

NEWS IN brief

Turkey coup trials to begin early 2017

AFP, Istanbul
The first trials of the thousands of suspects arrested in the wake of Turkey's failed July 15 coup aimed at ousting President Recep Tayyip Erdogan will begin in early 2017, the chief Ankara prosecutor said yesterday. Thousands of ex-soldiers, legal workers and civilians are currently in jail pending trial on suspicion of involvement in the coup.

Hamid Mir wins most resilient journo award

TNN, New Delhi

Hamid Mir, a Pakistani journalist who was the first to interview Osama Bin Laden after 9/11, and who survived an assassination attempt in 2014, on Wednesday won the 'Most Resilient Journalist Award', conferred by the International Free Press in The Hague, "for showing extraordinary courage and perseverance in reporting."

Lebanon's Hariri named new PM

AFP, Beirut

Leading Sunni political figure Saad Hariri was named as Lebanon's new prime minister yesterday, the office of President Michel Aoun announced. "After the necessary parliamentary consultations... the president has entrusted Saad Hariri with the formation of a government," said a statement read by the president's chief of staff Antoine Choukeir.



Lahore chokes on toxic smog

AFP, Lahore

Thousands of citizens of Pakistan's Lahore, one of the world's most polluted cities, yesterday complained of breathing difficulties and irritable eyes as a blanket of thick smog was forecast to persist for several days. Readings of dangerous "fine particulate matter" were more than four times the World Health Organization's recommended level, exceeding 104 micograms per cubic metre of in the worst-hit parts of the city.

Israeli troops shoot dead Palestinian

AFP, Jerusalem

Israeli troops yesterday shot dead a Palestinian who attempted to stab a soldier near the West Bank settlement of Ofra, the army said. "Palestinian assailant armed with a knife attempted to stab an Israel Defence Forces soldier guarding a bus stop near the community of Ofra," a statement in English said.



Passengers from a passing train watch as rescue workers search a train which crashed in Karachi, Pakistan yesterday. At least 21 people have been killed and dozens more injured after two trains carrying hundreds of passengers collided during morning rush hour. PHOTO: REUTERS

Pak blames 8 Indian diplomats for spying

New Delhi flatly rejects allegations

REUTERS, Islamabad

Pakistan yesterday named eight Indian diplomats it accuses of espionage and terrorism, as tension mounted between the nuclear-armed rivals following days of artillery duels and skirmishes on the border dividing the disputed Kashmir region.

The foreign ministry said six Indian embassy staff worked for New Delhi's Research & Analysis Wing (RAW) intelligence agency, while two were operatives for the Intelligence Bureau agency. Their names were leaked to Pakistani media overnight.

In response, India said it "completely rejected the baseless and unsubstantiated allegations" leveled by Pakistan against officials at its high commission in Islamabad.

Rajesh Kumar Agnihotri, a commercial counsellor, was named by the Pakistan foreign ministry as RAW's station chief in Islamabad.

The foreign ministry statement gave an eight-point list of the diplomats' espionage activities.

It accused them of fuelling instability in Pakistan's Sindh and Baluchistan provinces, as well as sabotaging its most vital economic project, the \$46-billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), involving transport and energy infrastructure projects to link China with Pakistan's coast on the Arabian Sea.

They were also accused of liaising with factions of the Pakistani Taliban and of working to damage Pakistan's relations with western neighbour Afghanistan.

30 killed in Kunduz

Raids come after Taliban assault leaves 2 US soldiers dead

AFP, Kunduz

US airstrikes early yesterday killed at least 30 Afghan civilians, including women and children, in the volatile northern province of Kunduz, officials said, after a Taliban assault left two American soldiers dead.

The airstrike triggered emotionally-charged protests in the provincial capital, with the victims' relatives parading mutilated bodies of dead children piled into open trucks through the streets of Kunduz city.

The carnage underscores worsening insecurity after the Taliban last month overran Kunduz city for the second time in a year, as Nato-backed Afghan forces struggle to rein in the insurgents.

Afghan forces and coalition troops were conducting a joint operation against the Taliban on the outskirts of the city when they came under insurgent fire, prompting calls for air support.

"In the bombardment 30 Afghan civilians were martyred and 25 others were wounded," provincial spokesman Mahmood Danish told AFP.

Police spokesman Mahmoodullah

Akbari gave the same toll to AFP, adding that the dead included infants aged as young as three months and other children.

"They were asleep when their house came under attack by coalition troops," Akbari said.

In a brief statement on Twitter, Nato conceded that US forces were behind the airstrike.

"Airstrikes were conducted in #Kunduz to defend friendly forces under fire. All civilian casualty claims will be investigated," it said.

