

ELSEWHERE
10 arrested for protest against Putin in Moscow
MOSCOW

More than a thousand opposition activists of various stripes marched in central Moscow on Sunday after President Vladimir Putin proposed re-drafting the Constitution, unleashing political upheaval. Protesters — mostly young anti-fascist activists — chanted "Revolution" and "No to dictatorship". About ten people, including a protester who carried a placard urging Mr. Putin to quit power, were detained. **AFP**

More than 80 soldiers killed in Yemen attack
DUBAI

More than 80 Yemeni soldiers have been killed and scores injured in a missile and drone attack blamed on Houthi rebels in central Yemen, sources said on Sunday. Saturday's strike follows months of relative calm in the war between the Iran-backed Houthis and Yemen's internationally recognised government, which is backed by a Saudi-led military coalition. **AFP**

Trump's defence team terms impeachment charges 'brazen'

Lawyers call the case unconstitutional and bid to remove the President dangerous

**MICHAEL D. SHEAR
NICHOLAS FANDOS
WASHINGTON**

President Donald Trump's legal defence team strenuously denied on Saturday that he had committed impeachable acts, denouncing the charges against him as a "brazen and unlawful" attempt to cost him reelection as House Democrats laid out in meticulous detail their case that he should be removed from office.

In the first legal filings for the Senate impeachment trial that opens in earnest Tuesday, the dueling arguments from the White House and the House impeachment managers previewed a politically charged fight over Mr. Trump's fate, unfolding against the backdrop of the presidential election campaign.

In a 46-page trial memorandum and a 60-page statement of facts, House impeachment managers asserted that beginning in the spring, Mr. Trump undertook a corrupt campaign



All set for trial: President's lawyers say the case is driven by a desire to hurt Mr. Trump's chances in 2020 election. **• REUTERS**

to enlist a foreign government to help him win the 2020 election. He did so, Democrats argued, by pressuring Ukraine to publicly announce investigations of his political rivals, withholding as leverage vital military aid and a White House meeting for the country's President.

'Concealed actions'

The President then sought to conceal those actions from Congress, they said, posing "a serious danger to our constitutional checks and ba-

lances" by ordering administration officials not to testify or turn over documents requested by a House impeachment inquiry.

In a six-page filing formally responding to the House impeachment charges submitted shortly after, Mr. Trump's lawyers denounced the case as constitutionally and legally invalid, and driven by a desire to hurt Mr. Trump in the 2020 election.

"The articles of impeachment submitted by House Democrats are a dangerous

attack on the right of the American people to freely choose their President," they said in the response, which was Mr. Trump's first legal submission in the impeachment proceeding, ahead of a fuller brief due on Monday.

"This is a brazen and unlawful attempt to overturn the results of the 2016 election and interfere with the 2020 election, now just months away."

'Broke no laws'

The President's lawyers did not deny any of the core facts underlying the charges, conceding that he withheld \$391 million in aid and a White House meeting from Ukraine and asked the country's President to investigate former Vice-President Joe Biden and his son, Hunter Biden.

However, they said Mr. Trump broke no laws and was acting within his powers. They argued that he was not seeking political gain but working to root out corruption in Ukraine. **NY TIMES**

Harry, Meghan to drop titles, retire as working royals

No more public funding; home renovation cost to be repaid

**REUTERS
LONDON**

Prince Harry and his wife Meghan Markle will no longer be working members of Britain's monarchy and they will pay their own way in life as they embark on an independent future, Buckingham Palace said on Saturday.

They will also no longer use their "Royal Highness" titles, the palace said in an announcement. The announcement sought to end turmoil sparked earlier this month when the couple announced they wanted to reduce their official duties and spend more time in North America. Prince Harry's late mother Princess Diana lost the title as the Princess of Wales after her divorce from Prince Charles in 1996.

The Queen and family members had discussions with officials on how this stepping back would work in practice for Prince Harry, 35, and Ms. Markle, 38, a former American actress. "Harry, Meghan and Archie will always be much loved members of my family," Queen Elizabeth said in a statement.

"I recognise the challenges they have experienced as a result of intense scrutiny over the last two years and support their wish for a more independent life."

