joe Biden and Ukraine that is now at the centre of the impeachment battle ("Learn the truth. Watch Now!").  
The onslaught overwhelmed the limited Demo-

cratic response. Mr. Biden's campaign put up the stiffest resistance: It demanded Facebook take down the ad, only to be rebuffed. It then slashed its online advertising budget in favour of TV ads.  
While the Trump campaign has put its digital operation firmly at the centre of the President's reelection effort, Democrats are struggling to internalize the lessons of the 2016 race and adapt to a political landscape shaped by social media.  
Mr. Trump's first campaign took far better advantage of Facebook and other platforms that reward narrowly targeted – and, argua-

bly, nastier – messages. And while the President is now disfavoured by a majority of Americans in most polls, he has one big advantage: his 2020 campaign, flush with cash, is poised to dominate online again.  
Brad Parscale, the digital director for 2016, is now leading the entire campaign – with focus on pushing its product – Trump – by churning out targeted ads, aggressively testing the content and collecting data to further refine its messages. It is selling hats, shirts, a strategy that yields yet more data, cash and, of course, walking campaign billboards. NY TIMES  
The Greens made strong gains in Switzerland's election on Sunday while the far-right Swiss People's Party lost ground, early results showed, potentially putting environmentalists in the mix for a seat in the coalition that has governed the country for decades.  
The SVP remained in first place, but lost ground as Greens seized on voters' concerns about climate change. The Greens have never had a seat in the four-party Federal Council.

## THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12760

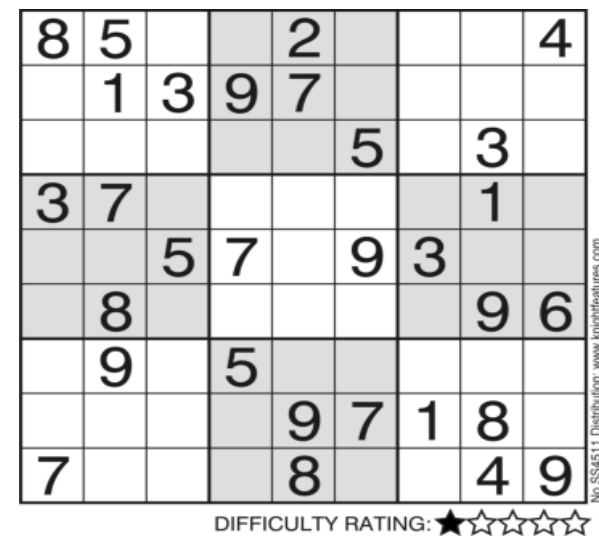


### ACROSS

- 1 Dates I've crushed act as sleep aid (8)
- 5 Preserve business degree-holder in wood (6)
- 10 One old dictator caught by strange element (7)
- 11 Inside, Tamil leader settles down and writes (7)

- (set by Gridman)
- 12 Take rest after minor snatch (6)
  - 13 By stupid chance, I'm a garageman (8)
  - 15 Born and died in want (4)
  - 16 Fine operation around old music instrument (5-5)
  - 18 Nobleman reported this change accepting red sleepwear (10)
  - 20 Chatter on fabric endlessly (4)
  - 23 Hide thus? (4,4)
  - 24 Prince and the King are hip (6)
  - 26 Urge fee alteration for political exile (7)
  - 27 Stop mate as there's shortage in all previous openings (7)
  - 28 White munition merchant is more friendly (6)
  - 29 Such people have high interest in lending (8)
- ### DOWN
- 1 Wisecrack's not in? Bad! Hard to accept! (5,2,4,4)
  - 2 Shrink, beginning to deny success, led off (7)
  - 3 Clan-based Telangana leader's almost coarse (6)
  - 4 Virginia parliamentarian to improvise (4)
  - 6 Part of vessel where the fashionable may be found? (8)
  - 7 Feeler woman sent back following a new model (7)
  - 8 See! A consortium's representation is happy to hear (5,2,4,4)
  - 9 Straight over to railway reference book (9)
  - 14 Quick-tempered, he'd catch out heartless chief (9)
  - 17 Suppress saint's right view (8)
  - 19 More brusque gangleader reportedly more abrasive (7)
  - 21 Try to fill in this slot! (4,1,2)
  - 22 Gobble up Dalit leader's oeuvre endlessly and furiously (6)
  - 25 Goddess loses credit in time of anxiety (4)

## SUDOKU



**Solution to puzzle 12759**  
DESKTOPS OPAQUE  
E E R A E U X  
M A T I N I S E R V A N T  
I R C R I V R O  
C R A C K D O W N E R R O R  
I T Y F G R E T  
L I E N A G E L E S S L Y  
E C L E A R L E E E H G  
A E E V S R B R V  
U S A G E S O I T T O V O I C E  
R D N E I N O R  
O M I N O U S C H I C K E N  
R N U U L T E O  
A U G U S T R E C O R D E R

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

## FAITH Free from faults

The Divya Prabandha hymns and stotras such as the Vishnu Sahasranama sing the Lord's glories in myriad ways to hail His auspicious qualities; and like the Vedas, they too accept that these are still inadequate to express His ineffable supremacy. Yet, what overwhelms all bhaktas is the Lord's Saushtilya, His inherent nature that springs from His boundless compassion that makes Him accessible to the erring jivatmas, pointed out Mukkur Sri Srinivasan in a discourse.  
In his hymn Amalanadipiran, Tiruppanazhwar hails the Lord as 'amalan,' 'vimalan,' 'nimalan' and 'ninmalan,' adjectives that emphasise total purity that has no contact with any doshas whatsoever. This is his spontaneous outburst when he enters the sanctum sanctorum of the Srirangam temple and beholds the captivating form of the Lord. He is amazed and wonderstruck that His sacred lotus feet have of their own accord entered his eyes to shower His divine grace on him. Why else should He, who is ever free from any blemish, choose to enter the hearts of jivatmas who are full of faults, and always tormented and harassed by evil thoughts? This is because God is above doshas and even when He incarnates, He does so out of His Sankalpa and remains unaffected by all the objects and doshas in creation while the jivatma is bound by doshas in every birth owing to past karma.  
The Upanishads make use of the analogy of two birds living together in a tree to explain the coexistence of the jivatma and the Paramatma in every being. While the jivatma gets affected by samsara, the Paramatma is unaffected. How can there be such disparity in reaction to the pulls of samsara? This is explained by the example of ghee that lends its stickiness to the hand when one handles it, while the mouth or tongue does not feel sticky when one partakes of it.