

Iran resumes uranium enrichment at Fordow plant

This marks Tehran's fourth step away from the 2015 nuclear agreement

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TEHRAN

Iran resumed uranium enrichment at its underground Fordow plant south of Tehran on Thursday in a new step back from its commitments under a landmark 2015 nuclear deal, raising alarm from Western powers. Engineers began feeding uranium hexafluoride gas into the plant's mothballed enrichment centrifuges in "the first minutes of Thursday", the Iranian Atomic Energy Organisation said.

The suspension of uranium enrichment at the long-secret plant was one of the restrictions on its nuclear programme Iran had agreed to in return for the lifting of sanctions. Iran's announcement that it would resume enrichment at the Fordow plant from midnight (2030 GMT on Wednesday) had drawn a chorus of concern from the remaining parties to the troubled agreement.

The resumption of enrichment at Fordow is Iran's fourth step away from the



Deal in danger: Centrifuge machines in Natanz uranium enrichment facility, Iran, in a photo released on Tuesday. •AP

agreement. The United States called for "serious steps" to be taken in response to the move. "Iran's expansion of proliferation-sensitive activities raises concerns that Iran is positioning itself to have the option of a rapid nuclear breakout," U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a statement.

Uranium enrichment is the sensitive process that produces fuel for nuclear power plants but also, in highly extended form, the

fissile core for a warhead. Iran is now enriching uranium to 4.5%, exceeding the 3.67% limit set by the 2015 deal but less than the 20% level it had previously operated to and far less than the 90% level required for a warhead. Iran has always denied any military dimension to its nuclear programme.

IAEA inspection
It has been at pains to emphasise that all of the steps it has taken are transparent and swiftly reversible if the

remaining parties to the agreement find a way to get round U.S. sanctions.

"All these activities have been carried out under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency," the Iranian nuclear organisation said.

A source close to the United Nations watchdog said that it has inspectors on the ground in Fordow and would report "very rapidly" on the steps taken by Iran.

Iran revealed on Thursday that it had withdrawn the credentials of one IAEA inspector last week after she triggered an alarm at the gate to Iran's other enrichment plant at Natanz, raising suspicion she was carrying a "suspect product". It did not specify what the product was or whether it had actually been found in the inspector's possession. But it promised that its representative to the IAEA would deliver a detailed report on the incident at a special meeting on Iran held at the agency's headquarters in Vienna.

Border with Nepal not altered: India

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India on Thursday said the new map of the country did not revise anything as far as the border with Nepal is concerned. The response came after Nepal's Foreign Ministry complained that the map depicted Nepali territory of Kalapani as part of the Indian State of Uttarakhand.

"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," said Raveesh Kumar, spokesperson, Foreign Ministry.

Nepal on Wednesday had formally protested over the issue. A press release by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs there said Kathmandu is committed to protect Nepal's territorial integrity. "Nepal is clear that Kalapani is a part of Nepali territory. We are committed to protect the international boundaries of Nepal and for that we have diplomatic dialogue with friendly Nepali Foreign Ministry declared," said the press release.

China hints at cancelling U.S. tariffs

REUTERS
BEIJING

China and the United States have agreed to cancel in phases the tariffs imposed during their months-long trade war, the Chinese Commerce Ministry said on Thursday, without specifying a timetable.

An interim U.S.-China trade deal is widely expected to include a U.S. pledge to scrap tariffs scheduled for December 15 on about \$156 billion worth of Chinese im-

ports, including cell phones, laptop computers and toys.

Phase one trade deal
Tariff cancellation was an important condition for any agreement, Ministry spokesman Gao Feng said, adding that both must simultaneously cancel some tariffs to reach a "phase one" trade deal.

"In the past two weeks, the lead negotiators from both sides have had serious and constructive discussions on resolving various core

concerns appropriately," Mr. Gao said. "Both sides have agreed to cancel additional tariffs in different phases, as both sides make progress in their negotiations." He did not give a timeline.

