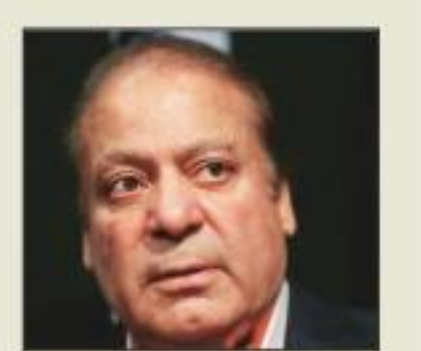


TOP OF THE WORLD



PAKISTAN
Ailing Sharif to travel to London on Tuesday for treatment
 Lahore: Pakistan's ailing former prime minister Nawaz Sharif will leave for London on Tuesday by an air ambulance for treatment after the Lahore High Court allowed him to travel abroad for four weeks for medical care on his plea and rejected the Imran Khan government's condition of furnishing an indemnity bond. A two-member bench of the Lahore High Court headed by Justice Baqar Najfi on Saturday announced the verdict on Sharif's plea challenging the Imran Khan government's condition of furnishing an indemnity bond for the removal of his name from the no-fly list so that he could travel to the UK for his medical treatment.

BRITAIN
Govt, military covered up war crimes: report

London: The UK government and military covered up credible evidence of war crimes by British soldiers against civilians in Afghanistan and Iraq, according to an investigation by the BBC and the *Sunday Times*. Leaks from two government-ordered inquiries into the conduct of troops in the conflicts implicated troops in the killing of children and torture of civilians, the investigation found. The allegations include murders by a soldier from the elite SAS unit, as well as deaths in custody, beatings, torture and sexual abuse of detainees by members of the Black Watch infantry unit.

PHILIPPINES
Life taking toll on my health, says Duterte

Manila: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has admitted that life is taking its "toll on my health", as speculation swirls over the 74-year-old's prolonged absences from the public eye. Duterte cut short a trip to Japan last month because he was suffering from "unbearable pain" in his spine after a recent motorcycle accident, and has not spoken publicly for two weeks. The accident came 10 days after he revealed he has *myasthenia gravis*, an autoimmune disease that causes muscle weakness.



A protester throws a Molotov cocktail during a clash with police at Hong Kong Polytechnic University on Sunday. AP

HK cops try to flush out campus protesters
 Police fire barrage of teargas, water cannons, officer hit by arrow in day of clashes

KEN MORITSUGU
 HONG KONG, NOVEMBER 17
 POLICE LAUNCHED a late-night operation Sunday to try to flush out about 200 protesters out of a university campus on a day of clashes in which an officer was hit in the leg with an arrow and massive barrages of teargas and water cannons were fired. Riot police began moving in on one group of protesters outside the campus after issuing an ultimatum for people to leave area. They used teargas and water cannons on a resistant crowd wearing raincoats and carrying umbrellas. Protesters used bows and arrows earlier in the day, and one arrow struck a media liaison officer in the calf. Photos on the department's Facebook page show the arrow sticking out of the back of the officer's leg through his pants. As riot police moved in from all sides, some protesters retreated inside Hong Kong Polytechnic University while others set fires on bridges leading to it. A huge blaze burned along much of a long footbridge that connects a train station to the campus over the approach to the Cross-Harbour Tunnel, a major road under Hong Kong's harbor that has been blocked by the protesters for days. The use of bows and arrows, along with a gasoline bomb launched with catapults, threatened to escalate the violence in the more than five-month-long anti-government movement. Protesters are trying to keep the pressure on Hong Kong leaders, who have rejected most of their demands. The protests were sparked by proposed legislation that would have allowed the extradition of criminal suspects to the mainland. Activists saw it as an erosion of Hong Kong's autonomy under the "one country, two systems" formula implemented in 1997, when Britain returned the territory to China. AP

In blow to Trump, only Dem governor in US's deep south wins re-election
 Louisiana is 2nd poll setback in a month for President after campaigning heavily

