

# world

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## 55y y

**Kate Holton and Gabriela Baczynska**

Britain's weakened Prime Minister Theresa May arrived in Brussels on Thursday to lobby European leaders for help after she survived a parliamentary mutiny that highlighted the deadlock over Brexit.

May, 62, won the backing of 200 Conservative Party members of parliament versus 117 against, in a secret ballot that deepened divisions just weeks before parliament needs to approve a deal to prevent a disorderly exit from the European Union.

In Britain's biggest decision for decades, Brexit has split the nation and will shape the future of its \$2.8 trillion economy including London's status as a global financial hub.

Pro-Europeans fear exit will weaken the West, already struggling to assimilate Russian and Chinese power as well as Donald Trump's unpredictable US presidency. Brexit supporters hail it as casting off a flailing German-led European project.

Brexit Minister Stephen Barclay said May, who has been shuttling round Europe for months and will attend an EU summit until Friday afternoon, would seek assurances Britain

would not be tied to the European Union indefinitely post-Brexit, as her party critics fear.

The "direction of travel" was in Britain's favour, he said.

"The prime minister, through the mandate she secured from the parliamentary party last night, now has the time to have those discussions with European colleagues," he said, adding that the direction of travel was "positive".

However, no vote on the Brexit package was included in a schedule of parliamentary business for the coming week before Christmas and European leaders look unlikely to offer immediate support. A draft EU statement said they were merely "ready to examine" whether further assurance can be given.

The six-point EU document said any assurances would not "change or contradict" the legally-binding withdrawal agreement struck last month after two years of negotiations.

Earlier this week, May pulled a parliamentary vote on her deal, designed to maintain close future ties with the bloc, after admitting it would be heavily defeated in the House of Commons.

She has pledged a new vote before January 21 but faces a

tall order to convince sceptical lawmakers.

With Britain due to leave the EU on March 29, prospects now include a potentially disorderly exit with no deal agreed, or even another referendum.

May, who met Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar in Brussels and will shortly see EU summit chair Donald Tusk, wants legal assurances that the Irish "backstop" would not remain in place indefinitely. The backstop is an emergency fix to prevent extensive border checks on the island of Ireland and is the most contentious element of the deal.

"A significant number of colleagues did cast a vote against me and I've listened to what they said," May said in Downing Street late on Wednesday. "We now have to get on with the job of delivering Brexit for the British people."

May voted to remain in the EU at a 2016 referendum, but has pledged to implement Brexit in line with the people's will after that narrow vote to leave.

The EU's draft statement, seen by Reuters, reiterated that the bloc prefers a new deal to ever triggering the Irish backstop and that it would try to

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**HOOKM WORDS:** A visitor takes pictures of giant lanterns installed at the Foucaud Park in Gaillac, southwestern France, for the Lantern Festival. Monumental silk sculptures are exhibited in Gaillac from December 1 to February 6, as part of the Chinese traditional Lantern Festival marking the end of celebrations for the Chinese Lunar New Year period. Picture: AFP

## 26y – One decky heady

Doctors have removed a metal shard from the eye of a toddler shot in Kashmir, whose horrific injuries became symbolic of India's controversial use of pellet-firing shotguns in the conflict-torn region.

Surgeons who operated on Hiba Jan said it was too early to know if the 20-month-old girl would ever use her eye

again after being shot with a pump-action gun that discharges high-velocity fragments.

The girl's parents said they were shot at while trying to escape from clouds of tear gas during clashes between Indian forces and villagers in late November.

Her maiming underscored

the contentious use of pellet shotguns against civilians in Kashmir, a disputed Muslim-majority region where protests against Indian rule often turn violent.

"We have removed the pellet, but her eye was devastated," said one of the surgeons who operated on Hiba at the Shri Maharaja Hari Singh Hos-

pital in Srinagar on Wednesday.

"It is difficult to say (if surgery was successful) in the case of an infant, who cannot take a vision test or describe what can be perceived by the damaged eye," said the doctor, who was not permitted to speak to the press and requested anonymity.

