

ELSEWHERE



Putin to meet Zelensky on Ukraine peace efforts

MOSCOW
Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelensky will come together for the first time for a summit in Paris on Monday for talks on the conflict in east Ukraine, in what could be a step forward in ending Europe's only active war. **AFP**

Man held in Nepal over 'menstruation huts' death

KATHMANDU
Police have detained the brother-in-law of a woman, who died in a 'menstruation hut' in what is believed to be the first arrest over the outlawed tradition. Menstruating women are forced to sleep in a hut away from home. she died of smoke inhalation from a fire she had lit to keep warm. **AFP**

China imposes 'reciprocal' restrictions on U.S. diplomats

They have been told to notify the Foreign Ministry before meeting local officials

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIJING
China on Friday said it had taken "reciprocal" measures against U.S. diplomats in the country, ordering them to notify the Foreign Ministry before meeting with local officials.
Foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said China had notified the U.S. embassy of the new measures on Wednesday, which she said were a "counter-measure" to Washington's decision in October to restrict Chinese diplomats.
"We once again urge the U.S. side to correct its mistakes and revoke the relevant rules," she told reporters at a press briefing.
In October, the U.S. ordered Chinese diplomats to



Tit for tat: Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying during a press briefing in Beijing. **AP/FILE**

notify the State Department in advance of any official meetings with U.S. diplomats, local or municipal officials, and before any visits to colleges or research institutions.
At the time, Washington called the move "reciprocal", with a senior State Department official citing the inability of U.S. diplomats to meet with a range of Chinese officials and academics.
On Friday, Ms. Hua said that U.S. diplomats would have to notify the Foreign Ministry five working days in advance.
The U.S. embassy in Beijing declined to comment.
China's move to restrict U.S. diplomats comes as tensions between Washington and Beijing spike over human rights issues.

High tensions
Last week, U.S. President Donald Trump signed a law that supported pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong, which has been rocked by nearly six months of often violent unrest demanding greater autonomy – which Beijing has frequently blamed on foreign influence.
On Tuesday, U.S. lawmakers also voted to pass a Uighur rights Bill, which could impose sanctions against senior Chinese officials over the crackdown on Muslim Uighurs in Xinjiang.

We are killed in cold blood by Turkish proxies: Syrian Kurds

Ankara's offensive on Kurdish forces caused mass displacement

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
QAMISHLI

Syrian Kurdish mother Shara Sido says the news came to her via a messaging application. She received an image of a bullet-riddled corpse with the instruction: "Come collect your son."
Sitting inside a modest house in the de-facto Syrian Kurdish capital of Qamishli, the 65-year-old said, "This is the monster", showing a photograph of the Syrian fighter who, she said, confessed to shooting dead her 38-year-old son. "They killed my son in cold blood," she said, blaming Turkey-backed Syrian fighters.
Turkish troops and their Syrian proxies have overrun a swathe of northern Syria since October, after a deadly military campaign against



Syrian Kurds at a protest in their de-facto capital of Qamishli on Thursday **AFP**

Kurdish forces that caused tens of thousands to flee their homes.

'Demographic change'
Rights groups have accused Ankara-backed Syrian rebels of executions, home confiscations and looting – charges that Turkey-backed fighters deny.

Stories such as Ms. Sido's have instilled fear in a Kurdish minority, who have long accused Turkey of seeking to engineer demographic change.
Since the invasion started, Turkey has established a "safe zone" in a 120-km long strip along its southern border, where it says it wants to resettle Syrian refugees.
Turkish state media last month said around 70 Syrians crossed the border to Ras al-Ain in the first of such returns.
But the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based war monitor, says most of those returning are Arabs, not Kurds.
Mustafa al-Zaim, a Kurdish merchant who fled to Qamishli, says there is no way he is going back.