RICK ROJAS & JEREMY ALFORD
 BATON ROUGE, NOVEMBER 17
 GOVERNOR JOHN Bel Edwards of Louisiana, the only Democratic governor in the Deep South, narrowly won re-election Saturday, overcoming the intervention of President Donald Trump, who visited the state multiple times in an effort to help Edwards' Republican challenger and demonstrate his own clout. It was the second blow at the ballot box for Trump this month in a Republican-leaning state, following the Democratic victory in the Kentucky governor's race, where the President also campaigned for the GOP candidate. In Louisiana, Trump had wagered significant political capital to try to lift Eddie Rispone, a businessman who ran against Edwards in large part by embracing the President and his agenda. Trump campaigned for Rispone twice in the final two weeks of the race, warning Louisiana voters that a loss would reflect poorly on his presidency — the same appeal he made in Kentucky earlier this month to try to help Gov. Matt Bevin, who ultimately lost. Of the three governor's races this year, all in deep red states, Republicans won only one, in Mississippi. Republicans also lost control of both chambers of the state legislature in Virginia, where many Democratic candidates were sharply critical of Trump. In a rally in Louisiana last week in support of Rispone, Trump acknowledged the stakes, saying, "You've got to give me a big win, OK?" He also told the crowd that everyone wrongly blamed him for the Republican loss in Kentucky. NYT



Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards with supporters at his election night watch party. AP

EXPLAINED
Why state setbacks matter
 TRUMP TRAVELLED to Louisiana thrice to campaign for the Republican candidate, telling the crowd at a rally to "give me a big win, OK?" This comes at a time when the President is facing impeachment proceedings that could end his time in office if the GOP-controlled Senate doesn't take his side. He has repeatedly said any Republican who does not show 'loyalty' will be defeated in their next electoral race by his energised support base. But mounting GOP losses could be seen in some quarters of the party as Trump losing his political clout, and this could have implications for his potential impeachment.

Woman in Boris favouritism row says he left her humiliated

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
 LONDON, NOVEMBER 17
 A US businesswoman at the centre of controversy over whether Boris Johnson showed her inappropriate favouritism amid an alleged affair said Sunday she had been left "heartbroken" and "humiliated" by the British Prime Minister. Jennifer Arcuri, who is accused of getting privileged access to foreign trade jaunts and grants when Johnson was previously London mayor, told Britain's ITV he was treating her like "some fleeting one-night stand". The technology entrepreneur said the British premier, now campaigning for re-election, had rebuffed her requests "for advice" after the scandal erupted in September. "I'm terribly heartbroken by the way that you have cast me aside like I am some gremlin," Arcuri, addressing Johnson directly, told ITV's *Exposure* programme, according to excerpts released ahead of its Sunday broadcast. "I don't understand why you've blocked me and ignored me as if I was some fleeting one-night stand or some girl that you picked up at a bar because I wasn't — and you know that," she said. "I felt so disgusted and humiliated that I was told bigger things are at stake, never mind you." Johnson, who was London mayor from 2008 to 2016, is battling for a five-year term in Downing Street in next month's general election. The show alleges the pair had an affair for over four years, though Arcuri refused to confirm this. Johnson has previously said he did not have the kind of relationship with Arcuri that required him to notify watchdogs of a potential conflict of interest, as required. Arcuri was reportedly given £126,000 in public money and privileged access to three foreign trade missions led by then-mayor Johnson.



UK PM Boris Johnson

ITALY
VENICE HIT BY ANOTHER MASSIVE HIGH TIDE
 Reeling from devastating floods this week, Venice suffered another exceptional high tide on Sunday, with the water peaking at 150 cm, marking the worst week for the city since official tide statistics were produced in 1872. The city's centre for tide forecasts had warned the tide could reach 160 cm on Sunday and the high mark hit at 1210 GMT was not far short of that.



Map row: Nepal's PM claims Kalapani area, tells India to 'withdraw'