Hiba's father Nisar Ahmad,

## advertising feature



**WORKING TOGETHER:** Stakeholders attended a workshop to shape the potential development of the proposed Smart Industrial Academy

## AIDC exploring smart manufacturing

The AIDC Eastern Cape is collaborating with government and industry to establish Africa's first Smart Industrial Academy in Nelson Mandela Bay.

Role-players, including VWASA, the DTI, Eastern Cape department of economic development and environmental affairs, the Coega Development Corporation, the Composites Cluster and Jendemark have been in discussion with the AIDC and Deutsche Messe Training Academy to lay the foundation for the facility.

AIDC EC Board chair Weza Moss said the proposed academy, which would "support the development of future oriented skills demanded by the 4th Industrial Revolution, was a strategic and bold move to position the Eastern Cape and country for job growth and global competitiveness".

"Manufacturing is the biggest driver of jobs in the Eastern Cape, which is why investment in skills must be a top priority," Moss said.

He said funding and partnership agreements were in process, including with Jendemark, a global player in turnkey production solutions, based in Nelson Mandela Bay.

"As a leading proponent of Industry 4.0 including the pillars of integrated systems, predictive maintenance, additive manufacturing, augmented reality, the internet of things, simulation and autonomous robots,



**DREAM TEAM:** AIDC EC CEO Hoosain Mahomed, AIDC EC chair Weza Moss with economic development, environmental affairs and tourism Eastern Cape MEC Lubabalo Oscar Mabuyane and Jendemark CEO Quinton Uren at a tour of the Jendemark factory earlier this week

Jendemark is one of the many valuable industry partners that will support the academy's success," he said.

In alignment with its focused strategy to support the SA Automotive Masterplan 2035 – and specifically the skills and localisation pillars – the AIDC has proposed to establish the academy to develop skills to support not only the automotive but all

industry with access to technology and skills pertinent to Industrie 4.0 and SMART Factories.

The establishment of the academy was identified as a priority for SA following a learning mission by the AIDC to Germany to understand how the world's foremost manufacturing nations were ensuring that they were globally competitive in an

increasingly technology-driven sector.

The Deutsche Messe Technology Academy operates industry academies worldwide and forecasts to have established 10 smart industry academies by 2021 globally, with the view to a worldwide network of "industry academies".

Deutsche Messe spokesperson Thomas Rilke, on a visit to Port Elizabeth in November, said the academies operated by the Deutsche Messe Training Academy focus on areas of technology that are transforming entire industries.

"Deutsche Messe AG and Volkswagen AG share common interests in educating and informing SMEs in automation robotics and Industry 4.0 while Fraunhofer IFF is acting as an international research partner for automation, robotics and Industry 4.0," Rilke said.

The AIDC EC, which was established in 2003 to develop and grow the global competitiveness of manufacturers, had identified through "rigorous consultation and engagement" that it would achieve this best by supporting the sector's transformation and skills, Moss said.

For further questions and comments, please contact the AIDC at [info@aidcec.co.za](mailto:info@aidcec.co.za) or visit [www.aidcec.co.za](http://www.aidcec.co.za)

## Third death after attack on market

A third person has died from wounds sustained during a shooting attack on a popular Christmas market in Strasbourg, French authorities said on Thursday.

A further 13 people are injured, with five still in a critical condition, the local prefecture said in a statement.

One of the injured has been declared brain dead.

The suspected attacker, a 29-year-old Strasbourg native named Cherif Chekatt, opened fire at the eastern city's annual Christmas market on Tuesday night.

Police and soldiers exchanged fire with Chekatt, who was wounded but managed to escape.

More than 700 police in France have been searching for him since and the government has raised its security alert for terrorism to its highest level.

Border controls have been reinforced in Germany and Switzerland, where the career criminal has previous convictions, and hundreds of additional soldiers have been deployed to secure other Christmas markets across France.

More than 700 police were involved in the second day of the manhunt, scouring Stras-

bourg, which lies on the west bank of the Rhine river, and the surrounding region.