No royal events, tours

The Queen said she was "particularly proud" of how quickly Ms. Markle had become one of the family. The couple married in May 2018.

Harry will remain a Prince and the couple will keep their titles of Duke and Duchess of Sussex as they begin a new life split between North America and Britain,



Freedom at a cost: Meghan Markle and Prince Harry leaving Windsor Castle after their marriage, in this file photo. **• AP**

Meghan's father says she is cheapening royal family

**REUTERS
LONDON**

Meghan Markle's estranged father, Thomas Markle, accused his daughter of "cheapening" the royal family.

"It's disappointing

because she actually got every girl's dream... she's tossing that away, for, it looks like she's tossing that away for money," he said in a documentary. "They are cheapening it, they're making it shabby."

but they will not take part in any future ceremonial events or royal tours.

'Kind words, firm line'

Royal commentators said it amounted to an "abdication" from the royal family and showed that under the warm words, the Queen had taken a firm and decisive line. "It is harder to think of a much cleaner break than this. Harry and Meghan are still members of the Royal Family, but they are effectively no longer royal," the BBC's royal correspondent, Jonny Dymond, said.

Ms. Markle is currently in Canada with Archie and Prince Harry is expected to join her soon.

A palace spokeswoman said the couple would no longer receive public money

and that they would repay the cost of refurbishing their cottage in Windsor, officially worth £2.4 million (\$3.1 million). It remained unclear what public funds would be spent on their security. Buckingham Palace declined to comment but said there was an independent process to determine public funding for security.

The office of Canadian PM Justin Trudeau declined to comment on the news.

The change means Prince Harry, who served a decade in the British Army, will give up his military patronages and his role as Commonwealth Youth Ambassador.

While they will no longer receive public funding, Prince Charles will continue to offer private financial support, a royal source said.

UN-led talks in Berlin a bid to curb foreign interferences, help restart dialogue

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BERLIN**

World leaders made a fresh push for peace in Libya at a summit in Berlin on Sunday, in a desperate bid to stop the conflict-racked nation from turning into a "second Syria".

The Presidents of Russia, Turkey and France joined other global chiefs at the talks hosted by Chancellor Angela Merkel and held under the auspices of the UN.

The summit's main goal is to get foreign powers wielding influence in the region to stop interfering in the war — be it through weapons, troops or financing.

Haftar in Leaders of both warring factions — strongman Khalifa Haftar and the head of Tripoli's UN-recognised government Fayez al-Sarraj — were also in Berlin for the first such gathering since 2018.

But pro-Haftar forces

upped the ante ahead of the talks by blocking oil exports at Libya's key ports, crippling the country's main income source in protest at Turkey's decision to send troops to shore up Mr. Sarraj's Tripoli-based Government of National Accord (GNA).

Ahead of the talks, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan lashed out at Mr. Haftar, saying he needed to drop his "hostile attitude" if

Libya is to have any chance at winning peace.

The flaring oil crisis underlined the devastating impact of foreign influence in the conflict, in which Mr. Sarraj's GNA is backed by Turkey and Qatar while Mr. Haftar has the support of Russia, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates.

The UN hopes all sides will sign up to a plan to refrain from interference, and commit to a truce.

450 wounded in two days of Beirut clashes

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIRUT**

Nearly 70 people were injured in renewed clashes between protesters and police here on Sunday, taking the toll of wounded from two days of violence to nearly 450.

Protests have rocked the country since October 17, with people demanding a new government comprised of independent experts, and not politicians.

Eight die in blaze at Czech disability home

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PRAGUE**

At least eight people died and thirty were injured after a fire at a home for people with learning disabilities in a western Czech town early on Sunday, rescuers said.

"A total of 38 people were affected by the fire, of them eight unfortunately died," emergency services spokesman Prokop Volenik told AFP.

He said 30 people were taken to hospital — one in a critical condition, three with serious injuries and 26 with light or no injuries.

Czech media said the fire had been put out.

"The fire broke out in the boys' section of a home for

the mentally handicapped," said Jitka Gaudunova, the Mayor of Vejprty, a small town on the German border some 100 km northwest of Prague.