4 killed in shooting at U.S. Navy base

Suspect, reportedly a Saudi national, shot dead three and injured several others

REUTERS
FLORIDA

The suspected shooter involved in a deadly incident on Friday at a major U.S. Navy base in Florida was believed to be a Saudi national in the U.S. for training, two U.S. defence officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity.
Four people, including the shooter, were killed in the episode at Naval Air Station Pensacola, the Navy and local sheriff's office said, the second deadly shooting at a U.S. military installation this week.
The first reports of an "active shooter" on the base came through to the Escambia County sheriff's office.
A few minutes later, a sheriff's deputy fatally shot the shooter in a classroom on the base, Sheriff David Morgan said at a news conference on Friday morning.
"Walking through the crime scene was like being



Repeat incident: Emergency responders near the Naval base in Pensacola. **WEAR-TV/AP**

on the set of a movie," Mr. Morgan said.
The two law enforcement officials, who were not authorised to speak on the record about the investigation, said the suspected shooter was on the base for training but said they could provide no additional information.
Saudi Arabia's embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to questions.
Two sheriff's deputies were injured, one shot in the arm, the other in the knee, but both were expected to survive, officials said. Eight people were taken to Baptist Hospital for treatment.
While military bases house the nation's most powerful armaments, military personnel normally are restricted from carrying weapons on base unless they are part of their daily duties. Nonetheless U.S. military bases have seen deadly mass shootings before, including one in Ford Hood, Texas, in 2009 that left 13 dead and one at the Washington Navy Yard in 2013 that killed 12.
President Donald Trump had been briefed and was monitoring the situation, a White House spokesman said.
On Wednesday, a sailor shot three civilians at the historic Pearl Harbor base in Hawaii, killing two of them before taking his own life.

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Changing food habits



In desperation: Over 50 polar bears gathered outside Ryrkaypyi village in Russia's far north scrambling for food. Activists say climate change has prevented coastal ice from forming and in the absence of ice cover, the animals are forced to come ashore in search of food. **AFP**

Greta joins climate protest in Madrid

ASSOCIATED PRESS
MADRID

Climate activist Greta Thunberg arrived in Madrid on Friday to join thousands of other young people in a march to demand world leaders take real action against climate change.
Madrid is hosting UN-sponsored talks aimed at streamlining the rules on global carbon markets and agreeing on how poor countries should be compensated for destruction largely caused by emissions from rich nations.
Ms. Thunberg paid a surprise visit to the venue of the talks and joined a sit-in.

French government sticks by pension reforms

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PARIS

The French government on Friday expressed determination to plough ahead with far-reaching pension reforms in the face of the biggest strikes in years, which have brought public transport in much of the country to a standstill.
The strikes, which began on Thursday, have seen most high-speed trains cancelled, flights affected and most of the Paris metro shut down in a major challenge to the ambitious reform agenda of President Emmanuel Macron.
The turmoil is expected to continue over the weekend and through until at least Tuesday when unions have called more nationwide protests.
Prime Minister M Edouard Philippe insisted that the government would not abandon a plan which would require the French "to work a bit longer."
He pledged to work with trade unions to introduce a single "fairer", points-based pension scheme for all, scrapping the 42 more advantageous plans currently enjoyed by train drivers, soldiers and a host of other workers in the process.
Mr. Philippe said that the government was "very determined" to implement the reform, adding he did not believe the French would always accept a situation where some retire earlier with more money than others doing comparable jobs.

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Merkel makes her first visit to Auschwitz

