

14 THE WORLD

MEANWHILE

GRETA THUNBERG WINS AMNESTY'S TOP AWARD

Swedish activist Greta Thunberg and the Fridays for Future youth movement received Amnesty International's "Ambassadors of Conscience" award for their work highlighting the need for action to avert climate disaster. The 16-year-old received a standing ovation at The George Washington University in the US capital where the ceremony was held.

TOP OF THE WORLD



She is considered one of the 'founding mothers' of NPR. AP

USA

Cokie Roberts, famed journalist, dies at 75

AMERICAN JOURNALIST Cokie Roberts, regarded by National Public Radio as one of its "founding mothers" and a prominent political commentator on ABC News, died on Tuesday at 75 at her Washington home from complications of breast cancer, her family said in a statement. Roberts worked in radio as a foreign correspondent for CBS and a congressional correspondent for NPR in the 1970s. She went on to become a prominent political commentator on ABC News, serving as the network's chief congressional analyst. NPR President Jarl Mohn said the Emmy Award winner was "the trusted voice that Americans count on when political news breaks".

PHILIPPINES

20 killed as truck plunges down ravine

Manila: Twenty people, including children, were killed Tuesday in the southern Philippines when the flatbed truck they were riding in plummeted into a ravine, police said. The vehicle was bringing a group of people home from a trip to the beach when the driver lost control near the town of T'boi in the latest deadly crash on the nation's dangerous roads. "Based on eyewitness accounts, the truck lost its brakes. We will conduct further investigations on the actual cause," police investigator George Tabayan said.

AUSTRALIA

Pell appeals against child sex conviction

Sydney: Disgraced Cardinal George Pell lodged an appeal against his child sex abuse convictions in Australia's High Court on Tuesday, in a last-ditch effort to clear his name. Pell filed his application for leave to appeal just one day before the 28-day lodgement window closed, a court official in Canberra said. It is the final avenue for the 78-year-old — who is serving a six-year sentence for sexually assaulting two choirboys in a Melbourne cathedral in the 1990s — to get out of jail.

Attacks by Taliban kill 48, Afghan President unhurt as bomb hits rally

Suicide bombers strike Kabul and Ghani campaign rally in Parwan province, 11 days before election

REUTERS

KABUL, SEPTEMBER 17

TALIBAN SUICIDE bombers killed 48 people in two separate attacks in Afghanistan on Tuesday, the deadliest taking place near an election rally by President Ashraf Ghani, though he was unhurt.

The attacks happened 11 days before Afghanistan's presidential election, which Taliban commanders have vowed to violently disrupt, and follow collapsed peace talks between the United States and the insurgent group.

Ghani, who is seeking a second five-year term in voting on Sept 28, was due to address a rally in Charikar, the capital of central Parwan province, when a suicide bomber attacked the gathering.

The blast killed 26 people and wounded 42, said Nasrat Rahimi, spokesman for the interior ministry.

"When the people were entering the police camp, an old man riding a motorcycle arrived on the highway and detonated his explosives, causing casual-



ties," said Parwan province's police chief Mohammad Mahfooz Walizada.

With sirens wailing, rescuers rushed to lift the wounded into the backs of pick-up trucks for evacuation.

"Women and children are among them and most of the victims seem to be the civilians," said Abdul Qasim Sangin, head of Parwan's provincial hospital.

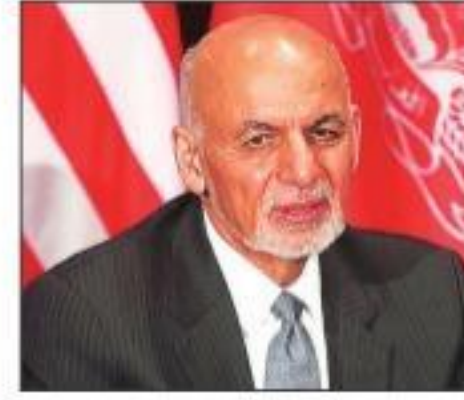
The President was nearby but unharmed, and later took to Twitter to condemn the bomb-

ing at the rally.

