

President of Russian Federation Calls on the President

PIB Delhi
New Delhi, Oct 6.

His Excellency Mr Vladimir Putin, the President of Russian Federation, called on the President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, at Rashtrapati Bhavan yesterday. Welcoming the Russian President to India, the President said that India-Russia warm and friendly ties are progressing well. Our 19th Annual Bilateral Summit was a success. This has been a very productive year for our relations and significant achievements have been made. The President said that India

deeply appreciates Mr Putin's personal contribution to the India-Russia Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership. He was happy to note that defence cooperation between the two countries is strong and growing. The President said that there have been significant developments on military technical cooperation, which is one of the pillars of our strategic partnership. The President said that India is keen to enhance its economic ties with Russia. Bilateral trade now stands at US \$ 10 billion. We need to further improve upon it to reach the target of US \$ 30 billion by 2025.

The President said that inter-regional cooperation between the Indian states and the regions of Russia is important to strengthening our partnership. We need to encourage and promote this engagement. We believe that the Russian Far East can become a new focus area. The President said that India and Russia have always had excellent cultural relations. He was happy to note that the Festival of India has been organised in the Russian Federation, after a gap of 30 years. It was inaugurated at the Kremlin Palace and will continue till March 2019 in various cities of Russia.

Assam 70-yr-old 'declared foreigner' dies at detention center

Agency
Guwahati Oct 6.

A declared foreigner dies at a detention camp in Tezpur, Assam. He was declared a foreigner through an ex-parte judgment by a Foreigners Tribunal (FT) in 2007. A declared foreigner, Mohammed Jabbar Ali (70), who was lodged at a detention camp in Tezpur, Assam died on Thursday night following illness, officials said on Friday. A resident of Rowta, in Udalguri district, Ali was

declared a foreigner through an ex-parte judgment by a Foreigners Tribunal (FT) in 2007. Police said he was arrested and lodged in a detention camp in 2015. The Gauhati High Court dismissed his petition for a review the same year. Tezpur jail official said that Ali was unwell for a few weeks and was undergoing treatment at hospitals in Guwahati and Tezpur. "He complained of uneasiness on Wednesday and after check-up was referred to Civil Hospital in Tezpur, where he died on Thursday," the official said.

Arun Jaitley disagrees with SC

Agency
New Delhi Oct 6.

Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on Saturday said he disagreed with the Supreme Court's judicial view on Section 377 that sexuality is a part of free speech. "I disagree with the judicial review in the apex court judgment that sexuality is a part of free speech," the minister said at the Hindustan Times Leadership Summit 2018 in the national capital. While decriminalising gay sex last month, the SC had said, "Sexual orientation of an individual is natural and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is a violation of Freedom of

Expression." "That is a little excessive," the Union minister said. Stating that the SC's observation calls for debate, Jaitley added, "How then do you restrain any sexual activity in army frontier, school hostel." While responding to a question on his views on the recent verdict on Section 377 by the apex court, the minister said, "The court had taken into account a lot of views but sometimes, you get carried away while making these historical judgments," he said, adding, "The SC judgment on Section 377 is a part of a sustained campaign for social reform."

Over 350 students booked at Noida college over group clash

Agency
Noida, Oct 6.

Police has booked more than 350 students, Indian and Afghans studying at a private university in Greater Noida, after video of a Kashmiri student being beaten up surfaced on social media. The student was beaten by a group of Indian students after a fight broke out between groups of Indian and Afghanistan students. The scuffle followed another incident which was reported on Monday after a video surfaced on social media purportedly showing three Afghan students at the Sharda University roughing up a student. "An Indian student from Kashmir was roughed up by other Indian students who is said to have posted provocative messages on a WhatsApp group from the

side of the Afghan students involved in the fight on Monday. These Indian students were apparently aggrieved over the university's lackadaisical approach on the matter," a senior police official told journalists. The police official, who did not wish to be named, alleged lack of cooperation from the university and said, "The officials of the deemed university have gone careless on the matter simmering since Monday and that has led to this situation." There was no official response from the university over the incident till the filing of this report Thursday night, although the university announced that classes would remain suspended till Sunday. A meeting was held by the authority after Thursday's incident following which three