In what could be another gesture to boost optimism, China's state agency Xinhua reported late on Thursday that the Chinese customs and the Ministry of Agriculture are considering removing restrictions on U.S. poultry imports.

Tamil party endorses Premadasa for President

TNA says the Rajapaksas' record on power devolution has been 'dismal'

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's main Tamil party, the Tamil National Alliance (TNA), on Thursday officially endorsed presidential candidate Sajith Premadasa, ahead of the November 16 poll.

The TNA, which represents Tamils of the war-affected north and east, said it based its decision on the past track records of the two main candidates — Mr. Premadasa and Gotabaya Rajapaksa — and on a reading of their respective manifestos. In the event of a likely close contest between them, Tamil (from the north, east and hill country) and Muslim votes could prove crucial in determining the winner, who requires a vote share of 50% plus one. The minorities are widely credited with propelling the current



Poll talk: Sajith Premadasa at a rally in October. •AP

Maithripala Sirisena-Ranil Wickremesinghe government to power in 2015.

Over 8.5 lakh people in the Tamil majority-Northern Province are registered to vote, while nearly 12 lakh are registered to vote in the Eastern Province, that is home to Tamils, Muslims and Sinhalese. A total of 16 million Sri Lankans will get to vote in

the country biggest election in less than two weeks.

The people expected the newly elected President to be "genuinely committed" to democracy, opposed to authoritarianism and totalitarianism, the protection and preservation of the independence of the different institutions of governance, the protection of fundamental

rights and human rights, justice and equality for all citizens irrespective of ethnicity or religion, TNA leader R. Sampanthan said in a statement endorsed by all constituent parties.

Terming the Rajapaksas' track record on human rights and power devolution "dismal", the TNA referred to Mr. Premadasa as a "leader with clean hands", though a few other Tamil parties in the north have raised questions over Mr. Premadasa's specific position on power devolution.

However, taking "all factors" into account, "particularly past performance on vital fronts and future performance based upon their respective manifestos," the TNA has urged all people, particularly the Tamil people, to vote for Mr. Premadasa.

'All 39 truck victims were from Vietnam'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

All 39 bodies found in a refrigerated truck outside London last month have now been identified as citizens of Vietnam, British police and Vietnamese officials said on Thursday.

The Vietnamese Embassy said it was "in deep sorrow" over the confirmation that the 31 men and eight women discovered dead in a truck on October 23 were from the country. Essex Police had initially said the victims were believed to be Chinese nationals, until several Vietnamese families came forward to say they feared their relatives were on board.

Ex-Twitter employees spied for Saudi Arabia, alleges U.S.

They gave private data on the kingdom's critics to Riyadh

REUTERS
WASHINGTON/SAN FRANCISCO

Two former employees of Twitter and a third man from Saudi Arabia face U.S. charges of spying for the kingdom by digging up private user data and giving it to Saudi officials in exchange for payment, a complaint from the Department of Justice shows.

Ali Alzabarah and Ahmad Abouammo, who used to work for Twitter, and Ahmed Almutairi, who then worked for the Saudi royal family, face charges of working for Saudi Arabia without registering as foreign agents, according to the complaint

filed against them on Wednesday. The indictment points an unusually public finger at Saudi Arabia, a U.S. ally that maintains warm ties with President Donald Trump despite its bad human rights record.

Saudi Arabia has not yet publicly remarked on the complaint.

King Salman met with the Director of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, Gina Haspel, in the capital Riyadh, the state news agency said on Thursday. It gave no details on the topics discussed at the meeting, which was also attended by the Saudi Foreign and Inte-

rior Ministers and the U.S. Ambassador.

According to the complaint, Mr. Abouammo repeatedly accessed the Twitter account of a prominent critic of the Saudi royal family in early 2015. At one instance, he was able to view the email address and telephone number associated with the account. He also accessed the account of a second Saudi critic to get personally identifiable information.

Mr. Almutairi, for his part, is accused of acting as a go-between for the Saudi government and the Twitter employees.