"Taliban tried to break this unity by targeting innocent civilians," he wrote. "They shamelessly accepted responsibility at a time when they're cloaking acts of terror as efforts for peace."

In a separate incident, a man on foot blew himself up in the centre of the capital Kabul, sending ambulances and Afghan forces rushing to the blast site.

Twenty-two people were killed, and 38 were wounded, said Rahimi, the interior ministry



(Left) At the site of the attack in Kabul. President Ashraf Ghani (above) said Taliban were "cloaking acts of terror as efforts for peace". Reuters

spokesman. Most of the dead were civilians, including women and children, though six were security force members.

The Taliban said it carried out the two attacks, and a statement issued by a spokesman for the insurgents said they were aimed at security forces.

"People were given warning," the statement said, adding, "Do not take part in the puppet administration's election rallies, because all such gatherings are our military target."

EXPLAINED

Violence worsens amid failed talks, upcoming polls

DURING PEACE talks with the US, the Taliban had stepped up attacks in Afghanistan in a bid to gain leverage in the negotiations. Now, with the US calling off the talks, the Taliban have publicly declared that there will be even more strikes. The group considers the Afghan government a US puppet, and after the collapse of the talks, it's likely the Taliban will hit more government targets. They have also warned that election rallies will be targeted. Taliban have denounced the twice-delayed presidential election, and told civilians to stay away from rallies.



The Gwadar port is part of CPEC. Reuters

Chinese envoy to Pakistan: CPEC has entered second phase

SAJJAD HUSSAIN
ISLAMABAD, SEPTEMBER 17

CHINESE AMBASSADOR to Pakistan Yao Jing has said that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has entered the second phase after completion of key projects in the first stage.

The envoy, while addressing the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) on Monday, said that the CPEC projects in energy and infrastructure sectors have either been completed or are near completion, the *Express Tribune* reported.

Completion of phase-I of CPEC had set a strong foundation for the second phase, which would focus on the development of Special Economic Zones (SEZ), strengthening trade and cultural ties through joint ventures and exchange of delegations, he said.

"CPEC is a unique model of connectivity, trade, and development, which is an important part of the Belt and Road initiative," Yao added.

The CPEC, launched in 2015, is the flagship project of the multi-billion-dollar Border and Road Initiative (BRI) launched by President Xi that aims to link Southeast Asia, Central Asia, the Gulf region, Africa and Europe with a network of land and sea routes. PTI

Hindu student found dead in hostel in Pak, kin demand probe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KARACHI, SEPTEMBER 17

A PAKISTANI Hindu dental college student was found dead in mysterious circumstances in her hostel room in Sindh province with a rope tied to her neck, prompting her family to demand a transparent probe, according to media reports on Tuesday.

Namrita Chandni, a final-year student of Bibi Asifa Dental College in Larkana district and a social activist, was found lying on a cot by her friends on Monday with a rope tied to her neck. Her room locked from inside, the *Express Tribune* reported.

Chandni belonged to Ghotki, the district which was in the news since Sunday after three cases against 218 rioters were filed for vandalising properties, including a Hindu temple.

Police is yet to ascertain whether the girl committed suicide or was murdered.

Chandni's brother and uncle demanded an investigation into her death, saying it is unlikely that she committed suicide.

Iran's Khamenei rules out talks with US

PARISA HAFEZI & STEVE HOLLAND
DUBAI, WASHINGTON, SEPTEMBER 17

IRAN'S SUPREME Leader on Tuesday ruled out talks with Washington after President Donald Trump blamed Tehran for an attack on Saudi oil facilities that knocked out half the kingdom's output.

Trump said on Monday that it looked like Iran was behind the weekend strike at the heart of the Saudi oil industry, which cut 5% of global production, but stressed he did not want to go to war. Iran denied it was to blame.

