

U.S. Senate passes Hong Kong rights Bill

It mandates action against Chinese officials who commit rights abuses; Beijing vows countermeasures

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE WASHINGTON The U.S. Senate unanimously adopted legislation on Tuesday supporting "human rights and democracy" in Hong Kong...

man said Mr. Klein "relayed that we are watching the situation in Hong Kong with grave concern" during the Foreign Ministry meeting. China had also reacted angrily when the U.S. House of Representatives passed a similar measure last month.



Nowhere to escape: Police detaining protesters as they tried to flee the Hong Kong Polytechnic University campus.

Chinese police tortured me, says ex-U.K. staffer

ASSOCIATED PRESS BEIJING A former employee of the British Consulate in Hong Kong said he was detained and tortured by Chinese secret police trying to extract information about massive anti-government protests in the territory.

added the legislation "makes it clear that the U.S. will stand firmly and unambiguously with the legitimate aspirations of the people of Hong Kong". Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said the U.S. purpose was to "support the extremists and violent elements against China that are trying to mess up Hong Kong..."

Diplomat says he followed Trump's orders on Ukraine

He points to clear quid pro quo for Trump-Zelensky meet

SRRIRAM LAKSHMAN WASHINGTON In what is likely to be an inflection point in the public impeachment inquiry into whether U.S. President Donald Trump violated his oath of office in his dealings with Ukraine...



Gordon Sondland

the pressure campaign. "As a presidential appointee, I followed the directions of the President. We worked with Mr. Giuliani because the President directed us to do so," Mr. Sondland said, referring to Rudy Giuliani, Mr. Trump's personal lawyer...

ELSEWHERE



Prince Andrew to step back from public duties LONDON Britain's Prince Andrew said on Wednesday he was stepping down from public duties for the foreseeable future after being engulfed in a scandal involving Jeffrey Epstein.

Iran says 'enemy conspiracy' defeated

President Hassan Rouhani accuses rival countries of plotting against Tehran

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE TEHRAN Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said on Wednesday the country's people had defeated an "enemy conspiracy" behind a wave of violent street protests and were celebrating their victory.

hatched," referring to Saudi Arabia, Israel and the U.S. The demonstrations erupted in the sanctions-hit Islamic republic on Friday after an announcement the price of petrol would be raised by as much as 200% with immediate effect.

shops looted. Officials have confirmed five deaths, including of three security personnel stabbed by "rioters". Thousands of mourners chanted "Death to America" at the funeral procession on Wednesday for one of those killed, a Revolutionary Guard commander in Shahrar, west of Tehran.

national said more than 100 demonstrators were believed to have been killed. The full extent of the bloodshed was difficult to ascertain given a near-total internet blackout now in its fourth day.

106 dead in Iran protests: Amnesty

ASSOCIATED PRESS DUBAI Days of protests over rising fuel prices and a subsequent government crackdown have killed at least 106 people across Iran, Amnesty International said on Tuesday, adding that the real figure may be much higher.

Friday and spread quickly across at least 100 cities and towns. But it disputed Amnesty report through its mission to the United Nations, calling it aseless allegations and fabricated figures.

Absent in the coverage was an acknowledgement of what sparked the demonstrations. Amnesty said it gathered its figures from interviewing journalists and activists, then crosschecked the information. In its breakdown, it showed the hardest-hit areas as the western Kermanshah province and its oil-rich southwestern province of Khuzestan.

Bolivia President says she will call poll soon

LA PAZ Bolivia's interim President Jeanine Anez said on Wednesday she will call elections in the coming hours, after deadly unrest following the resignation of Evo Morales.

Suu Kyi to lead Myanmar's defence against ICJ case

It is accused of genocide against Rohingya

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE YANGON Myanmar's civilian leader and Nobel peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi will head up a delegation to the UN's top court to defend a case accusing the mainly Buddhist country of genocide against Rohingya Muslims, the government said on Wednesday, a decision that blind-sided observers.

Myanmar of breaching the 1948 UN Genocide Convention through its brutal military campaign in 2017, which targeted the Rohingya in Rakhine state. In the opening hearings, the African country is expected to ask the court to make an emergency injunction to protect the Rohingya, pending a decision on whether to deal with the wider case.

With no government in sight, another Israeli election looms

Kingmaker Lieberman denies support to Netanyahu, Gantz

REUTERS JERUSALEM Israel moved closer towards a new election on Wednesday after kingmaker Avigdor Lieberman declined to back either Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu or challenger Benny Gantz with a deadline on building a government about to expire.



Avigdor Lieberman

Mr. Lieberman, who heads the far-right Yisrael Beiteinu party, told a news conference on Wednesday that "both (Netanyahu and Gantz) were guilty" in failing to agree on a Likud-Blue and White alliance, which he had strongly advocated.

Tories switch Twitter name during key debate

Party faces fire for misleading public

ASSOCIATED PRESS LONDON Britain's Conservative Party was accused on Wednesday of trying to deceive voters by changing the name of its press office Twitter account to factcheckUK during an election debate between Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Opposition Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn.

based fact-checking website Full Fact, told the BBC. And I think it is inappropriate and misleading for a serious political party to behave that way. Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab defended the party's actions, saying the Twitter account was clearly linked to the Conservatives.

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12786

Crossword puzzle grid with clues and solution for puzzle 12786.

SUDOKU

Sudoku puzzle grid with clues and solution for puzzle 12785.

FAITH

Lord Vasudeva is Bhagavan

Sage Parasara, author of Vishnu Purana, argues that the name Bhagavan is apt only in the case of Lord Vasudeva, said P.T. Seshadri, in a discourse. If the word Bhagavan is split into its components - bha+ ga+va, the appropriateness of Bhagavan as a name for Vasudeva becomes evident.