students allegedly involved in the Monday fight were suspended. "During the period a probe will be held to ascertain the cause of the fight and action taken against those guilty," another police official said. According to the official, no official complaint was made to the police about the scuffle that broke out Thursday in which one Indian student suffered injuries and was taken to a hospital. On Friday Gautam Buddha Nagar administration held a meeting with the Sharda University management Friday to discuss the fight that broke out on its campus in Greater Noida between groups of Indian and Afghan students, officials said. Three Afghan students were suspended over the Monday scuffle and the university had announced shutting classes till Sunday, while the mid-term

was examinations deferred, according to officials. District Magistrate Brajesh Narain Singh said the Sharda University management has been asked to bring the two confronting sides to the table and ensure dialogue between them in order to defuse the tension. India and Afghanistan are friendly countries. The university officials have been asked to get the students from both sides to talk so that cordial relations can be restored among them. "They have been told to tell the students to concentrate on their studies and focus on upcoming examinations, Singh told reporters. The administration has also asked the university to restrict entry of outsiders, particularly those making communal statements and inflammatory remarks," he said.

India, Russia seal missile deal despite US warning

Agency
New Delhi Oct 6.

India and Russia concluded Friday the contract for the supply of S-400 missile systems despite the threat of US sanctions. There was no public announcement of the deal by Prime Minister Narendra Modi or visiting Russian President Vladimir Putin. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told Russian reporters that the deal was signed on the fringes of the summit. "Both sides welcomed the conclusion of the contract for the supply of the S-400 Long Range Surface to Air Missile System to India," the joint statement said. Sources said the S-400 deal "fulfills India's defence needs", and the government has taken the decision in "national interest". The S-400 Triumf air defence systems — the deal value is over USD 5 billion — will be delivered in 24 months from the signing of the contract. Incidentally, Beijing signed a deal with Moscow in 2015 to buy six battalions of the S-400 system, and deliveries commenced in January 2018. The S-400 deal has been caught in diplomatic crossfire between US and Russia, with Washington threatening Delhi and other partners with sanctions if their defence deals with Moscow go through. While the CAATSA (Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act) was passed unanimously by the US Congress and signed by President Donald Trump, the US Congress has now passed a law granting waiver to some countries. India is one of the intended beneficiaries, but Trump has to personally certify the deal for a waiver. CAATSA, if implemented in its stringent form, would have affected India's defence procurement from Russia. The Russian maker of S-400s — Almaz-Antey Air and Space Defense Corporation, Joint Stock Company — is on the US list of 39 Russian entities.

partners." "The waiver authority is not for a blanket waiver. It is transaction-specific. There are strict criteria for granting a waiver. Waivers of CAATSA section 231 will be considered on a transaction-by-transaction basis. We cannot prejudice any sanctions decision," the spokesperson said. After the Modi-Putin summit talks, eight pacts, including one on cooperation between ISRO and Roscosmos on India's manned space mission project Gaganyaan, were signed. Pacts were also inked in the fields of nuclear energy and railways. The two sides also discussed opportunities in aviation, railways and river crafts. Putin pitched Russian passenger jets as a competitive alternative to US jet manufacturers. India and Russia, Modi said, are committed to cooperating in the fight against terrorism. Putin said the two countries have agreed to step up cooperation in combating the menace of terrorism and drug trafficking. On terrorism, while there was no specific reference to Pakistan-based terrorist groups, the joint statement said, "The two sides denounced terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and reiterated the need to combat international terrorism with decisive and collective response without any double standards. The sides agreed to converge their efforts to eradicate terrorist networks, their sources of financing, arms and fighters supply channels, to counter terrorist ideology, propaganda and recruitment. The sides condemned all kinds of state support to terrorists including cross-border terrorism and providing safe havens to terrorists and their network."

chemical and biological terrorism, the joint statement said both sides supported and emphasised the need to launch multilateral negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament, an international convention for the suppression of acts of chemical and biological terrorism. On defence cooperation, they recalled the long history of mutual trust and mutual benefit, and said both sides expressed satisfaction at the significant progress made on the ongoing projects of military-technical cooperation and recognised the positive shift towards joint research and joint production of military-technical equipment between the two countries. Sources, however, made clear that there was no 'Make-in-India' component in the S-400 deal. "It is just a purchase," sources said. There was also considerable amount of discussion on connectivity between India and Russia, through the International North-South Transit Corridor planned via Iran. "They discussed how they can implement it effectively," sources said. The two leaders also discussed potential trade growth, and put a target of USD 25 billion by 2025. Sources said while current bilateral trade is about USD 10 billion, and it witnessed a 20 per cent growth in the last year, both leaders felt that there was scope for more. They also set a target of USD 15 billion as investments from each side, totalling USD 30 billion. Last year, Putin told Modi that Russian companies had invested USD 12.5 billion in Gujarat's oil sector. Putin, sources said, was interested in knowing about the GST implementation in India. They spent some amount of time discussing issues pertaining to GST. The two leaders also discussed the impact of oil prices on their economy, and the Russian President conveyed Russia's readiness to increase oil and gas production to meet the energy needs of India. On the cultural side, sources said that the two sides will also work jointly towards tiger conservation over the next one year and translate the works of contemporary authors. To promote people-to-people exchanges, the two sides decided to have a Ganga-Volga dialogue, a civilisational dialogue.