"Iranian officials, at any level, will never talk to American officials... this is part of their policy to put pressure on Iran," Iranian state TV quoted Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as saying.



Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei gives a speech in Tehran on Tuesday. Reuters

He said talks could only take place if the United States returned to a nuclear accord between Iran and the West that Trump abandoned last year.

US-Iran relations deteriorated after Trump quit the accord and

reimposed sanctions over Tehran's nuclear and ballistic programmes. He also wants Iran to stop supporting regional proxies, including Yemen's Houthi group, which has claimed responsibility for the attack. REUTERS

Saudi oil attack launched from Iran: US official

Washington: The United States has concluded the weekend attack on Saudi oil facilities was launched from Iranian soil and cruise missiles were involved, a US official said on Tuesday.

The official, who declined to be identified, said the United States was gathering evidence about the attack to present to the international community, notably European allies, at the UN General Assembly next week.

Asked if Washington was certain that the missiles had been launched from Iranian soil, the official answered: "Yes".

The hit on Abqaiq and Khurais oil field in Saudi Arabia have roiled global energy markets. PTI

Israelis vote in unprecedented repeat election centred on PM Netanyahu

ARON HELLER
JERUSALEM, SEPTEMBER 17

ISRAELIS VOTE Tuesday in an unprecedented repeat election that will decide whether longtime Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stays in power despite a looming indictment on corruption charges.

Netanyahu, the longest serving leader in Israeli history, is seeking a fourth consecutive term in office, and fifth overall. But he faces a stiff challenge from retired military chief Benny Gantz, whose centrist Blue and White party is running even with Netanyahu's Likud. Both parties could struggle to form a majority coalition with smaller allies, though, forcing them into a potential unity government.

Netanyahu has tried to por-



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his wife Sarah cast their votes in Jerusalem on Tuesday. AP

tray himself as a seasoned statesman who is uniquely qualified to lead the country through challenging times. Gantz has tried to paint Netanyahu as divisive and scandal-plagued, offering himself as a calming influence and

an honest alternative.

Netanyahu appeared poised to remain in office after the April elections, with his traditional allies of nationalist and ultra-religious Jewish parties controlling a parliamentary majority.

But Avigdor Lieberman, his mercurial ally-turned-rival, refused to join the new coalition.

Without a parliamentary majority, Netanyahu dissolved Parliament and called a new election. AP

ELECTION WITH BROAD IMPLICATIONS

■ During the election campaign, Netanyahu has promised to annex large parts of West Bank if re-elected. This is a move that many consider will end the possibility of a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict.

■ Netanyahu is also facing multiple corruption cases. He has been pushing a Bill that would give him immunity while he is in office. So far, he has not had enough support in Parliament to pass the Bill. However, a comprehensive victory in these elections could give him the numbers needed to fend off the cases.

MICHAEL HOLDEN
LONDON, SEPTEMBER 17

BORIS JOHNSON could recall Parliament if Britain's highest court rules he unlawfully suspended it, a government lawyer said on Tuesday, after judges heard the Prime Minister wanted a shutdown because it was an obstacle to his Brexit plans.

Johnson announced on August 28 that he had asked Queen Elizabeth to prorogue, or suspend, Parliament for five weeks from last week until October 14. He said the shutdown was necessary to allow him to introduce a new legislative agenda.

Opponents said the real reason was to prevent scrutiny and challenges by Parliament — where he now has no majority — to his Brexit policy, especially his promise to leave the European Union by October 31 even if no divorce deal has been agreed.

They want the Supreme Court, the United Kingdom's highest judicial body, to rule Johnson's actions were illegal. Critics, including rebels thrown



Boris Johnson suspended Parliament for five weeks ahead of Brexit. Reuters

out of his Conservative Party over Brexit, say he should resign if that is its decision.