Taza Gul, a 55-year-old labourer, was among dozens of angry protesters outside the Kunduz governor's office, bringing with him the bodies of seven dead family members in a motorised tricycle.

"I am devastated. I want to know, why these innocent children were killed? Were they Taliban?" said Gul. "No, they were innocent children."

Civilian caused by Nato forces have been one of the most contentious issues in the 15-year campaign against the insurgents, prompting strong public and government criticism.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani said he was "deeply saddened" by the killings, while urging the military to do everything possible to prevent civilian casualties.

India, China stand-off in Demchok

THE HINDU ONLINE

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) has been engaged in a face-off with the Chinese People Liberation Army (PLA) along the Line of Actual Control in Leh district's Demchok area since Wednesday afternoon, a top government official told The Hindu.

The official said that the Chinese Army has come close to the Indian "side" of the LAC and have refused to go back.

It is learnt that some civilian project is going on in the border areas and China has objected to it. The face-off comes days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi celebrated Diwali with ITBP jawans at Mana in Uttarakhand, the last village on the Indian territory along the border with China.

'Myanmar dealing with Rakhine by rule of law'

REUTERS, Kyoto

The Myanmar government is responding to conflict in the troubled north of Rakhine state, which has suffered its worst violence since 2012, based on rule of law, leader Aung San Suu Kyi was quoted as saying yesterday.

Nobel Peace Prize winner Suu Kyi has faced mounting criticism abroad for her government's handling of a crisis in the Muslim-majority region, where soldiers have blocked access for aid workers and are accused of raping and killing civilians.

She has also not directly commented on calls from human rights experts urging the government to investigate the allegations of abuse, or on statements from human rights monitors, although she has urged the military to act with restraint.

Troops have poured into the area since militants believed to be Rohingya Muslims launched coordinated attacks on border

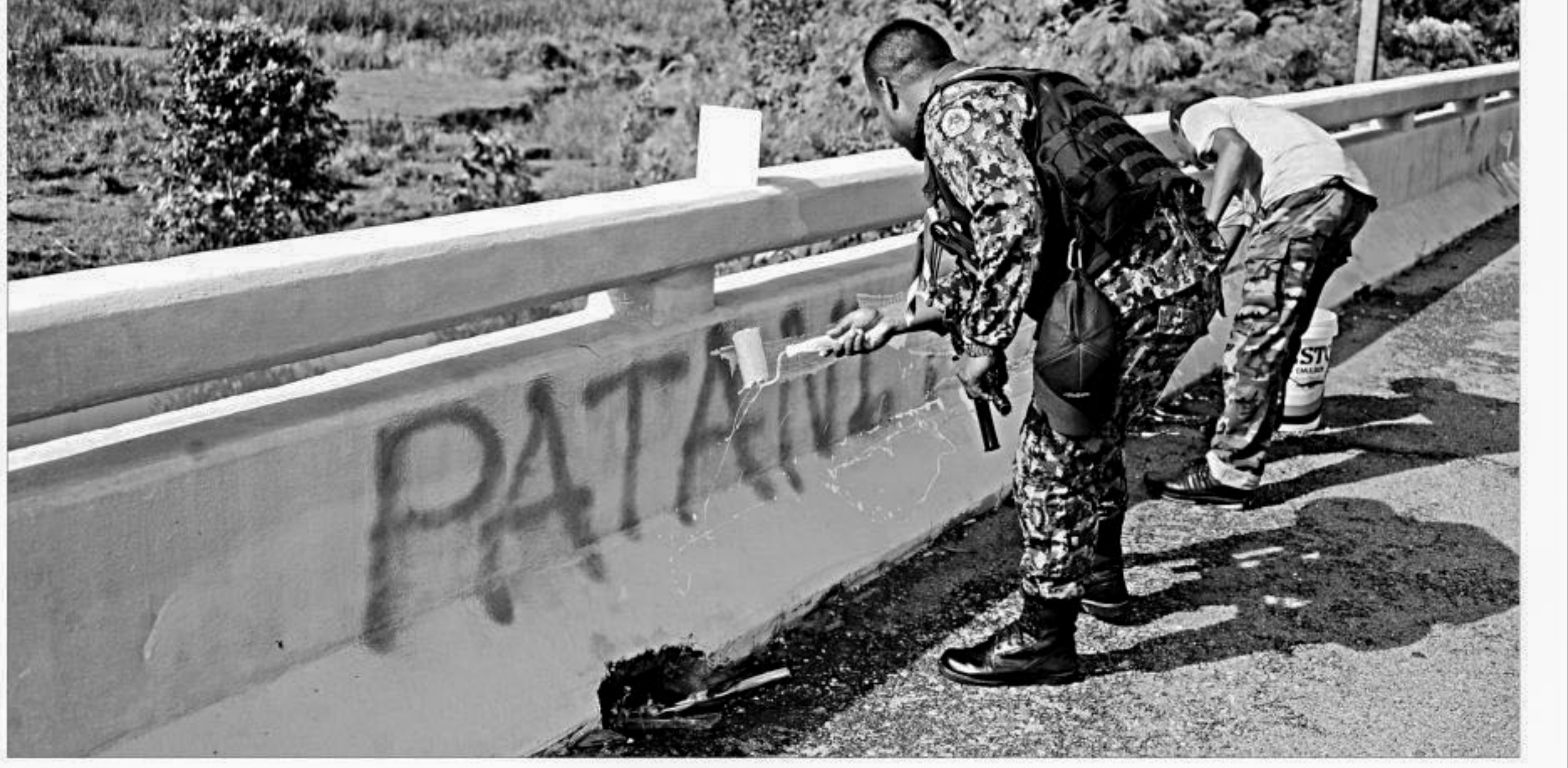
posts on Oct 9, killing nine police. The government says five soldiers and at least 33 alleged attackers have been killed in the military operation.