Rape sets off revenge attacks on UP, Bihar migrants in Gujarat, 180 held

Agency
Ahmedabad Oct 6.

The Gujarat police Friday said that at least 180 people have been arrested across five districts for targeting migrants, particularly from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, in violent protests across the state. With the protests continuing unabated since Wednesday, several migrant workers have reportedly left the state in fear. Protests erupted in the districts of Gandhinagar, Ahmedabad, Patan, Sabarkantha and Mehsana after the arrest of Ravindra Sahu, who hails from Bihar, for allegedly raping a 14-month-old girl in Sabarkantha district

last week. Director General of Police Shivanand Jha said that "following the case of rape... people from a particular community have targeted non-Gujaratis." The victim belongs to the Thakor community, which, according to police, has targeted migrants since the incident. Congress MLA and AICC secretary in charge of Bihar, Alpesh Thakor, who is also president of the Thakor Sena, which has been blamed for the attacks, has demanded, within 72 hours, the withdrawal of cases against members of his community who were "innocent". Thakor told The Indian Express Friday: "I appeal for peace to all those behind these

incidents. There could be members from our community and Sena but no such instruction (to launch attacks) was given out from our side (Thakor Sena). This is to only defame us and the Sena. We are only aiming at peace and employment in the state." He said that their target was the "state government and companies", not individuals or a community or caste. "Despite the rule of employing 80 per cent locals companies do not follow this. The state government should ensure its proper implementation", Thakor said. According to Thakor, those not involved in the violence should not face police cases.

"How can you name somebody in the FIR who was not there at all? We are demanding police withdraw cases against all these persons within 72 hours," he said, warning that he would take "legal recourse" if the demand was not met. The Thakor Sena claims that cases were registered against nearly 500 people named in around 50 FIRs across six districts and Ahmedabad city. Police security was also placed outside industrial units which employ migrants after Thakor said his outfit's anger was against the government and the companies, not complying with the rule to employ locals in factories.

Arvind Kejriwal writes to non-BJP CMs, expresses concerns over amendments to Electricity Act by Centre

Agency
New Delhi Oct 6.

In a bid to corner the Centre over the proposed reforms in the power sector ahead of 2019 Lok Sabha elections, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) convenor and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Saturday wrote a letter to non-BJP chief ministers seeking their comments on the amendments to the Electricity Act, 2003.

Kejriwal sent the letter to chief ministers Mamata Banerjee, N Chandrababu Naidu, Pinarayi Vijayan, H D Kumaraswamy, V Narayansamy, Edappadi K Palaniswami, Lal Thanhawla, Amarinder Singh, K Chandrashekar Rao, Naveen Patnaik and Pawan Chamling. In his letter, Kejriwal wrote, "The proposed amendments to the Electricity Act 2003 are a matter of serious concern as they concentrate all powers

in the electricity sector in the hands of Central Government to the exclusion of State Governments and it will lead to an immediate steep hike in electricity tariffs." "It appears that the motive of the Central Government is to impose and hasten privatisation of electricity all over the country and to favour a few companies. By concentrating all powers with itself, the Centre will be able to do that," the letter said.

Urging leaders to ensure that the Bill doesn't get passed in Parliament, the Chief Minister added, "We all need to get together to ensure that the Central Government does not succeed in getting this amendment Bill passed in Parliament. We may also give it wide publicity and make people aware of how these amendments will adversely affect a common man."

Official sources pointed out that the reference to cross-border terrorism was aimed at Pakistan. "Recognizing the importance of adopting the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, pending in the United Nations, to become part of the international law, both sides called upon the international community to make sincere efforts towards its early conclusion," the joint statement said. To address the threats of