Angry Mormons bury their dead in Mexico

Family was possibly caught in crossfire, say investigators; relatives reject the claim

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
RANCHO LA MORA

At a ranch in a wooded valley of northern Mexico, Howarth LeBaron gazes mournfully at his three surviving children. Days ago, they lost four of their siblings and their mother in a massacre.

"There are no words for what happened to them," he says, watching the children as they play with a toy unicorn and dinosaur. "There are no words."

His wife Rhonita and four of her children were among nine victims killed on Monday in a hail of bullets in an attack authorities have blamed on a drug cartel.

They were driving in three cars on a rural road between Sonora and Chihuahua, a region bordering the U.S.

As it prepared to start



State of mourning: A funeral in La Mora, Mexico, for three persons killed by drug cartel gunmen earlier this week. •AP

holding funerals for the victims on Thursday, this small community voiced grief and anger at the Mexican government. They say a gang attacked them deliberately. The families have stood up in the past to the powerful drug cartels that control this

lawless region. Some 30 houses make up the small ranch community in a valley ringed with pines.

The families are part of a large group of U.S. Mormons who emigrated to Mexico in the late 19th century, fleeing persecution for their tradi-

tions, including polygamy.

The community leapt to prominence a decade ago when it publicly challenged the drug cartels over the kidnapping of a teenage member of the LeBaron family.

The military blamed this week's killings on a drug cartel called "La Linea." Mexico's Security Minister Alfonso Durazo said the attack might have been a case of mistaken identity by gunmen meaning to target a rival gang.

"I don't know what the mistake is supposed to have been," said Julian LeBaron. "They knew they were women and children and still they attacked them, and after attacking them they set them on fire." He accused the government of failing his community.

Documents show how FB harnessed user data

Partners like Amazon got special access

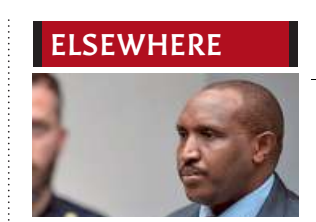
AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SAN FRANCISCO

Leaked documents from a civil suit against Facebook show how the social network aimed to employ user data as a tool for bargaining and to manipulate competitors, NBC News reported on Wednesday. Some 7,000 pages of documents reveal how Facebook chief Mark Zuckerberg and his team harnessed users' personal information to reward partners by giving them preferential data, while depriving rivals of the same sort of information, it reported.

NBC said the emails, notes and other documents dated as far back as 2011 and were supposed to be kept out of the public eye pending the civil case in California. They show, for example, how Amazon received special data access after purchasing advertising on Facebook, while an app called MessageMe was denied data after growing so large it became a competitor.

While acting out of self-motivation, Facebook planned to portray the moves as protective of user privacy, the documents showed. The lawsuit was filed by a now defunct startup called Six4Three.

The suit accuses Facebook of abusing its power over user data, although most of the documents filed in the case have been sealed by a judge at Facebook's request.



ICC hands 30-year-jail term to Congo warlord

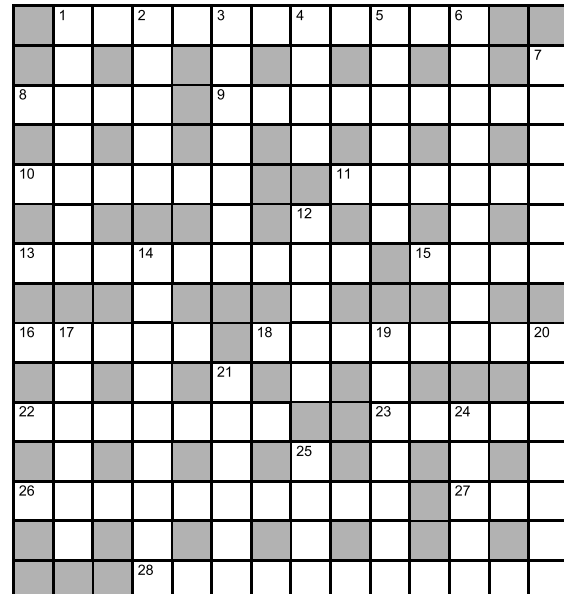
THE HAGUE
International Criminal Court judges handed Congolese rebel chief Bosco Ntaganda a 30-year jail term for war crimes on Thursday, the highest ever sentence passed down by the tribunal. •AFP