Mr. Volenik said all of those affected were adults.

The broadsheet DNES daily quoted Ms. Gaudunova as saying the clients of the home had tried to set it on fire in the past, and that the home was understaffed.

People from the town tried to help when the fire broke out but eight clients suffocated. "The Deputy Mayor ran into the fire to help the clients and he paid for it. He's now in hospital under observation," said Ms. Gaudunova.

Tehran says it will launch satellites

**ASSOCIATED PRESS
TEHRAN**

Iran said on Sunday that two newly constructed satellites have passed pre-launch tests and will be transported to the nation's space centre for eventual launch, without elaborating.

Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Javad Azari Jahromi tweeted and called it an "important research step". Iran has not said when it will launch the satellites, but often coordinates its launches with national holidays. It will celebrate the 41st anniversary of the Islamic Revolution next month.

Iran to examine black boxes

Official had earlier said the recorders were headed to Kiev

**REUTERS
DUBAI**

Iran is trying to analyse the black boxes of a Ukrainian airliner that its military shot down this month, the state IRNA news agency reported on Sunday, denying a report that a decision had been taken to send the plane's recorders to Ukraine.

All 176 people on board the plane were killed in the January 8 crash.

Canada, which had 57 citizens on board, and other countries that lost nationals, have said the flight data and voice recorders should be analysed abroad.

"We are trying to read the black boxes here in Iran.



A crate said to be containing the two black boxes, in Tehran. **• REUTERS/FILE**

Otherwise, our options are Ukraine and France, but no decision has been taken so far to send them to another country," Hassan Rezaifar, a director in charge of accident investigations at Iran's Civil Aviation Organization, told IRNA.

Two officials hurt as Hong Kong rally turns violent

Told to disperse, crowd beats up police

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
HONG KONG**

Two police officers were beaten bloody by pro-democracy protesters in Hong Kong Sunday as violence erupted at a rally calling for greater democratic freedoms in the heart of the city.

Trouble flared when police ordered the authorised gathering to disperse after officers conducting stop and searches on nearby streets had water bottles and paint thrown at them by angry crowds.

A group of plainclothes officers who were speaking with organisers were then set upon by masked protes-

ters, who beat them with umbrellas and sticks, an AFP reporter on the scene said.

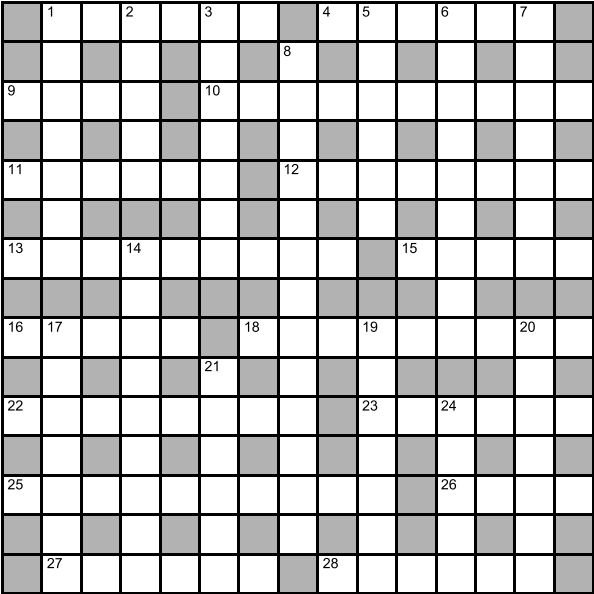
Two officers were seen with bloody head wounds as colleagues shielded them from further attacks. "We strongly condemn all the rioters and violent acts," police spokesman Ng Lok-chun told reporters.

Video posted online showed an organiser asking the officers to show their warrant cards which they did not, a frequent gripe among protesters.

Soon, riot police swept into the area and fired tear gas to disperse the crowds.