She expressed Germany's 'deep shame' at what happened in the Nazi death camps

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
OSWIECIM

Germany's Angela Merkel crossed the gates of the former Auschwitz Nazi death camp in Poland on Friday for the first time in her 14 years as chancellor, promising to battle a new wave of anti-Semitism.
Ms. Merkel is only the third Chancellor ever to visit the Nazi German camp, where a million Jews were killed between 1940 and 1945 and which has come to symbolise the Holocaust as a whole.
Her trip, which comes ahead of the 75th anniversary of the camp's liberation by Soviet troops on January 27, is being seen as an important political message.
On the eve of her visit, the 65-year-old leader said that "the fight against anti-Semitism and against all forms of hate" was a priority for her government.
She also hailed a new €60 million (\$66 million) donation for the Auschwitz-Birkenau Foundation that was approved by Germany's federal states on Thursday.
Ms. Merkel began her visit by walking under the Nazi slogan "Arbeit macht frei" (Work will set you free) that still hangs over the gates of the camp.
"Remembering the crimes... is a responsibility which never ends," Ms. Merkel said during the visit in a message aimed at calls from the German far right for a shift away from a culture of remembrance and atonement.
"To be aware of this responsibility is part of our national identity, our self-understanding as an enlightened and free society," she added.
She expressed Germany's "deep shame" at what happened in Auschwitz and neighbouring Birkenau, where a million Jews lost their lives between 1940 and 1945.



Paying homage: German Chancellor Angela Merkel placing candles at an Auschwitz monument near Oswiecim. **REUTERS**

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'Iran protesters shot at from choppers, rooftop'

Severe violence used during unrest: UN

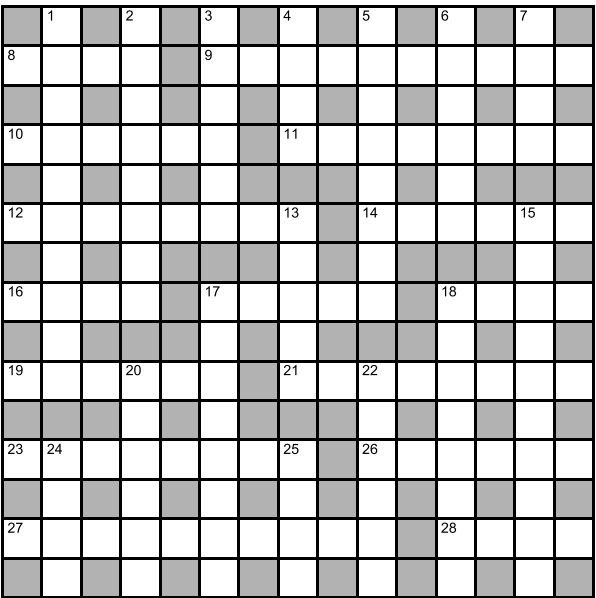
REUTERS
GENEVA

Iranian security forces have shot at protesters from helicopters and a rooftop and have aimed at peoples' heads in using "severe violence" to quell anti-government unrest last month, U.N. human rights chief Michelle Bachelet said on Friday.
They have also fired at protesters as they were running away, Ms. Bachelet said in a statement, citing verified video footage.
The U.N. Human Rights Office has received information indicating that at least 208 people have been killed, including 13 women and 12 children, during the demonstrations and at least 7,000 people arrested, the statement said. More than twice that number may have been killed, according to unconfirmed reports, according to the statement.
Iranian authorities confirmed for the first time this week that security forces killed demonstrators during what rights groups have said was the deadliest anti-government unrest since the 1979 Islamic Revolution.
"All in all, the picture now emerging from Iran is extremely disturbing," she said. Security forces have used water cannon, tear gas, batons, and live fire against unarmed demonstrators, it added.

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THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12800

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ACROSS

- 8 After destroying first two letters, appeal was redrafted into a petition (4)
- 9 Crime of inaction for which I was put into prison after half-simian went back (10)
- 10 Unknown revolutionary, on second thoughts, had the human spirit (6)

- 11 Sailor decoded and was cleared of charges (8)
- 12 Six artists trapped in enclosure on church property (8)
- 14 Put sulphur in stationary container (6)
- 16 Plant a money making plant (4)
- 17 Tether Chinese athlete in Nanking, at first (5)
- 18 Long tree (4)
- 19 This time, marry and lie alongside (6)
- 21 When the paper usually puts out the answer to these clues? It may never come... (8)
- 23 Remove fears of engineers since there is no doubt (8)
- 26 Latest report on state meeting (6)
- 27 Plastic that can put you in the red? (6,4)
- 28 Unhappy when Eros goes back (4)

