

Faces and Places



Mohammed bin Salman

In October, journalist Jamal Khashoggi was killed in Saudi Arabia's embassy in Istanbul, Turkey. The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, or CIA, has been investigating reports that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman personally ordered the killing. Prince Mohammed's father, King Salman, is officially the ruler of Saudi Arabia, but the Crown Prince is recognized as the acting leader. According to sources, the CIA has concluded that Prince Mohammed, whom Khashoggi repeatedly criticized, ordered the killing. When asked about the report, U.S. President Donald Trump said the CIA did not reach a conclusion about the matter. He also said that he was going to stand by the prince, because Saudi Arabia is an important U.S. ally, and important to the U.S. economy. **Do you think the U.S. should stand by Saudi Arabia? Why or why not?**

Kim Jong Yang

The International Criminal Police Organization, commonly called Interpol, has named Kim Jong Yang as its new president. Interpol's previous president, Meng Hongwei, resigned earlier this year after being arrested for bribery in his native China. Interpol is a 95-year-old non-political organization that fights against international crime, and helps coordinate information among its 194 member nations. Kim, who is 57 years old, spent several years as a well-regarded police chief in South Korea. He also helped bring modern crime-fighting techniques to the Philippines and other Asian countries. Many international observers were worried that Alexander Prokopchuk, a Russian interior minister, would get the job, but that did not happen. Russia allegedly uses Interpol resources to target its critics living in other countries. **Would Interpol have lost credibility if Prokopchuk had gotten the job?**

Tijuana, Mexico

For weeks, thousands of Central Americans have been making their way north in a so-called "migrant caravan." These migrants are escaping the violence and poverty in their own countries and hope for asylum in the U.S. About 5,000 of these migrants have gathered in Tijuana, Mexico, hoping to pass through the busy San Ysidro Port of Entry. But tensions have risen in Tijuana as border agents examine fewer than 100 petitions for asylum per day. Last weekend, hundreds of migrants broke off from a peaceful march and attempted to cross the border at Tijuana without permission. In response, U.S. agents fired several rounds of tear gas. President Trump denied that tear gas had been used on children, despite reports and photos to the contrary. **Is tear gas an appropriate response to the migrant caravan? Why or why not?**

Mississippi

On November 27th, Mississippi Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith defeated Mike Espy in a special runoff election. Sen. Hyde-Smith became Mississippi's first female senator earlier this year, when she was appointed to fill former senator Thad Cochran's seat. Hyde-Smith, a Republican, had to run again to keep her seat through 2021, when Cochran's term expires. She received the largest vote total on Election Day, but failed to get more than 50 percent of the vote, triggering a runoff election between the top two candidates. Espy, her Democratic opponent, was a former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. He was trying to become the first African American senator from Mississippi since Reconstruction. Some observers accused Sen. Hyde-Smith of making racially offensive remarks during the campaign, but she denied these charges. In the runoff, Hyde-Smith received 53.9 percent of the vote to Espy's 46.1 percent. **Do you think the Democrats have a chance of winning this seat in 2020?**