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12836

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

ACROSS

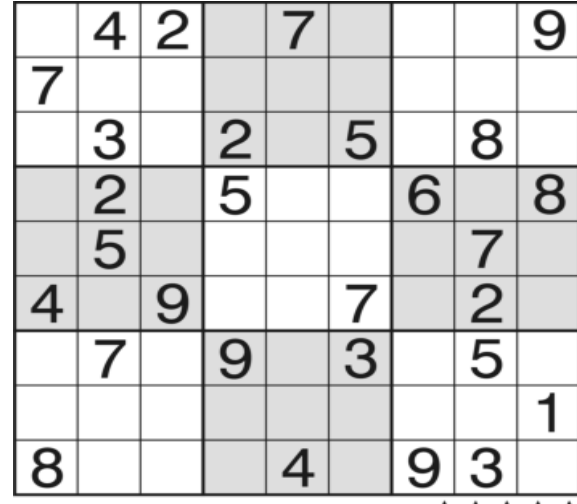
- Burn ruler, replace last born with legal head (6)
- Dramas reproduced in South Indian city (6)
- Indian king open to return (4)
- In excavation, bit of ruby found in rock soup (10)
- Street has shower drain (6)
- Flower destroyed in old ply (4,4)
- Responders warn seers in a riot (9)
- Speech starts on time (5)
- Neckwear for racecourse in England? (5)
- I leave magistrate confused by tactic (9)
- With suggestion at tavern, you destroy love (8)
- Tugboats have pillars (6)
- Liberate from pita menace! (10)
- Thought confused aide (4)
- Return bronze particle to country (6)
- Hill has a fragrance (6)

DOWN

- Austere painting in bridge (7)
- Antelope from New York starts attending legislative assembly (5)
- British medical official has nut almost with hesitation (7)
- Sailor broadcast to the missing (6)
- Rare aural broadcast in village, say (5,4)
- Undergarment has one cross (7)
- Eccentric initial parson is sacred (13)
- Murder mystery novel wound thin (9)
- Elf leader sees adult leaving Indian islands (7)
- Worker trims hymns (7)
- Keen to notice hideout (7)
- At home, cultivate love for dye (6)
- Give up on one trapped by current (5)

(set by Anon)

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12835

MISGUIDE SCARED
APPRISE OAR
REALISED BUNDLE
BROSCROA
LIKENSORTENED
PILLAR PLATEAU
PENITENT RAIL
REGIMENT MODEST
EOLIA ATTEND
COLLUSION OLIVE
LASSLDBNCL
UNPAID CALENDAR
DSEIN T LIE
ELEVEN HERITAGE

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

243916875
896547231
157832469
714698352
569423718
382751694
435279186
621385947
978164523

FAITH

Action and consequence

Sukracharya warns Mahabali not to give land to Vamana. He says that Vamana is none other than Vishnu Himself. But Bali says that if indeed Vamana is Vishnu, then it is an honour for Bali to be asked to give something to Him. Sukracharya, taking the form of a bee, blocks the outlet in the vessel of water, for without the pouring of water, no 'daana' is complete. Vishnu uses a blade of grass to poke Sukracharya's eye and blinds him. Periyazhvar, describing this incident, lauds the Lord as the One with the Sudarsana in His hand. The Lord did not use His discus, but used a piece of grass. Periyazhvar speaks of Sudarshana in this context to show that whatever the Lord uses as a weapon, Sudarsana is present in it, said M.A. Venkatakrishnan, in a discourse.

Sukracharya was only telling the truth when he warned Bali about Vamana. Not a word of what he said was untrue. Vamana was indeed Vishnu, and He had indeed come to deprive Bali of territory over which he was ruling. So, why was Sukracharya punished for being honest? Why did he lose an eye? This was a question once posed by a shishya to his guru. The latter answered that it was a sin to stop 'daana', and that is what Sukracharya had attempted. That is why he was punished. Then the shishya asked, "If, as you say, 'daana' is so virtuous, why was Bali punished? After he only gave to Vamana."

The guru replied, "It is important to obey one's guru, because he always has his shishya's welfare in mind. Sukracharya advised Bali not to trust Vamana and tried his best to prevent him from giving land to Vamana. But Bali paid no attention to his guru. So, for the sin of disobeying his guru, he was punished." So, for every sin, there is some punishment. No one can escape the consequence of his or her actions.