



**ELSEWHERE**

**Macron vows action against Islamist terror**

PARIS  
French President Emmanuel Macron vowed an “unrelenting fight” against Islamist extremists on Tuesday as he paid tribute to the four Paris police staff stabbed to death last week by a radicalised colleague. The assailant, Mickael Harpon, had converted to Islam about 10 years ago and nurtured radical beliefs. AFP

**Trump administration blocks envoy’s testimony**

WASHINGTON  
The White House on Tuesday blocked Gordon Sondland, Ambassador to the European Union, from speaking to Congress as part of the impeachment investigation of President Donald Trump. “The U.S. Department of State directed him not to appear today for his scheduled transcribed interview,” Mr. Sondland’s attorney said. AFP

**Thief swipes \$840,000 watch from man in Paris**

PARIS  
A Japanese man who stepped out of his Paris hotel for a cigarette was robbed of his \$840,000 Swiss watch by a thief who snatched it off his wrist, police sources said on Tuesday. The thief asked the 30-year-old victim for a cigarette and then grabbed the man’s arm and fled with the rare Richard Mille timepiece. AFP

**24,000 tourists arrive in Saudi Arabia in 10 days**

RIVADH  
Saudi Arabia welcomed 24,000 tourists in the 10 days after it started issuing tourism visas for the first time on September 27, state television has reported. Saudi Arabia is opening up the kingdom to holidaymakers as part of a push to diversify its economy away from oil. AFP

# Loyalists slam Trump over Syria troops pullout move

Allies in GOP say the decision would help Russia and Iran, lead to revival of IS

**SRIRAM LAKSHMAN**  
WASHINGTON

In the midst of an impeachment inquiry into U.S. President Donald Trump’s dealings with Ukraine that has polarised Washington along party lines, lawmakers from both parties found themselves – unusually – on the same side with regard to the President’s decision to pull troops out of “northern Syria”.

“A precipitous withdrawal of U.S. forces from Syria would only benefit Russia, Iran, and the Assad regime,” Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, a Trump loyalist, said in a statement released on Monday.

The White House announced via email on Sunday night that the U.S. was withdrawing troops from “northern Syria” and that Turkey was going to go ahead with a “long-planned operation” in the region. The decision was made following a call on Sunday between Mr. Trump and Turkey’s President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), led by Kurds, has been leading the fight against the Islamic State (IS) in Syria. Turkey views the Kurdish groups as terrorists, setting up the possibility that Turkey would attack the Kurds following U.S. troop withdrawal. An August agreement between the U.S. and Turkey set up joint patrols in the “safe zone” at the Syria-Turkey border. The patrols had separated Kurdish and Turkish troops.

U.S. Defence Department officials were “blindsided” by the President’s decision, *The Washington Post* reported.



**Looming tension:** A fighter from Turkish-backed forces during a military drill in Azaz, Syria. •AP

ed. “The Department of Defense made clear to Turkey – as did the President – that we do not endorse a Turkish operation in northern Syria,” Pentagon spokesperson Jonathan Hoffman said.

On Monday, President Trump appeared to qualify Sunday night’s troop announcement saying it did not give Turkey carte blanche to do anything in Syria. “As I have stated strongly before, and just to reiterate, if Turkey does anything that I, in my great and unmatched wisdom, consider to be off limits, I will totally destroy and obliterate the Economy of Turkey...,” Mr. Trump tweeted on Monday.

**‘Not our friend’**

The critics of Mr Trump’s decision included the U.S.’s former U.N. envoy, Nikki Haley, one of the few former administration officials who had parted with the President on good terms when she stepped down last October.

“We must always have the backs of our allies, if we expect them to have our back.

The Kurds were instrumental in our successful fight against ISIS in Syria. Leaving them to die is a big mistake. #TurkeyIsNotOurFriend,” Ms Haley said via Twitter on Monday.

GOP senator Lindsay Graham, who is a strong Trump ally, called the decision “short-sighted and irresponsible” and said Congress would introduce bipartisan sanctions on Turkey and suspend the country from NATO, if Turkey were to invade Syria.

“But this impulsive decision by the President has undone all the gains we’ve made, thrown the region into further chaos,” Mr. Graham told the TV show, “Fox and Friends”, on Monday

Comparing the move to former U.S. President Barack Obama’s rationale for pulling troops out of Iraq, Mr. Graham said the pullout would lead to the IS’s re-emergence. He also said that while the [so-called] Caliphate was destroyed, the “biggest lie” the administration was telling was that the IS is defeated.

