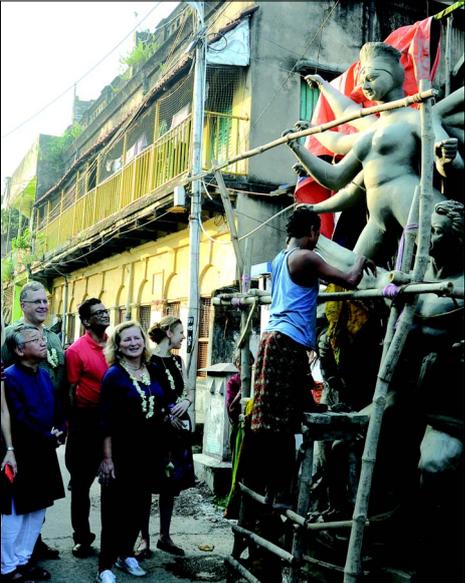




Vietnamese YOGA players performs on the concluding day of the 8th Asian Yoga Sports Championship at Jimmy George Indoor Stadium in Thiruvananthapuram on Sunday.

ECHO WORLD

India believes in peace but not at cost of self respect: PM



Members of the British Consulate General's office visited Kumartuli today to see Durga idols in various stages of making—Arjit Ganguly

NEW DELHI, SEPT 30—India staunchly believes in peace and is committed to taking it forward, but it would not be at the cost of compromising its self-respect and sovereignty, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Sunday as he asserted that the armed forces will give a befitting reply to any attempt to destroy the atmosphere of peace in the country.

Recalling the 2016 surgical strikes, he said Indian troops gave a befitting reply to the audacity of a proxy war under the "garb of terrorism" in his monthly 'Mann Ki Baat' radio address. Modi said, "It has now been decided that our soldiers will give a befitting reply to whoever makes an attempt to destroy the atmosphere of peace and progress in our nation." He said India staunchly believes in peace and is committed to taking it forward, "but not at the cost of compromising our self-respect and sovereignty of our nation. India has always been resolutely committed to peace."

Days before Air For Day is celebrated on October 8 to mark its birth in 1932, Modi said "air warriors" have proved themselves to be the epitome of "every citizen's eye through display of sheer might in the skies. He also recalled the contribution of the IAF in transporting men and material to Srinagar in 1947 when Pakistani attackers had tried to capture Jammu and Kashmir. He said IAF played a key role in 1965,

circumstances would be futile and also cited stamps issued by Pakistan in July to "glorify" Kashmiri militant Burhan Wani as a reason for the cancellation.

Modi pointed out that India is one of the largest contributors to various United Nations Peace Keeping Forces in terms of sending its personnel. "For decades, our brave soldiers wearing blue helmets have played a stellar role in ensuring maintenance of world peace," he said to drive home his point. He said yesterday Indians celebrated 'Paraakram Parva' to mark the second anniversary of the surgical strikes. "We remembered that surgical strike carried out in 2016, where our soldiers gave a befitting reply to the audacity of a proxy war under the garb of terrorism," he said. He said such celebrations remind the youth of the glorious heritage of the army. "It also inspires us to maintain the unity & integrity of the country," he said.

He pointed out that the Air Force has an example of ensuring gender equality and has opened its doors for women. "Now, the Air Force is offering the option of permanent commission to women," besides the Short Service Commission. "India can proudly claim that in the armed forces, only man-power but woman-power too



Prime Minister, Narendra Modi addressing the public meeting after inaugurating several projects, at Anand, Gujarat on Sunday

is contributing equally. Women are already empowered and now getting armed too," he said.

The prime minister also praised navy commander Abhilash Tomy for his courage at high seas when his boat was damaged in storm while participating in Golden Globe Race. "He fought to be afloat without food or drink. He did not accept defeat and continued to fight death. A rare example of courage, determination, strength and bravery," Modi said. He recalled his meeting with Tomy and prayed for his good health. (PTI)

1971 and the Kargil war. He said he the relief and rescue work or disaster management, the country is indebted to the IAF for its commendable efforts.

He pointed out that the Air Force has an example of ensuring gender equality and has opened its doors for women. "Now, the Air Force is offering the option of permanent commission to women," besides the Short Service Commission. "India can proudly claim that in the armed forces, only man-power but woman-power too

AT A GLANCE

Naidu meets ailing Parrikar

NEW DELHI, SEPT 30—Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu Sunday met ailing Goa Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar at AIIMS here to enquire about his health. Parrikar was admitted to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) on September 15. Parrikar, 62, was flown to the national capital owing to his declining health. He had returned from the US in the first week of September, days after which he was admitted to a hospital in Goa. Earlier this year, he had undergone a three-month-long treatment in the US. "Met Shri Manohar Parrikar, the Chief Minister of Goa and inquired about his health at AIIMS today. He is one of the most lovable and honest senior politicians of our country. I wish & hope he will get well soon and serve the society as he ever does," the Vice-President's secretariat tweeted.