N. Korea slams Abe as 'idiot and villain'

SEOUL
North Korea slammed Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe as an "idiot and villain" on Thursday after he condemned the North's latest missile test. Pyongyang last week tested what it called "super-large multiple rocket launchers" but Japan said they were likely ballistic missiles. •AFP

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12775

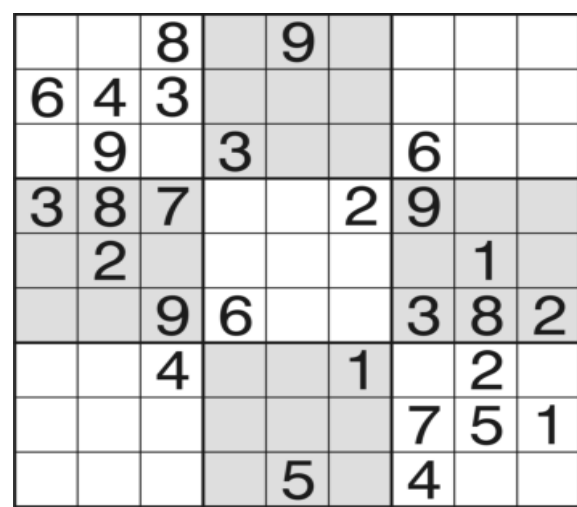
Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles



(set by Vulcan)

- 13 Old American in green-upholstered luxury car (9)
- 15 Speed of system ports (5)
- 16 Sure about securing couple of billions to build monastery (5)
- 18 Go with request that's absurd and ridiculous (9)
- 22 Definite or indefinite number (7)
- 23 Order from home with depression (6)
- 26 True, actors travelling around the city (10)
- 27 Standard time for break (4)
- 28 It's indecent — with fellows making this noise (4,7)
- 4 It erupts quiet naturally from the inside (4)
- 5 Tax worry stopping agreement (6)
- 6 Too many bad clues, not satisfactory basically (9)
- 7 Business house entirely set (4,2)
- 12 Trap a poacher lastly sets in 3 different directions (5)
- 14 Defeat apparent before end of match and series (9)
- 17 A week extra long at the start as a rule (6)
- 19 Journey's over, left one city (7)
- 20 Shake's ingredients as used by runner — vegan (7)
- 21 Sadism always intrinsically bad (6)
- 24 Chief Editor backing Arsenal (5)
- 25 Refusal, when voiced, understand (4)

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12774 Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

U	P	B	E	A	T	T	E	N	N	E	R										
P	H	D	I	A	O	A						4	6	3	8	5	2	1	7	9	
A	S	I	A	M	I	N	E	S	T	R	O	N	E								
T	N	I	I	T	W	G						5	8	1	6	9	7	2	3	4	
B	A	D	G	E	R	T	H	E	R	E	M	I	N								
G	E	A	T	R	G	E						2	7	9	1	4	3	5	8	6	
H	E	R	C	U	L	E	A	N	P	I	E	R	S								
L	A	I	R	D	O	R	I	N	A	T	E		8	9	2	3	1	6	7	4	5
R	O	S	H	A	T	E	R					6	3	4	5	7	8	9	1	2	
I	M	P	U	N	I	T	Y					9	1	6	7	3	5	4	2	8	
E	S	G	M	S	D	P						7	4	8	2	6	9	3	5	1	
I	N	T	E	R	S	E	A	C				3	2	5	4	8	1	6	9	7	
A	S	S	E	T	S	T	R	U	S	T	S										



To play an interactive version of this crossword online, scan the QR code