

China on edge

The toll continues to rise due to the new coronavirus as authorities scramble for more beds, medical facilities and masks amid the outbreak



Growing fears: A Chinese woman with a protective mask in Beijing, China, on Wednesday. • GETTY IMAGES

637
Number of deaths in China

31,211
Number of infections

240
Number of cases outside China

VIRUS ON SHIP

At least **61 people** on a cruise ship off Japan test positive for the virus

A TIMELINE OF THE OUTBREAK

NEW VIRUS

December 8: Health authorities in Wuhan, an industrial city of 11 million people in central Hubei province, first document the new illness

December 31: China alerts the World Health Organization (WHO) to cases of pneumonia in the city

January 7: Chinese officials say they have identified a new virus from the coronavirus family. It is named 2019-nCoV

FIRST DEATH

January 11: China announces its first death in Wuhan

January 13:

The first case outside China is reported in Thailand, originating in Wuhan

• Around 10 other countries, including Australia, France and the U.S., confirm cases over the following days

HUMAN TRANSMISSION

January 20: As the disease spreads across China, a national infectious disease expert confirms the illness can be transmitted between humans

January 23: Wuhan is placed under quarantine, with transport links cut and in other Hubei province cities, affecting more than 56 million people

On January 28: Germany and Japan announce the first two confirmed human-to-human transmissions outside China

January 29: The U.S. and Japan become the first of several nations to start evacuating citizens from Wuhan

EMERGENCY

January 30: The WHO declares a "public health emergency of international concern"

February 2: The Philippines reports the first coronavirus death outside China



TWO-WEEK QUARANTINE

February 5: Hong Kong announces a two-week quarantine for travellers from the mainland. Its flagship carrier Cathay Pacific asks its entire workforce to take unpaid leave

Airbus closes an aircraft production facility near Beijing

WHISTLEBLOWER DIES

February 7: A Chinese doctor, who was punished after raising the alarm in late December about the coronavirus, dies from the pathogen



Death of doctor sparks anger at govt. in China

Social media users seek apology from Wuhan govt.; China is doing everything possible to contain virus, Xi tells Trump

REUTERS BEIJING/SHANGHAI
A Chinese doctor reprimanded for warning against a "SARS-like" coronavirus before it was officially recognised died of the illness on Friday, triggering online expressions of anger at the government and fuelling suspicions of censorship.

The death of Li Wenliang, 34, came as Chinese President Xi Jinping told the U.S. that China was doing all it could to contain the virus after earlier assuring the World Health Organization (WHO) of full openness and transparency.

The death toll in mainland China reached 637 on Friday, with a total of 31,211 cases, WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in Geneva.

"For the last two days there had been fewer report-

ed infections in China, which is good news, but we caution against reading too much into that," he told the WHO Executive Board. "The numbers could go up again."

U.S. President Donald Trump, after speaking to Mr. Xi by phone, said China was showing "great discipline" in tackling the virus.

Li was among eight people reprimanded by police in the city of Wuhan, the epicentre of the flu-like contagion in central Hubei province, for spreading "illegal and false" information. Li's social media warnings of a new "SARS-like" coronavirus angered police. Li was forced to sign a letter on January 3, saying he had "severely disrupted social order" and was threatened with charges.

"We deeply mourn the death of Wuhan doctor Li



In high demand: People queuing up to buy masks in Hong Kong, which has reported 25 confirmed cases, on Friday. • AP

Wenliang... After all-effort rescue, Li passed away," the ruling Communist Party's *People's Daily* said on Twitter.

Social media users called Li a hero, accusing authorities of incompetence.

"Wuhan indeed owes Li Wenliang an apology," Hu Xi-

jin, editor of the government-backed *Global Times* tabloid, said on social media. "Wuhan and Hubei officials also owe a solemn apology to the people of Hubei and this country."