Militants attack police station

SRINAGAR, SEPT 30—A policeman was injured critically in a militant attack on a police station in Jammu and Kashmir's Shopian district on Sunday, a police official said. Militants opened indiscriminate fire on the police station in south Kashmir early today, the official said. The injured policeman has been admitted to a hospital in a critical condition, he said. Further details are awaited.

Fijians date

SUVA, SEPT 30—Fiji will go to the polls on November 14. Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama announced Sunday, for what will be only the second general election since his bloodless coup in 2006. He made the announcement after meeting President Jioji Konrote, within hours of his return from the United Nations General Assembly in New York. "His excellency the President of the Republic of Fiji, on the advice of the Honourable Prime Minister, has dissolved parliament on 30 September 2018," the South Pacific Island's government said in a statement. Bainimarama formed the first post-coup democratically elected government after taking 60 percent of the vote in the 2014 general election, and has continued to lead public opinion polls since then.

Trump 'in love'

WASHINGTON, SEPT 30—US President Donald Trump said he and North Korea's Kim Jong Un have fallen "in love" - their romance fuelled by "beautiful letters" he received from the leader of the nuclear-armed state. Trump on Saturday elevated his recent praise of Kim to new heights, at a West Virginia rally in support of local candidates for his Republican Party. "And then we fell in love - OK? No really. He wrote me beautiful letters and they're great letters. We fell in love," Trump told the crowd. On Monday at the United Nations General Assembly Trump lauded the North Korean strongman - who is accused by the UN and others of widespread human rights abuses - as "terrific," one year after Trump eviscerated Kim from the same platform.

Gandhi Bhavan renovation work

KOLKATA, SEPT 30—The West Bengal government has been renovating the Gandhi Bhavan in Behelghata area of the city, a two-storey building where Mahatma Gandhi spent 25 days between August and September in 1947 when Kolkata was in the grip of riots. The government would hold a programme at the house on October 2 on the occasion of 150th birth anniversary of Gandhi ji. "We expect West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to declare the building a heritage property on October 2," said Papi Sarkar. (PTI)

BJP ally SBSP wants division of UP

LUCKNOW, SEPT 30—After the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), BJP ally Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP) has also raked up the issue of division of Uttar Pradesh, saying it will make it a poll plank in 2019.

"We have been demanding a separate Purvanchal state for over 16 years. Now, as we expand our party organisation all over the state, we support the demand of division of Uttar Pradesh into four parts. We will make it an issue in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, reach out to the public and stage agitations to press the demand," state minister Om Prakash Rajbhar, who is also the SBSP chief, told PTI.

"We want Purvanchal, Bundelkhand, Paschim Pradesh and Awadh Pradesh. As Uttar Pradesh has a population of over 22 crore, managing it administratively is difficult. Running the administration in small states is easy. This is an important issue. People want development and rights. Only at the time of elections, the leaders think of the people and afterwards, they forget their issues," he said.

Define the term 'urban naxal', asks Romila Thapar

NEW DELHI, SEPT 30—Eminent historian Romila Thapar, who petitioned the Supreme Court against the house arrest of five Left-leaning activists, has asked government to define the phrase 'urban naxal', saying either they do not understand the meaning of the term or the activists like her do not.

Talking on the house arrests of five activists Varavara Rao, Arun Ferreira, Vetrarao Gonsalves, Sudha Bharadwaj and Gautam Navlakha, she said these are the people who are fighting against social injustice. "We were all born Indians, I argued as Indians all our lives. These activists are fighting for good causes and terming them urban naxal is a political move," she said.

"Do they even know what urban naxal means, first ask the government to define the term urban naxal and then tell us how we fall into this category. It is very easy to call us urban naxal. And also tell us how we have become urban naxal, either the government does not understand the meaning of urban naxal or we don't understand the meaning of the term," Thapar told newsmen.

Define the term 'urban naxal', asks Romila Thapar



She was speaking on the sidelines of a press conference held by the petitioners after the Supreme Court judgement on Friday refused to interfere with the arrest of the five rights activists in connection with the Bhima-Koregaon violence case and declined to appoint a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe their arrests.

The five activists have been under house arrest since August 29. Politicians like Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis have often referred to the five activists as "urban naxals".

Many social media users have enlisted themselves as "urban

naxals" in a show of solidarity with the arrested Left-leaning activists as "Me Too Urban Naxal" hashtag trended on Twitter. They countered that the term "urban naxal" was a mere creation of some sections to malign those who have an anti-establishment stance.