YUBARAJ GHIMIRE
 KATHMANDU, NOVEMBER 17
 WITH PROTESTS mounting, Nepal Prime Minister KP Oli said on Sunday that the Kalapani area at the tri-junction of Nepal, India and Tibet belonged to Nepal, and "India should immediately withdraw its army from there". It was Oli's first public response to a controversy triggered by official India maps released recently that included Kalapani, an area located on the western edge of Nepal. While there was no official response from Delhi, sources reiterated that the maps depicted India's "sovereign territory accurately" and there had been no revision in the boundary with Nepal. Addressing a meeting organised by the Nepal Yuva Sangam, the youth wing of the ruling Nepal Communist Party, Oli said, "We will not allow even an inch of our territory to be occupied by any country, India must vacate it." However, he overruled suggestions that Nepal come out with an amended map including the contested areas. Dialogue will follow after India "withdraws its army from our land", Oli said. Nepal has seen protests by both ruling and opposition parties over the India maps. Participants at an all-party meeting called by Oli three days ago, including former prime ministers and ex-foreign ministers, asked him to take up the issue with India immediately. The new maps were released by India to factor in the newly-created Indian Territories of Jammu and Kashmir (J-K) and Ladakh. These maps include Pakistan Occupied Kashmir as part of J&K, and Gilgit-Baltistan, also controlled by Pakistan, in Ladakh. In a statement on November 6, the Nepal Foreign Ministry said, "The government is clear that the Kalapani area lies within Nepalese territory." In a reaction a day later, the Indian Ministry of External Affairs said, "Our map accurately depicts the sovereign territory of India. The new map has in no manner revised our boundary with Nepal... The boundary delineation exercise with Nepal is ongoing under the existing mechanism. We reiterate our commitment to find a solution through dialogue in the spirit of our close and friendly bilateral relations." The statement added that India and Nepal should guard against "vested interests trying to create differences between the two".



Protests against the maps in Kathmandu, Sunday. Reuters

Participants at an all-party meeting called by Oli three days ago, including former prime ministers and ex-foreign ministers, asked him to take up the issue with India immediately. The new maps were released by India to factor in the newly-created Indian Territories of Jammu and Kashmir (J-K) and Ladakh. These maps include Pakistan Occupied Kashmir as part of J&K, and Gilgit-Baltistan, also controlled by Pakistan, in Ladakh. In a statement on November 6, the Nepal Foreign Ministry said, "The government is clear that the Kalapani area lies within Nepalese territory." In a reaction a day later, the Indian Ministry of External Affairs said, "Our map accurately depicts the sovereign territory of India. The new map has in no manner revised our boundary with Nepal... The boundary delineation exercise with Nepal is ongoing under the existing mechanism. We reiterate our commitment to find a solution through dialogue in the spirit of our close and friendly bilateral relations." The statement added that India and Nepal should guard against "vested interests trying to create differences between the two".

Iran protests: Khamenei backs fuel price hike

DUBAI: Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Sunday backed gasoline price increases that have sparked protests across Iran, blaming opponents of the Islamic Republic and foreign enemies for "sabotage", state television reported. "Some people are no doubt worried by this decision ... but sabotage and arson is done by hoologians not our people. The counter-revolution and Iran's enemies have always supported sabotage and breaches of security and continue to do so," Ayatollah Khamenei said, according to state TV. Riot police and security forces clashed with demonstrators on Saturday in Tehran and dozens of cities across the country, Iranian news agencies and social media said, a day after the government increased the price of gasoline. Officials said Saturday that one person was killed in the city of Sirjan, while social media reports referred to several other deaths as protests turned political. REUTERS

Gotabaya Rajapaksa a hero to many, but others want him tried for war crimes

SANJEEV MIGLANI & SHIHAR ANEEZ
 COLOMBO, NOVEMBER 17
 FOR SRI Lanka's majority Sinhalese Buddhists, president-elect Gotabaya Rajapaksa is best-placed to take on the hard challenge of defeating enemies of the state such as those who carried out deadly Easter Sunday attacks early this year. For others, he is a leader who should be tried for war crimes over allegations of killings, torture and disappearances of scores of people during the final stages of the war against Tamil Tigers in 2009 that he led as defence secretary. Rajapaksa is the younger brother of former president Mahinda Rajapaksa, and the two nationalists gave the military a free hand to crush the Tamil separatists and end a 26-year civil war that had left more than 100,000 people dead. Now the 70-year-old Rajapaksa, who won Sunday's election, has vowed to drain the swamp of religious extremism that bred the home-grown Islamist suicide bombers who struck churches and hotels in April, killing more than 250 people. He plans to rebuild the security arms of the state, including intelligence cells and surveillance networks that he says the outgoing administration dismantled under international pressure. That has raised fears of a return to a security state like that Rajapaksa created to fight the Tamils, one that could be directed against Muslims who have faced hostility from Buddhists hardliners since the attacks, say experts. In his first comments following his election victory, Rajapaksa said he would carry all countrymen with him in the new Sri Lanka he planned to build. A former lieutenant colonel in the army, Rajapaksa has the image of a decisive leader who gets things done. As president, he has offered voters a technocratic, military-style governance, led by professionals rather than politicians. Rajapaksa, an avowed Buddhist and vegetarian, left the army in the 1990s and moved to the US where he worked in information technology. This year he applied to renounce his US citizenship since Sri Lankan law does not allow candidates with dual citizenship to run for president. To those who raised issues related to rights abuse during his time as defence secretary he said last month during the campaign: "You're talking about the past all the time, let's talk about the future." REUTERS