Li's death was a "tragic reminder" of how China's pre-

Shortage of anti-virus masks: WHO chief

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE GENEVA

The world is running out of masks and other protective equipment against the novel coronavirus, the World Health Organization chief warned on Friday.

"The world is facing a chronic shortage of personal protective equipment," Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said. He also said countries must not hold back clinical data on confirmed cases of virus.

ELSEWHERE



Macron seeks key role in EU nuclear strategy

PARIS
French President Emmanuel Macron on Friday advocated a more coordinated European Union defence strategy in which France, the bloc's only post-Brexit nuclear power, and its arsenal would hold a central role. AP

UN must break 'habits' on West Asia: Kushner

NEW YORK
Donald Trump's son-in-law and architect of the new U.S. peace plan for the West Asia, Jared Kushner, has called on the UN Security Council to break its "habits" and solve the "hardest problem in the world", in a rare interview. AFP

3 life sentences to U.K. doctor for sex assaults

Shah was found guilty of 90 offences

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA LONDON

An Indian-origin doctor, who exploited women's cancer fears to carry out invasive examinations between 2009 and 2013, has been given three life sentences for 90 sexual assaults on female patients in London on Friday.

Manish Shah assaulted 23 women and a 15-year-old girl while working in London. He was described by the judge as a "master of deception who abused his position of power". "You made up stories which got into heads and caused panic," said Judge Anne Molyneux at the Old Bailey court. The 50-year-old doctor,



Manish Shah

who claimed the assaults were "defensive medicine" was found guilty of 25 sexual offences against six victims at Mawney Medical Centre last autumn.

At an earlier trial in 2018, he was convicted of offences relating to 18 other people, bringing the total number of offences to 90.

U.S. killed AQAP chief in Yemen: Trump

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump confirmed on Thursday that the U.S. had killed the leader of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) — days after the jihadist group claimed responsibility for a December 6 shooting at Naval Air Station Pensacola in Florida, in which a Saudi Air Force officer killed three American sailors.

The U.S. "conducted a counterterrorism operation in Yemen that successfully eliminated Qassim al-Rimi, a founder and the leader of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula," President Trump said in a White House statement.

Trade deal before Trump visit not a given

Gaps remain in talks; U.S. is disappointed about new tariffs, says source

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN WASHINGTON

Gaps remain between the positions of India and the U.S. in talks over a trade deal but Washington remains "hopeful" a deal can be reached prior to President Donald Trump's visit to India in a few weeks, a source close to the trade negotiations told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Trump is expected to visit India on February 24-25. For a President who markets himself as a negotiator and closer of deals, signing a trade deal while in India is likely to be an important aspect of Mr. Trump's trip. Nevertheless, it is not a given that the deal will be completed before the visit, the source said. U.S. Trade Representative

Robert Lighthizer's reported visit to New Delhi next week to wrap up the deal has not been finalised — a decision on whether or not he will visit has not been made, the source said.

The U.S. side is also "disappointed" about the tariffs announced in the Union Budget, particularly the import cess on medical devices, the source said.

Cess on medical devices
Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced a health cess of 5% on medical devices (except those exempt from basic customs duty) to help local manufacturers and finance health infrastructure. Currently, duties on medical devices are in the 0-7.5%

range. A customs duty increase on a number of agricultural goods, including walnuts (kernels) and some dairy products like cheese and butter, was also announced.

U.S. industry lobbies and officials have repeatedly complained about tariffs in India. Mr. Trump revoked India's GSP benefits on grounds of inadequate market access in India. Following the Union Budget last week, Nisha Biswal, who heads the U.S.-India Business Council (USIBC), part of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said the industry body was concerned about the new tariffs.

"The Council also remains concerned about the many new tariffs, fees, and cesses

introduced in the Budget. These new tariffs touch agricultural goods, medical devices, automobile parts, electronics and electric vehicles. Both USIBC and the U.S. Chamber have long maintained that tariffs raise prices for consumers and create friction with trade partners, ultimately inhibiting economic growth."