In Japan on a five-day visit that included a meeting with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Suu Kyi met Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, who said violence could not be permitted in dealing with the crisis, a Foreign Ministry statement said.

"The problem in Rakhine state is extremely delicate and care is needed in responding," Suu Kyi was quoted as saying.

"The Myanmar government is responding to the issue of Rakhine state based on the principles of the rule of law."

Meanwhile, Myanmar police and civilian officials said police will begin arming and training non-Muslim residents in the troubled north of Rakhine State, where officials say militants from the Rohingya Muslim group pose a growing security threat.



Thai soldiers paint over separatist messages left on a bridge by suspected militants the night before in the Yingo district in Thailand's restive southern province of Narathiwat yesterday. Three people were shot dead in a night of co-ordinated violence across Thailand's rebellious 'Deep South', in attacks apparently timed with a visit by the new minister for the restive Muslim-majority region. PHOTO: AFP

South Korean president risks scandal probe

Warns new PM nominee; ex-presidential aide detained

AFP, Seoul

A snowballing political scandal moved closer to embattled South Korean President Park Geun-Hye yesterday, with her newly nominated prime minister warning she could face a probe, hours after prosecutors detained a former presidential aide.

Ex-presidential aide Ahn Jong-Beom was taken into custody late Wednesday over suspicions he helped Park's friend Choi Soon-Sil coerce companies into donating large sums to dubious non-profit foundations that she then used for personal gains, Yonhap said.

Ahn, who was dismissed on Sunday, is the second person to be taken into emergency detention after Choi was held Monday for questioning in the influence-peddling scandal.

Park is scrambling to deflect rising public anger over suggestions that Choi -- the daughter of a shadowy religious figure -- vetted presidential speeches, had access to classified documents, and used her influence for personal enrichment.

"Everyone including the president is equal before the law," new prime minister nominee Kim Byong-Joon declared at a press conference.

"My position is that it is (legally) possible to interrogate and investigate" a sitting president, he said.

Under South Korea's constitution, the incumbent president may not be charged with a criminal offence except insurrection or treason.

But many argue the sitting president can be probed by prosecutors and then charged after leaving office.

Justice Minister Kim Hyun-Woong also told parliament yesterday that prosecutors could question Park, if the ongoing investigation required it.



চিত্তরঞ্জন কটন মিলে চিত্তরঞ্জন টেক্সটাইল পল্লী স্থাপনের লক্ষ্যে

শিল্প গুট বিক্রয়ের পূর্বে দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ টেক্সটাইল মিলস করপোরেশন (বিটিএমসি) বিটিএমসি ভবন (৩য় তলা), ৭-৯, কাওরান বাজার, ঢাকা এর নিম্নলিখিত চিত্তরঞ্জন কটন মিলে চিত্তরঞ্জন টেক্সটাইল পল্লী স্থাপনের নিমিত্ত বিক্রয় সাইজের ৭টি শিল্প গুট 'যেখানে যে অবস্থায় আছে ভিত্তিতে' বিক্রয়ের লক্ষ্যে আত্মীয় ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠান/প্রবাসী বাংলাদেশী বিনিয়োগকারীদের নিকট হতে সীল মোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

