

India, China face-off in Ladakh ends

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI  
Soldiers of India and China were engaged in a face-off which escalated into a scuffle near the Pangong Tso lake in eastern Ladakh on Wednesday. However, the face-off ended after a few hours following a delegation level meeting between the local commanders, Army sources said.

U.S. lawmakers flag curbs in Kashmir

2 prominent Democrats ask Pompeo to 'press' India to end restrictions

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN WASHINGTON DC  
Pramila Jayapal and James McGovern, two prominent and liberal Democrats from the U.S. House of Representatives, have written to U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo asking him to "press" the Indian government to immediately end the communications restrictions in Kashmir and adhere to international human rights standards there.

dia or at gatherings, raising concerns about the restrictions the government has imposed on Kashmir. Ms. Jayapal and Mr. McGovern's letter, dated September 10, and tweeted by Ms. Jayapal on Wednesday, seeks to "raise significant concerns about the ongoing humanitarian and human rights crisis in Jammu & Kashmir" and highlights the detentions, curfews, lack of communication and internet access. "Multiple reports indicate that over 3,000 people have been indefinitely detained by Indian authorities without any charges, some as young as 11-years-old. Those jailed have included elected officials, lawyers, business executives, religious leaders



Shut off: People sit in front of a closed market in Pampore in south Kashmir. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

and doctors," the lawmakers said. Ms. Jayapal, a Chennai-born Congresswoman from Washington state is co-chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus and Mr. McGovern is Chairman of the House Rules Committee which decides whether and how the House will vote on legislation.

Pak. bid to politicise issue rejected: India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI  
India on Thursday said Pakistan's attempt to politicise the Kashmir issue at the UN Human Rights Council had been rejected. It also said Pakistan must understand that repeating a lie "does not turn it into a gospel truth". "It is quite audacious on the part of Pakistan that the country which is harbouring terrorists, which is the epicentre of terrorism, is pretending to speak on behalf of the global community on human rights," MEA spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said.



CM Mamata Banerjee addressing a rally after the culmination of her padyatra in Kolkata on Thursday. ■ RAJEEV BHATT

Mamata hits the streets against NRC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT KOLKATA  
West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday hit the streets in Kolkata in protest against the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam and said she would not allow a similar exercise in West Bengal. "I condemn the NRC, I condemn the BJP. We do not accept NRC," she said, addressing a public gathering after leading a rally in north Kolkata. Ms. Banerjee, along with several leaders, including several Ministers in her Cabinet, walked the 4.6 km stretch from Sinthi More in north Kolkata to Shyambazar.

Ban detention camps, urge Left parties

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI  
Five Left parties have urged the government to ensure that those excluded from the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam are not put 'indefinitely' into detention camps and demanded the abolition of the camps themselves. The five Left parties — Communist Party of India (Marxist), Communist Party of India, Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) Liberation, All India Forward Bloc and Revolutionary Socialist Party — met in the capital on Wednesday and issued a joint statement at the conclusion of the meeting.

bers of the Trinamool, the Left Front and the Congress. Referring to the list of people excluded from the NRC, Ms. Banerjee said out of 19 lakh people, 12 lakh were Hindus, including 1 lakh Gorkhas. "Sometimes, protest becomes necessary when the fight is for one's existence," she said, alleging, "You won't be able to shut the voice of the people of Bengal as you did with your police in Assam."

52 errors in J&K Reorganisation Act

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI  
The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act passed by the Parliament on August 6 had at least 52 errors. On Thursday, the Ministry of Law and Justice issued a notification correcting the mistakes ranging from spelling and grammatical errors to incorrect dates. The Act downgraded and bifurcated the State of Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories—J&K and Ladakh.

Similarly, the year "1916" was mentioned as "1960" in the original Act; "Scheduled Caste" was corrected to "Scheduled Castes"; "Childs" was replaced with "Child" and "marriage" with "marriages". The Act even mentioned that there will be delimitation of the parliamentary constituencies of Jammu and Kashmir. The corrigenda issued on Thursday said that the sentence has been omitted now. The legislation was first introduced in the Rajya Sabha on August 5 along with two other resolutions to read down Article 370 that gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir. (With PTI inputs)

Restore Net, phone links in hospitals: plea

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI  
A petition filed in the Supreme Court has sought the restoration of Internet services and phone lines in hospitals across Jammu and Kashmir. The petition filed by Dr. Sameer Kaul and one Salim Jahangeer Kirmani has asked the Centre to not block communication services like the Internet and landlines in hospitals given how crucial they are for providing healthcare. The petitioners said Internet was crucial for ordering essential medicines. Important machines like MRI and CT scanners also need updates from servers which require Internet connections, they added.

J&K blames Pak. for communication curbs

PEERZADA ASHIQ SRINAGAR  
Pakistan's continuous provocations are hampering easing of communication lines, especially mobile phones and Internet here, the Jammu and Kashmir government said on Thursday. "There continues to be tremendous provocation from across the border. Therefore, any decision must factor in that provocation in easing communication further. Our consistent effort is to remove restrictions as much as possible and as quickly as possible," said government spokesman Rohit Kansal. "Permanent neighbour" In reply to a question on Pakistan being a "permanent

neighbour," Mr. Kansal said that the provocations had not stopped them from opening 96 land line exchanges. "They have not stopped us from easing restrictions on movement. They will not stop us from further action too. We will ease them at appropriate time." He said there was a decline in the number of law and order situations after August 16, when it peaked. "There are attempts to enforce a shutdown by militants, anti-nationals and miscreants. However, action is being taken against them," said Mr. Kansal. The Internet facility and mobile phones continue to remain off for the 39th day on Thursday.

All 16 nations set for final RCEP deal

Talks will end before Nov.: Australia

SUHASINI HAIDAR NEW DELHI  
Amidst conflicting signals from the government over whether India will join the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) this year, Australia's lead negotiator for the 16-nation free trade agreement (FTA) says all countries have "committed" to completing talks in time for the RCEP summit on November 1. "What I can tell you is that in Bangkok last weekend, all ministers including India reiterated their commitment to concluding the negotiations in full by the time of the leaders summit in November," negotiator James Baxter said, referring to an RCEP trade ministers' meeting held in Thailand on September 8, attended by Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal. On Friday, negotiating teams and diplomats from all 16 RCEP countries will meet for a "Track 1.5" round

table on "Global and Regional Trade and Economic Integration Issues". The meeting will be inaugurated by Minister of State for Commerce & Industry Hardeep Singh Puri, who is expected to articulate India's continuing concerns about signing on to the agreement. India is seeking a mechanism to "cap" imports as a safeguard in case its withdrawal of tariffs under RCEP leads to a sudden surge in goods flooding the Indian market. Other sticking points have been over a dual tariff mechanism for countries India doesn't have an FTA with like China, as well as the need for freedom of movement for services from India to the other countries. With Australia and New Zealand in particular, India has been negotiating on agricultural and dairy imports. A final decision is expected closer to the summit, just ahead of PM Modi's visit to Thailand on November 1.

No second consular access for Jadhav: Pak.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ISLAMABAD  
Pakistan on Thursday said there was no plan to grant India a second consular access to death row convict Kulbhushan Jadhav. India's Deputy High Commissioner in Islamabad Gaurav Ahluwalia met Mr. Jadhav on September 2 after Pakistan granted consular access to the retired Navy officer following a directive from the International Court of Justice in July. "There is no other meeting planned," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mohammad Faisal said.

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