"The consequence (of his advice to the monarch being ruled unlawful) could be that he goes to the queen and seeks the recall of parliament," Richard Keen, the government's chief law officer in Scotland, told the court.

However, Keen was unable to rule out that Johnson might then look to suspend Parliament again.

All 11 judges on the Supreme Court will now decide on a crucial question: how far Britain's unwritten constitution limits the power of the Prime Minister and whether Johnson's advice to the queen was therefore illegal. REUTERS

KHALID HAMEED WAS KILLED BY A STUDENT WHO CLAIMED THE PROFESSOR INSULTED ISLAM

The killing of a professor sends a chill through a campus in Pakistan

BEN FARMER
BAHAWALPUR, SEPTEMBER 17

PROFESSOR KHALID Hameed's devotion to teaching often led him to arrive early for work, and the day he was killed was no different.

Hameed, a senior English lecturer at Government Sadiq Egerton College in the Pakistani city of Bahawalpur, parked at about 8 am on March 20, signed the staff room register, unlocked his office and walked in. His killer came up from behind, hitting him in the head with a heavy padlock and stabbing him sev-

eral times. Hameed, 59, who was six months from retirement, died immediately.

One of his students, Khateeb Hussain, was detained by police. In a video of his interrogation, Hussain said he killed Hameed — a devout Muslim, according to his family — because he had insulted Islam. Six months later, no charges have been brought against Hussain, or against a preacher from Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan, a hard-line Islamic group, who police say incited him to kill.

The killing has devastated Hameed's family and chilled his

colleagues at Sadiq Egerton College. They see it as a horrifying new chapter in a campaign against liberal education, which small but influential extremist groups in Pakistan consider unacceptable. Many of the teachers are now wary of speaking freely to their students.

"Actually, this teacher was a symbol of all liberal education," said Irshad Ahmad Tabasum, an associate professor in Hameed's department.

Tabasum and some of his colleagues stressed that Hameed was no provocative liberal firebrand, just a dedicated, well-liked



Khalid Hameed was a devout Muslim, his family said

teacher. They said the college had not previously had trouble with religious extremists and they were at a loss to explain what

could have motivated the killer.

A day before Hameed's death, anonymous pamphlets were distributed that called for banning a campus gathering that he was coordinating. The pamphlets claimed, wrongly, that men and women there would be allowed to dance together. But investigators said Hussain was not behind the pamphlets and teachers at the college doubt there is a connection.

In the video of his interrogation, Hussain — who had been pursuing a degree in English literature — said Hameed "used to bark against Islam and utter derogatory remarks every day".

But he did not cite any specific comment that angered him.

Like English literature classes around the world, Hameed's roamed across broad themes in philosophy, history, religion and politics, his colleagues say. They resent speculation about what he might have said that enraged Hussain, seeing it as an attempt to find justification, or at least sense, in his killing.

But they also say that the shock of the killing has made them wonder about their own teaching — and that they have started to skirt potentially contentious subjects.

"For the last 25 years, I have never felt the pressure as I am feeling now," Tabasum said. He said he had long taught "Oedipus Rex" in his classes on Greek tragedy but was now worried about doing so.

"Because every single word can create a problem for you," he said. "This is what has been inculcated in me after this incident. Before that, whatever I felt, I expressed that."

Teachers have found themselves reluctant to let classroom discussions get too philosophical, said Mahmood Ahmed Shaheen, an assistant professor at Sadiq

Egerton. "Obviously it is a fact, when such incidents happen, they affect our sensibilities, they affect our perception," he said. "We feel a bit insecure when you are studying and discussing something in class, and particularly if it is related to religion."

Such fears have spread well beyond Bahawalpur, a conservative city 380 miles southeast of Islamabad, the capital. "I think that it would be wrong and foolish to think that such terrible incidents could only happen elsewhere," said Shaista Sonnu Sirajuddin, a former professor at the University of Punjab in Lahore. NYT