Asked if police had been instructed to catch Chekatt dead or alive, government spokesperson Benjamin Griveaux told CNews: "It doesn't matter. The best thing would be to find him as quickly as possible."

It took police four months to track down Salah Abdeslam, the prime surviving suspect from the November 2015 militant attack on Paris, in an apartment in Brussels.

Witnesses told investigators that Chekatt, who is of North African descent, had cried out "Allahu Akbar" (God is Greater) as he opened fire on the Christmas market, a target Paris prosecutor Remy Heitz suggested may have been chosen for its religious symbolism.

Chekatt's police photo shows a bearded man with a prayer bruise on the centre of his forehead. He has 27 convictions for theft and violence.

Neighbours living on the housing estate where Chekatt family's live described the suspect as a typical young man who dressed in jogging pants and trainers rather than Islamic robes. – AFP, Reuters

## 29y - One decky heady

Michael Cohen issued a stinging rebuke of Donald Trump, his former boss, as he was sentenced to three years in prison, insisting it had been his job to cover up the US president's "dirty deeds".

Cohen, who served as Trump's lawyer and fixer for a decade, likened his sentencing on Wednesday to a moment of "freedom" as he would no longer be bound by his relationship to his former employer.

The sentence hearing followed Cohen pleading guilty earlier this year to four crimes: tax evasion, lying to a financial institution, lying to Congress and breaking campaign finance laws.

The last of those involved paying two women who claimed affairs with Mr Trump – Stormy Daniels, the porn star, and Karen McDougal, a former Playboy model – to stay quiet



**MICHAEL COHEN** Picture: REUTERS

before the 2016 presidential election.

Cohen has claimed in court that Mr Trump directed the payments – something the US president has denied. Mr Trump has also suggested such payments would not amount to crimes.

Appearing in a New York federal court yesterday, Cohen appeared to fight back tears at

## inbrief

### Two decky brief headys for all

A Buddhist monk has been killed by a leopard while meditating in a protected forest for the big cats, the fifth such attack in the area this month, Indian police said Thursday.

Rahul Walke Bodhi was seated beneath a tree in Ramdegi forest in western India for morning prayers on Tuesday when the leopard pounced.

The 35-year-old monk was fatally injured, police in Maharashtra state said. Two other devotees meditating with him at the time escaped unscathed to alert police, who started a search for his body.

"His badly mauled body was found further into the forest, indicating the animal tried to drag it along," Krisna Tiwari, a senior police officer in the region, told AFP.

The forest, roughly 825 kilometres (510 miles) west from the state capital Mumbai, falls within a protected reserve for big cats where four other fatal attacks have occurred in recent weeks.

The monks, in the area for an annual prayer conference, had ignored warnings from local officials about venturing too far into the forest, police said.

The attack followed a separate fatal incident on Monday, when shopkeeper Sandeep Arjun was killed outside his stall on the outskirts of the forest.

It was unclear whether the same leopard was responsible for both attacks.

Three more deaths attributed to leopards and tigers have been reported around the reserve in the past month, officials say.

Official estimates suggest there are between 12,000 and 14,000 leopards in India.

Urban expansion has reduced their numbers as forest habitats shrink, bringing them into closer contact – and conflict – with humans.

An estimated 431 leopards were killed in 2017, according to government figures. Most were killed by poachers for their hides and body parts.

There are no figures on the number of humans killed by leopards, but experts say there are hundreds of deaths each year. – AFP

### Two decky brief headys for all

A statue of Indian independence leader Mahatma Gandhi has been removed from Ghana's most prestigious university after complaints

times as he made his case for leniency, while his parents, children, wife and in-laws watched on.

"This may seem hard to believe but today is one of the most meaningful days of my life," Cohen said.

"The irony is today is the day I get my freedom back. I have been leading a personal and mental incarceration ever since the fateful day that I accepted the offer to work for a famous real-estate mogul whose business acumen I greatly admired."

He accepted "full responsibility" for his crimes, but added of Mr Trump: "It was my duty to cover up his dirty deeds."

Cohen said he would not be remembered as "the villain" when a history of Mr Trump was written.

He also apologised to the American people, acknowl-