India and the U.S. have had months of talks over restoring India's benefits under the U.S.'s preferential trade system, the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), revoked in June last year. The U.S. has also wanted India to remove price caps on medical devices, and wanted a deal on dairy products and elimination of tariffs on ICT products.

U.S. warns Venezuela against harm to Guaido

Opposition leader is in Washington

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE WASHINGTON

The U.S. on Thursday warned Venezuela's rulers of consequences if opposition leader Juan Guaido is not allowed to return safely from a visit to Washington, where he enjoyed pledges of robust support.

In one sign that some saw as retaliation, authorities threw into jail six oil executives with joint U.S. and Venezuelan nationality, two months after allowing them to shift to house arrest.

Elliott Abrams, the U.S. envoy leading the drive to oust leftist leader Nicolas Maduro, warned that the U.S. was "prepared" with unspecified actions if Mr.



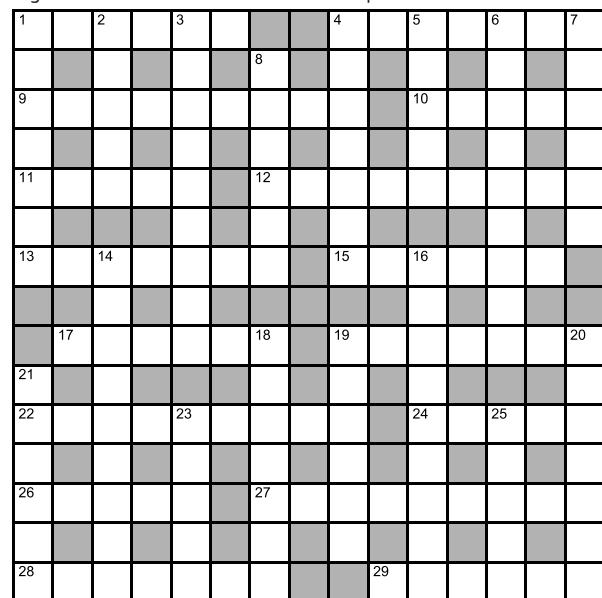
Juan Guaido

Guaido faces trouble.

"We hope that the regime makes the calculation, particularly after this trip, that the support for Guaido is strong and that the counter-reaction to any move against him would make it a mistake for the regime," Mr. Abrams told reporters.

THE HINDU CROSSWORD 12853

Log on to crossword.thehindu.com for more puzzles



(set by Karaoke)

- 13 Packets picked up for excursions (7)
- 15 Restrictions on Muslim? It should be transparent (6)
- 17 Take exception to tramp leaving model for good (6)
- 19 Origin of tooth cavity causes fit of rage (7)
- 22 Plant disease ends with animal (9)
- 24 Wild plants! — Upper-class covered with weapons (5)
- 26 Outstanding stone over atomic particle perhaps (5)
- 27 Evil Trump broke without mass appeal for due settlement (9)
- 28 Lack of sophistication in troubled Venetia (7)
- 29 Advance information on shell company with the bureau (6)
- 4 Unfair treatment in green cards distribution (3,4)
- 5 Niggard minister fires fool (5)
- 6 He interprets article by turning over without interest (9)
- 7 Sailor on passage to Shanghai? (6)
- 8 Untidy bus terminus is no exception for ruffians (6)
- 14 It's plain and mostly peaceful with wild tiger detailed (9)
- 16 Giving permission to the chap on becoming old-fashioned (9)
- 18 Eastern ski trail about line of communication (7)
- 19 Treeless hard nut partly cut up (6)
- 20 Setter's tale exchanged Oscar for England's Closed Book (7)
- 21 Judge involved in a slaughter of neighbour (6)
- 23 First lady ate a dead duck (5)
- 25 180°! (1-4)