Thapar, economists Prabhat Patnaik and Devaki Jain, sociology professor Satish Deshpande and human rights lawyer Maja Daruwala were the petitioners who filed a case in the Supreme Court after the five lawyers, journalists and civil rights activists were arrested across the country on August 28 and charged with abetting acts of terror under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

"Any democratic institution cannot take law into its hands. It has to go through a certain procedure. Arrests are the last step of a probe it is not the first step of an investigation," she said. "Arbitrary arrests on implausible charges means the police can walk into our homes and arrest us - either without a warrant or a warrant written in a language we don't understand and then accuse us of activities about which we know nothing," she said. (PTI)

Group tied to literature prize still under Nobel glare

COPENHAGEN, SEPT 30—There won't be a Nobel Prize in Literature this year but the Swedish Academy that awards the prestigious prize is still in the limelight.

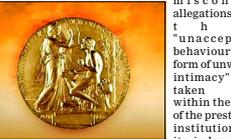
Jean-Claude Arnault, a French citizen who is a major cultural figure in Sweden, is at the center of a sex abuse and financial crimes scandal that has tarnished the academy and forced it to take a year off in its deliberations.

The 72-year-old is now on trial in Stockholm, facing two counts of rape of a woman seven years ago. He has denied the charges. A verdict in his case is expected on Monday, the same day that the 2018 Nobel Prize announcements kick off with the Karolinska Institute announcing who wins the Nobel award in physiology or medicine.

The prosecutor has urged the court to sentence Arnault to three years in prison. Yet no matter what the verdict for Arnault, the Swedish Academy itself has no guarantee that it will be allowed to

keep awarding the literature prize.

Lars Heikensten, the head of the Nobel Foundation, was quoted as warning Friday that if the Swedish Academy does not resolve its tarnished image his agency could decide that another group would be a better host. He even suggested there could be no Nobel Literature Prize awarded in 2019 either which is counter to the academy's current plan to award both the 2018 and the 2019 literature Nobels next year.



The allegations against Arnault, who ran a major cultural group in Sweden that was closely tied to the Swedish Academy, began in November 2017 when 18 women came forward in a Swedish newspaper to accuse academics against him. Arnault is married to a Swedish Academy member, poet

Katrina Frostenson, who quit the body in April as tensions escalated.

That month the Swedish Academy said an internal investigation into sexual

misconduct allegations found that "unacceptable behaviour in the form of unwanted intimacy" has taken place within the ranks of the prestigious institution. But its judgment in handling the accusations was called into question, kicking off a

fiere internal debate over how to face up to its laws that divided the body's 18 members who are appointed for life into hostile camps. Several members either left or disassociated themselves from the secretive academy.

The first woman to lead the academy, former permanent secretary Sara Danius, also quit in April, leading observers to wonder why some of Sweden's most accomplished women appeared to be taking the fall for a man's alleged misconduct.

Many people in the Scandinavian nation, which is known for promoting gender equality, have expressed dismay over the scandal, which has exposed bitter divisions within the academy and led to accusations of patriarchal leanings among some members.

In May, the Swedish Academy postponed the 2018 prize with the intention of awarding it in 2019. The academy's internal probe eventually led to a police investigation and the trial before the Stockholm District Court.

Arnault also has been suspected of violating century-old Nobel rules by leaking the names of award winners allegedly seven times, starting in 1996. It remains unclear to whom the names were allegedly disclosed, and it is not known whether that has been investigated. (AP)

UN, India to step up coop in counter-terrorism, terror financing: UN chief

UNITED NATIONS, SEPT 30—India is an "important partner" of the United Nations in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has said, and there are plans to step up cooperation between the two on strengthening capacity in combating terror financing.

Guterres, who will begin a three-day visit to India on Monday, said the planning and implementation of acts of terrorism transcend borders and it is the responsibility of all the States to take action to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism.

"The threat of radicalisation, violent extremism, and terrorism continues to persist and even grow in many parts of the world. Modern-day terrorists are savvy in both technology and social media, successfully exploiting contemporary tools to propagate the narrative of hate and violence to recruit young people and raise funds," Guterres told PTI in an email interview.

The UN chief emphasised that all nations must prevent and combat incitement to violence, and enforce counter-terrorism measures. He described India as an important partner of the UN in countering terrorism and preventing violent extremism.

"The Government of India's recent contribution to the United Nations Trust Fund for Counter-Terrorism will support the execution of capacity-building projects by the United Nations on strengthening capacity in the areas of countering terrorist financing, and on the use of advance passenger information," the UN Chief said in the email interview. (PTI)