দরপত্র সিডিউল প্রতি সেট ১,০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকা মাত্র (অফেরতযোগ্য) মূল্যে (১) সহকারী-সচিব, বেসরকারীকরণ/বিরোধীকরণ শাখা, বজ ও পাট মন্ত্রণালয়, কক্ষ নং-১১১৭, ভবন নং-৬ (১২তলা), বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা (২) প্রধান হিসাবরক্ষক, বাংলাদেশ টেক্সটাইল মিলস করপোরেশন, বিটিএমসি ভবন (৩য় তলা), ৭-৯, কাওরান বাজার, ঢাকা (৩) বিটিএমসি লিয়াজো অফিস, আমিন টেক্সটাইলস লি., যোগেশ্বর, চট্টগ্রাম (৪) জেলা প্রশাসক, নারায়ণগঞ্জ এর দপ্তর এবং (৫) চিত্তরঞ্জন কটন মিলস, গোদনাইল, নারায়ণগঞ্জ হতে প্রতি দিন অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে ০৫.১২.২০১৬ তারিখ পর্যন্ত ক্রয় করা যাবে।

দরপত্র (১) সহকারী-সচিব, বেসরকারীকরণ/বিরোধীকরণ শাখা, বজ ও পাট মন্ত্রণালয়, কক্ষ নং-১১১৭, ভবন নং-৬ (১২তলা), বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা (২) জেলা প্রশাসক, নারায়ণগঞ্জ (৩) প্রধান প্রকৌশলী (অতিরিক্ত দায়িত্ব), বাংলাদেশ টেক্সটাইল মিলস করপোরেশন, বিটিএমসি ভবন (৩য় তলা), ৭-৯, কাওরান বাজার, ঢাকা (৪) চিত্তরঞ্জন কটন মিলস, গোদনাইল, নারায়ণগঞ্জে রক্ষিত টেন্ডার বাবে ০৬.১২.২০১৬ তারিখ বেলা ১২-০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত গ্রহণ করা যাবে। একই দিনে বেলা ১২-৩০ ঘটিকায় উল্লিখিত সকল স্থানেই উপস্থিত দরদাতাদের সামনে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন) দরপত্র বাস্তব খোলা হবে এবং ০৭.১২.২০১৬ তারিখ বেলা ১২-০০ ঘটিকায় বিটিএমসি ভবন, ২য় তলা, বোর্ড কক্ষে উপস্থিত দরদাতাদের সামনে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন) সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র খাম খোলা হবে।

দরপত্রের সঙ্গে জামানত হিসাবে উদ্ধৃত মূল্যের ১০% (শতকরা দশ ভাগ) অর্থ বিটিএমসি'র অনুকূলে যে কোন সিডিউল ব্যাংক হতে ডিডি/পে-অর্ডার এর মাধ্যমে জমা দিতে হবে। প্রবাসী বাংলাদেশী বিনিয়োগকারীরাও অথবা তাদের বৈধ প্রতিনিধিগণ দরপত্র দাখিল করতে পারবেন। দরপত্রের বিস্তারিত শর্তাবলী ও তফসিল দরপত্রের সিডিউলের সঙ্গে পাওয়া যাবে। যথাযথ জামানত ছাড়া দরপত্র প্রস্তাব দাখিল করলে তা বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।

বিটিএমসি কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা যে কোন বা সকল দরপত্র বাতিল করার সংরক্ষণ করেন।

Indo-Pak tensions come in way of wedding

AFP, New Delhi

An impassioned plea by an Indian bride-to-be urging authorities to issue a visa to her Pakistani bridesmaid has gone viral on social media amid worsening ties between the neighbouring countries.

Journalist Purvi Thacker, who is set to get married in Mumbai in December, poured her heart out Tuesday on Facebook after her best friend Sarah Munir's visa application was rejected by the Indian consulate.

"Never did wars, religion, shared history, nationality or even cricket matches come between us," Thacker, a New



York-based freelance journalist, wrote in a blog. It was not until Munir's visa application was denied "that we were reminded that politics of hate and fear will create differences even where there are none among ordinary people like us."

"Being friends and being there for each other should not be this hard just because we were born on different sides of the borders," Thacker said.

India and Pakistan have been at loggerheads since their independence from Britain in 1947 and have fought three wars, including two of the divided territory of Kashmir which both countries claim as their own in full.

S AFRICA GRAFT PROBE Zuma faces pressure to resign

AFP, Johannesburg


South African President Jacob Zuma yesterday faced increasing calls to resign after a damaging probe unearthed further evidence of alleged corruption at the top of the ANC government.

The country's anti-graft watchdog ordered a judicial inquiry into possible criminal activity in Zuma's relationship with the Guptas, a wealthy Indian family accused of wielding undue political influence.

Zuma, 74, has weathered a series of major scandals since coming to power in 2009, but rapidly declining support for the African National Congress (ANC) party has threatened his presidency.

Fears have grown that South Africa has thrown away the optimistic legacy of Nelson Mandela's post-apartheid era -- with Zuma's alleged misconduct at the heart of public discontent.

"The mood of the people has become more and more angry," said a statement from Save South Africa.



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