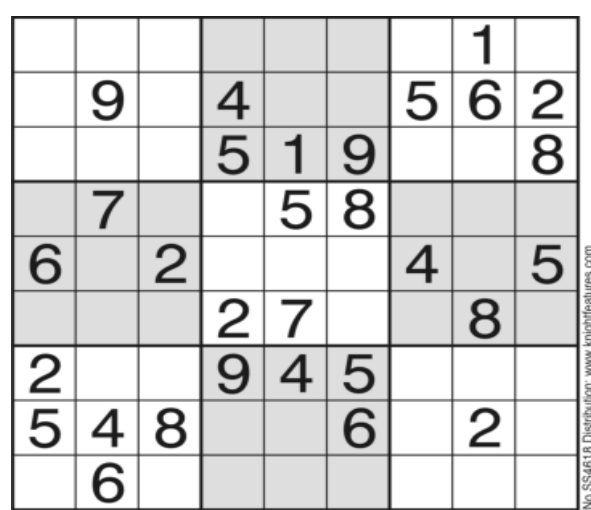
ACROSS

- 1 Relatives elected by rule books (2-4)
- 4 Rich cake prepared with spirit by spiritual leader (3,4)
- 9 Worth a charity shot? (4,5)
- 10 Scholars revolt about closing of city council (5)
- 11 Patients trunks (5)
- 12 Architect designed area around north of timber line (3,6)

DOWN

- 1 Cold fusion cooking for a shapely image (2,5)
- 2 Loudly spills the beans or vegetables? (5)
- 3 Weather? That's strangely in the air! (9)

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to puzzle 12852

J	A	A	N	E	B	H	I
E	M	L	S	I	O	N	S
S	S	T	O	S	O	M	T
T	T	O	R	E	A	N	G
E	R	O	L	L	E	U	E
R	E	I	G	N	E	M	I
A	O	N	O	P	H	E	
C	I	N	E	M	A	T	O
A	R	E	F	E	R	D	I
R	E	F	E	R	S	H	R
P	I	F	E	R	H	A	
E	R	A	S	U	R	E	
T	S	G	C	N	N	R	
E	X	C	E	L	T	R	
D	O	Y	A	A	R	O	N

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

9	1	8	5	2	3	7	6	4
6	2	3	4	8	7	9	5	1
4	7	5	6	9	1	3	2	8
2	3	4	1	5	8	6	9	7
7	5	6	9	4	2	8	1	3
1	8	9	3	7	6	5	4	2
3	6	2	7	1	9	4	8	5
5	9	1	8	3	4	2	7	6
8	4	7	2	6	5	1	3	9

FAITH

Honesty overrules destiny

Nala, a great king endowed with excellent graces, handsome looks and, above all, upright character, and Damayanti, the breathtaking princess of Vidarbha kingdom, are well matched in all respects and their love is sparked by divine grace through swans from Brahmaloaka. But in the Swayamvara arranged for her by her father, what should have been a straight choice becomes a challenge for both of them when the celestial Indra, Varuna, Yama and Agni, also participate as suitors. Despite the twist and hurdles that crop up, both Nala and Damayanti stand by dharma and their upright character helps them to get united in marriage, pointed out Sri B. Damodhara Dikshitar in a discourse.

The gods, Indra and others first intercept Nala who is on his way to attend the Swayamvara. Though they know him to be a suitor, they make a request that puts him in a tight spot. Nala has to represent their wish to marry her and convince her to choose one among them. Since Nala has already promised to help them, he cannot go back on his word. The gods grant him the divine power to enter the palace without being seen by anyone. In Damayanti's presence, he introduces himself as Nala, king of Nishada, who has now come as a messenger of the gods and not as a suitor. He conveys their message that she has to choose one among them as her husband.

But Damayanti is determined to marry only Nala and makes this very clear in her reply message to the gods. Even if they take part as suitors, she will garland only Nala. Nala faithfully reports Damayanti's stance to the gods who are impressed at the candour and true love for each other. Through their grace, Damayanti is able to identify the real Nala from the gods in Nala's form and garlands him.