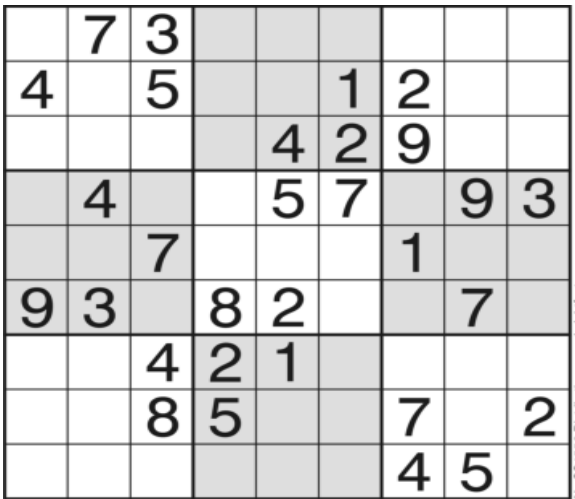
DOWN

- 1 When improvised explosive device is planted after school session, it is secret information (10)
- 2 Graph drawn right after tea behind tavern (3,5)

(set by Incognito)

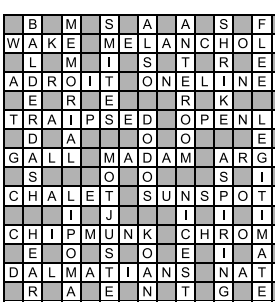
- 3 A doctor with low grade barium gets protozoa (6)
- 4 Some vadai-sambar returned to Continent (4)
- 5 Soft person from northern part of above was a citizen of the old German empire (8)
- 6 Pals dancing in front of little young lady composing songs (6)
- 7 It is announced before all at the beginning of a tennis match (4)
- 13 Once part of play is perfect (5)
- 15 Richard Starkey is Double-O? Top performer, right? (5,5)
- 17 Time around which diplomatic staff provides advice (8)
- 18 I hear, down to earth soldier gets passes to heaven (8)
- 20 No backward team is legally placed on soccer field (6)
- 22 Shapes molten metal using containers for fungal growths (6)
- 24 At first, European Union railway operator gives money (4)
- 25 Test old American (4)

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to puzzle 12799



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku



FAITH

Value of humility

When Vibhishana arrives at Rama's camp and surrenders to Him, Rama asks the monkey warriors what He should do. Should He admit Vibhishana or not? Each of them has a different opinion. Sugriva's answer is that Vibhishana should not be admitted. Angada wants Vibhishana to be tested, and if his loyalty and trustworthiness can be proved, then he can be admitted. Hanuman says that Vibhishana is a good person and so he should be allowed to join Rama's camp. Finally, Rama gives His opinion, which is that Vibhishana should be accepted because he has surrendered. It does not matter whether he is good or bad.
If Rama had already made up His mind, why did He allow the monkeys to voice their opinions? There was an important reason for Rama consulting the monkeys, said Kidambi Narayanan in a discourse. The monkeys were with Rama and so they had an interest in what was happening around them. Since they were in Rama's army, it was essential that they should be consulted too. Rama showed them that respect when He consulted them. This is indicative of Rama's humility. It showed that Rama was well versed in the Sastras.
Taittiriya Upanishad says that a learned man must get permission from a gathering before he speaks, and this is what Rama did. His humility also came from His learning. In the Gita, Krishna says vidya vinaya sampanne. This has been interpreted in three ways. Vidya (education) should give you humility (vinaya). Vidya eva vinaya sampanne – only education can give you humility. Education will give you nothing but humility. The proper way to understand this line from the Bhagavad Gita is this – "study that which gives you humility." Rama set us an example, to show us the value of humility, which comes through proper education.



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