The president-elect

DAYS BEFORE WEDDING, SHE WAS HELD FOR AN ABORTION SHE SAYS SHE DIDN'T HAVE. NOW HAJAR RAISSOUNI IS PUSHING FOR MORE FREEDOMS

Moroccan journalist a 'victim not only of unjust laws, but of unjust authorities'

AIDA ALAMI
 RABAT, NOVEMBER 17
 WHEN HAJAR Raissouni, an investigative journalist with one of Morocco's only independent news outlets, went to her doctor's office last August seeking treatment for a vaginal hemorrhage, she was not planning on becoming the centre of a national discussion on press freedom, abortion rights and what critics said is the nation's antiquated penal code. But Aug 31, minutes after she received the treatment, Raissouni and her fiancé, Rifaat al-Amin, were arrested — just two weeks before their wedding date. At first, she thought they were being robbed. But she quickly realised that the six men in plainclothes holding video cameras were police officers and that she was being arrested because of her critical reporting on Moroccan authorities. The couple would eventually be charged with sex outside of marriage and having an abortion, both crimes in the North African kingdom, though abortion laws are rarely enforced. Raissouni, who strongly denies having had an abortion, said she was forced by Moroccan authorities to undergo a pelvic examination that aggravated the hemorrhage, provoking renewed bleeding. Her physician, Dr Jamal Belkeziz; a second doctor; and an office assistant also were arrested, charged with violating abortion laws. Their trial in September caused a sensation in Morocco, drawing crowds of supporters and protesters and unleashing a torrent of criticism from press freedom and abortion rights advocates, among others. The court's decision to convict all five and sentence Raissouni and al-Amin, who is now her husband, to a year in prison provoked another uproar that was quieted only after the issuance of a royal pardon for all of the defendants Oct 16. "We're relieved that Hajar and her co-defendants are free, but they should have never been arrested in the first place," said Ahmed Benchemsi, Middle East and North Africa communications director at Human Rights Watch, after the pardon. "A silver lining for this deplorable incident is that a debate was opened about archaic laws in Morocco, and now there's a growing demand to impel criminalisation of nonmarital sex from legal books." Naturally reserved, Raissouni is still dealing with the consequences of having her private life discussed for weeks in the national and international news media. But the case thrust her reluctantly into the headlines and onto a list of the top 10 cases of injustice against journalists, and she is determined to use her newfound celebrity to push for a political system with independent institutions and a free press. "I was not just the victim of unjust laws but the victim of unjust authorities," she said in an interview conducted in her apartment in Rabat. "My case wasn't really about a nonexistent abortion, but it was the result of the arbitrary politics of the state." As terrible as this experience may have been, it seems fair to say that Raissouni seemed almost bound to fall afoul of Moroccan authorities at some point. She was born into a prominent family of landowners, warriors, intellectuals and political dissidents in northern Morocco and was urged from an early age to hold those in power accountable in a country where injustice largely prevails. She is also a niece of two prominent voices of dissent in Morocco: Soulaïmane Raissouni, editor of *Akhbar Al Yaoum*, one of the few independent news outlets in Morocco, where she had been working; and Ahmed Raissouni, an Islamist and vocal critic of the state. The urge to write and express herself came to Raissouni at an early age. When she was just 9, she wrote an article titled "Peace," and when she was 12, another one titled "Freedom." She excelled in school and eventually moved to the capital for college. Raissouni said she is not sure she is ready to resume her career, preferring to take time to recuperate from the ordeal. But she said she is still determined to denounce human rights abuses — perhaps even more so. NYT



Sentenced to one year in prison, Hajar Raissouni was later pardoned. Reuters