## Kurds are welcome, says Damascus

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
DAMASCUS

Damascus is ready to welcome Syria’s Kurds back into the fold after Washington left them to face Turkish military threats alone, a senior official said in comments published on Tuesday.

Ankara has threatened an offensive in Syria against Kurdish militias it considers terrorists and U.S. forces on Monday pulled back from Turkish border areas, opening the way for an invasion President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has said could come at any moment.

“We will defend all Syrian territory, and we will not accept any occupation of Syrian land,” Deputy Foreign Minister Faisal Mekdad said.

“The nation welcomes all its children,” he said.

# U.S. blacklists top Chinese firms over ‘rights violations’

Officials say the action not tied to upcoming trade talks

**REUTERS**  
WASHINGTON/SHANGHAI

The U.S. government widened its trade blacklist to include some of China’s top artificial intelligence startups, punishing Beijing for its treatment of Muslim minorities and ratcheting up tensions ahead of high-level trade talks in Washington this week.

The decision, which drew a sharp rebuke from Beijing, targets 20 Chinese public security bureaus and eight companies including video surveillance firm Hikvision, as well as leaders in facial recognition technology SenseTime Group Ltd and Megvii Technology Ltd.

The action bars the firms from buying components from U.S. companies without U.S. government approval – a potentially crippling move for some of them. It follows the same blueprint used by Washington in its attempt to limit the influence of Huawei Technologies Co Ltd for what it says are national security reasons.

U.S. officials said the ac-



The list covers 8 Chinese companies and 20 public security bureaus. •AP

tion was not tied to this week’s resumption of trade talks with China, but it signals no let-up in U.S. President Donald Trump’s hardline stance as the world’s two biggest economies seek to end their 15-month trade war.

The Commerce Department said in a filing the “entities have been implicated in human rights violations and abuses in the implementation of China’s campaign of repression, mass arbitrary detention, and high-technology surveillance against Uighurs, Kazakhs, and other members of Muslim minori-

ty groups.”

“The U.S. Government and Department of Commerce cannot and will not tolerate the brutal suppression of ethnic minorities within China,” said Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross.

**‘Stop interfering’**

China said the U.S. should stop interfering in its affairs. It will continue to take firm and resolute measures to protect its sovereign security, Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told a regular media briefing without elaborating.

Hikvision, with a market value of about \$42 billion, calls itself the world’s largest maker of video surveillance gear.

The other companies on the list are speech recognition firm iFlytek Co, surveillance equipment maker Zhejiang Dahua Technology, data recovery firm Xiamen Meiya Pico Information Co, facial recognition firm Yitu Technology and Yixin Science and Technology Co.

# Brexit talks on verge of collapse

Deal ‘essentially impossible’ if U.K. failed to give ground: Merkel

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
LONDON

Brexit talks between Britain and the European Union appeared to be on the verge of collapse on Tuesday, with Brussels accusing London of threatening the bloc’s future.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who said a deal was “overwhelmingly unlikely” without compromise by the U.K., according to a Downing Street source.

She warned that any deal was “essentially impossible” if London failed to give ground on the thorny Irish border question.

Britain is due to leave the EU on October 31.

According to the BBC, Downing Street believes Brexit talks are now “close to breaking down”.

EU Council President Donald Tusk’ had accused Mr. Johnson was playing “some stupid blame game”.

Mr. Tusk tweeted: “At stake is the future of Europe and the U.K. as well as the security and interest of our people.

“You don’t want a deal, you don’t want an extension, you don’t want to revoke, quo vadis?” Mr. Tusk asked.

# + Sri Lanka to see its longest ballot paper

35 candidates in the fray; presidential election cost may rise from \$22 mn to \$28 mn

**MEERA SRINIVASAN**  
COLOMBO

Sri Lanka will have its longest ever ballot paper in the November presidential election, the Election Commissioner said on Tuesday, after as many as 35 candidates filed nominations for the contest, said to be a record number of candidates.

The Commission will incur additional costs on the long ballot paper, pushing the cost of the election from the initially estimated \$22 million to \$28 million, officials told the media on Tuesday. The ballot paper will have symbols of all the candidates listed on it, with the party or alliance they represent, and voters are entitled to mark up to three preferences for President. “They don’t have to necessarily mark three preferences, but they could if they wish to,” an official told *The Hindu*.



SLPP’s candidate Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, left, with his brother, former president Mahinda Rajapaksa, in Colombo. •REUTERS

The Election Commission is preparing material and films to educate voters on exercising the preferential voting option. Awareness films will soon be telecast on local television, according to officials of the Commission.

Prominent among the candidates who filed nominations on Monday are the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP)’s Gotabaya Rajapaksa, a powerful ex-Defence Secretary and the brother of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa, and the ruling United National Party’s deputy leader Sajith Premadasa, who are the two main contestants in this poll.

The leftist Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna’s Anura Kumara Dissanayake and former Army commander Mahesh Senanayake are also in the fray, which includes only one woman candidate, scientist Ajantha Perera, and two Buddhist monks.

Additionally, the Tamil National Alliance (TNA)’s M. K. Sivajilingam and former Eastern Province Governor M.L.A.M. Hisbullah filed nominations as independents.

# China’s help to quell Hong Kong protests can’t be ruled out: Lam

Weekend unrest after mask ban brought the city to a halt

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
HONG KONG

Hong Kong’s leader Carrie Lam on Tuesday said China intervening to end months of pro-democracy protests is an option following a particularly violent week of unrest that paralysed the city.

The financial hub has been gripped by four months of rallies, and last weekend saw much of the city grind to a halt as masked demonstrators took to the streets in defiance of a controversial ban on face coverings.



Carrie Lam

used for half a century – to impose the ban sparked some of the most violent scenes since the crisis began, as protesters trashed subway stations, vandalised

shops and blocked roads.

Ms. Lam told reporters that while she believes the city’s authorities can cope with unprecedented troubles, China could be called upon if the situation becomes “so bad”.

“At this point in time, I still strongly feel that we should find the solutions ourselves. It is also the position of the central government (in Beijing) that Hong Kong should tackle the problem on her own... But if the situation becomes so bad, then no options can be ruled out if we want Hong Kong to at least have another chance.”

# + Trio win medicine Nobel Prize

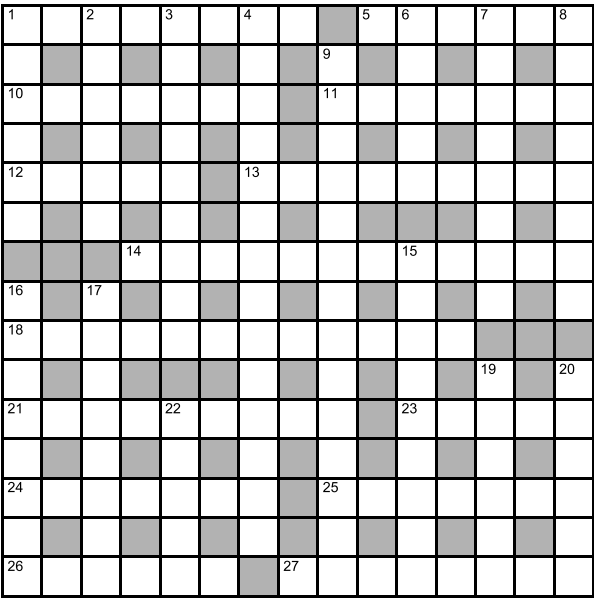
**ASSOCIATED PRESS**  
STOCKHOLM

Two Americans and a British scientist won a Nobel Prize on Monday for discovering details of how the body’s cells sense and react to low oxygen levels, providing a foothold for developing new treatments for anemia, cancer and other diseases.

William G. Kaelin Jr. of Harvard University, Gregg L. Semenza of Johns Hopkins University and Peter J. Ratcliffe at the Francis Crick Institute in Britain and Oxford University won the prize for advances in physiology or medicine.

The scientists will share the 9 million kronor (\$918,000) cash award.

## THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12750



■ ACROSS

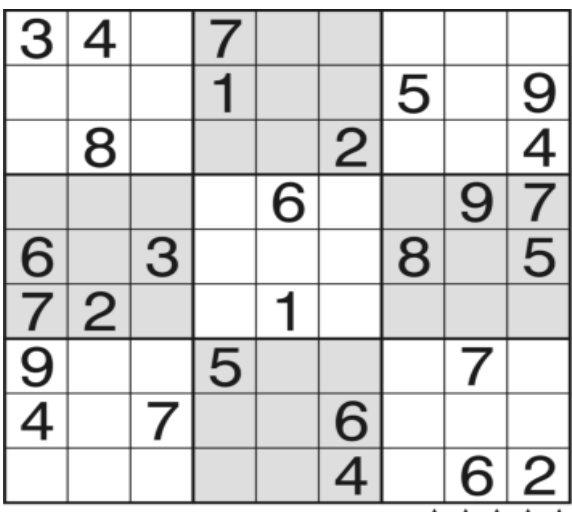
- 1 A container with coating of first-class metal (8)
- 5 Model in distress starting to raise kid (6)
- 10 Ruby inhales fresh joint (7)
- 11 Stuffed with enthusiasm, fellow goes in for spot of vodka in party on retirement (7)

- 12 Alcoholic beverage – iced cocktail with a bit of rum (5)
  - 13 Friends from America start to dominate in matches (9)
  - 14 Slandering oriental group after petty fight in venture (12)
  - 18 What a film director might do to be in command? (4,3,5)
  - 21 Impatient friend beginning to manifest a greed for money (5,4)
  - 23 United by wise tradition (5)
  - 24 Intrigue in Tehran planned by moles at Centre (7)
  - 25 Argue about girl going out to trap ghastly revolutionary in the dark (7)
  - 26 Start to thrash and rob religious person (6)
  - 27 Bully in party grabs hot date leaving joint (8)
- DOWN
- 1 Fast to catch one hacker’s latest infringement (6)
  - 2 Imply mate regularly provides shelter to tiresome revolutionary (6)

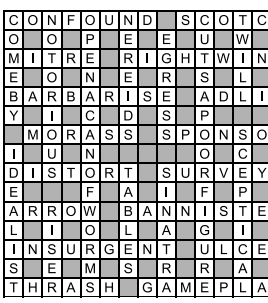
(set by Dr. X)

- 3 Reckless cartel killing a trainee in clumsy ambush (9)
- 4 Journalist about to interrupt unbalanced Republican – he’s impossible to understand (14)
- 6 Insane radical arrested around sports venue (5)
- 7 Guard on ship upset after sailor grabs couple of females (8)
- 8 Give up consuming dope on vacation! Plan afresh (8)
- 9 What a person having epileptic fit might do to become very angry? (4,2,3,5)
- 15 Escort rogue out in anger (9)
- 16 Misadventure by one director in stress (8)
- 17 Bond pursuing British miss in formal evening dress (5,3)
- 19 Empty container in tank (6)
- 20 Belittle head of faculty stifling workforce endlessly (6)
- 22 Stories speak about inspiring sailors (5)

## SUDOKU



**Solution to puzzle 12749**



**Solution to yesterday’s Sudoku**



## FAITH

### Reciting His names

Kamban in his Ramayana elaborates on the Narasimha avatara, something Valmiki did not do. When Hiranyakasipu asks Prahlada where Hari resides, Prahlada answers him. This answer that Kamban gives through Prahlada’s words is full of meaning, said M.A. Venkatakrishnan in a discourse. Prahlada says, “If you split an atom into a hundred pieces, then He is in each of them. He is Mount Meru. He is in this pillar. He is in your words too.”

There are many verses in the Divya Prabandham describing the Narasimha avatara. In one verse, Periyazhvar uses words that yield significant meanings. While talking of the pillar which Hiranyakasipu struck, and from which Narasimha emerged, Periyazhvar says, “aLanditta thUN”. He is indicating that this pillar (thUN) was measured by Hiranyakasipu. Many were Hiranyakasipu’s conquests, and this was his pillar of victory. He had proudly supervised its construction. He had ensured that it was huge, matching his huge size. Had the Lord come out of some other pillar, the demon might have argued that Narasimha had hidden inside the pillar and that the pillar had been built around Him. But he would have no doubts about any tricks where the pillar of victory was concerned, because it had been built under his watchful eyes. In his Thiruvallikeni pasuram, Thirumangai Azhvar describes a scenario, which we witness even in our families every day – a child coming home from school, and a parent asking him what he has learnt. Prahlada comes home after lessons and his father asks him what he learnt that day. But Hiranyakasipu does not find his son’s words pleasing. The child recited the Lord’s thousand names, ‘ayira naamam’, says Periyazhvar. Thus, even before Bhisma, we have an example of the Lord’s 1000 names being recited.