

## Kate and William's police convoy hits UK pensioner

London, United Kingdom

An 83-year-old woman was in a serious condition in a British hospital on Wednesday after being hit by a motorbike in the convoy carrying Prince William and his wife Kate.

The royal couple were travelling from their central London home to Windsor, west of the capital, on Monday when a police outrider collided with the pensioner.

Kensington Palace said they were "deeply concerned and saddened" and had contacted the woman, identified as "Irene".

"Their Royal Highnesses have sent their very best wishes to Irene and her family and will stay in touch throughout every stage of her recovery," the palace said.

The couple were reported to have sent flowers to the woman, who is in a serious but stable condition, with The Sun tabloid reporting she sustained



Representative picture

a broken pelvis.

A witness told the paper the "bike hit her and she spun round, off her feet and fell badly on the floor".

"The officer (driving) was devastated. But he was going on the wrong side of the road."

The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) said it was investigating the collision "in line with procedure".

William's grandfather Prince Philip, the husband of Queen Elizabeth II, was involved in a car accident in January, injuring two women when he drove into their vehicle.

## South Korea to send 50,000 tonnes of rice to North

Seoul, South Korea

South Korea said yesterday it will send 50,000 tonnes of rice to North Korea via the World Food Programme to help the country cope with a severe food shortage.

The isolated, impoverished North -- which is under several sets of sanctions over its nuclear weapon and ballistic missile programmes -- has

long struggled to feed itself and suffers chronic food shortages.

"The government cannot ignore the plight among North Korean people," said Seoul's unification ministry, which handles inter-Korean relations. It will be the first time the South has provided food aid to the North since 2010, when it sent 5,000 tonnes of rice across the border.

## Esper new Pentagon chief



Mark Esper, chosen by Donald Trump as new acting Pentagon chief, is close to top US diplomat Mike Pompeo, with whom he studied at the prestigious West Point military academy

Washington

Secretary of the Army Mark Esper, who was chosen by President Donald Trump to be the new acting Pentagon chief, is a former military man who moved to the defense industry.

"I know Mark, and have no doubt he will do a fantastic job!" Trump wrote in a tweet announcing his appointment.

Unlike his predecessor in the post, who had no military experience, 55-year-old Esper who served in the 1991 Gulf War. He was part of the famous 101st Airborne Division of the US Army, which was recently honored at the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the D-Day landings at Normandy. He is also close to top US diplomat Mike Pompeo, with whom he studied at the prestigious West Point military academy. Both men graduated

in the same year, 1986.

And Esper is familiar with the US Congress, having advised several senators, including Chuck Hagel, who later became secretary of defense.

Esper had been a senior executive of the Raytheon defense firm for seven years when he was tapped by Trump to be the secretary of the army in 2017.

Since then, the reserved man, who is married with three grown children, has been tirelessly combing American universities to recruit young people for increasingly technological Army jobs. He has also been in charge of equipping and training the US Army.

Esper's name had been circulating as a potential replacement for former Marine general Jim Mattis after his resignation as secretary of defense in December.

# Trump launches 2020 reelection campaign

Orlando

President Donald Trump launched his 2020 reelection campaign Tuesday, whipping up a crowd of at least 20,000 with a nationalist boast about the US economy being the "envy" of the world and warning that opposition Democrats want to "destroy" the country.

Promising the packed arena in Orlando, Florida an "earthquake at the ballot box," Trump said: "We did it once and we're going to do it again -- and this time we're going to finish the job."

"Our economy is the envy of the world," boomed the US leader, who is betting that strong job growth will help persuade the country to give him a second term.

"We are going to keep America great again," Trump told the crowd. "Oh we will keep it so great. Better than ever before."

"And that is why tonight I stand before you to officially launch my campaign for a second term as president of the United States."

Striking a darker note, Trump repeatedly encouraged the crowd to boo journalists covering the event, calling them "fake news."

The Republican then turned on the Democrats, accusing them of seeking to "rip your country apart."

"Our radical Democrat opponents are driven by hatred, prejudice and rage. They want to destroy you and they want to destroy our country as we know it," he said to roars of boos. "Not acceptable. It's not going to happen."

Even if dismal early poll numbers show he faces a difficult race, Trump goes into the reelection fight buoyed by soaring GDP, low unemployment, and confidence in the fierce loyalty of his right-wing base.

Trump -- himself accused by

opponents of wide-ranging corruption -- told the crowd that together they had formed "a great political movement" that had "stared down a broken and corrupt political establishment."

### Key state for victory

Supporters lined Orlando's downtown sidewalks all day, waiting in tents and chairs overnight to be the first in the door.

"This is a historic event, we

would not miss this for anything," one fan, David Meloney, told AFP.

Florida will be one of the key swing states in 2020 if Trump is to defeat the nominee chosen from a field of 23 Democratic hopefuls.

And ahead of the rally, he pushed several of the core issues in his populist, nationalist platform.

In a tweet early Tuesday, he attacked the European Union

for what he says is currency manipulation making it "unfairly easier" for the US ally when it comes to trade.

Another of his biggest focuses was illegal immigration.

This is a theme he has hammered repeatedly during his presidency and he is ramping this up further with an announcement Tuesday on Twitter that he wants the deportation of "millions of illegal aliens."

**Kamala Harris**  
Aged 54  
Senator and ex-state attorney general

**Elisabeth Warren** Aged 69  
Senator

**Bernie Sanders**  
Aged 77  
Independent senator

**Pete Buttigieg**  
Aged 37  
Mayor of South Bend (Indiana)

**Joe Biden** Aged 77  
Vice-president to Barack Obama

**Democrats**  
23 candidates

**Republicans**  
Donald Trump  
Aged 73

**Beto O'Rourke**  
Aged 46  
Former member of Congress (Texas)

**2020 battle for the White House**

**Timetable**

- ▶ Feb 3, 2020  
Start of primaries: Iowa caucuses
- ▶ March 3  
Super Tuesday
- ▶ July 13-16  
Democratic Party convention Milwaukee (Wisconsin)
- ▶ Aug 24-27  
Republican Party convention Charlotte (N. Carolina)
- ▶ Nov 3  
Presidential election

With around 500 days to go to the election, nationwide opinion polls point to a Trump defeat

But in 2016, it only took victories in a handful of crucial states to hand him the White House

Among the Democratic candidates, Joe Biden is streets ahead of his rivals

Source: AFP Photos

## Chinese worker killed in B'desh construction site clash

● Police said the violence was triggered by the death of a Bangladeshi worker

● The presence of large numbers of Chinese workers has caused some tensions with locals

Dhaka

Hundreds of Chinese and Bangladeshi labourers clashed at the site of power plant being built south of Dhaka, police said yesterday, leaving a Chinese worker dead and more than a dozen others injured.

Police said the violence was triggered by the death of a Bangladeshi worker at the site of a China-funded 1,320-megawatt plant, prompting locals to accuse the Chinese of trying to cover up the incident.



Representative picture

At one point, hundreds of Bangladeshi and Chinese workers were fighting at the site -- about 200 kilometres (125 miles) south of the capital -- and more than a dozen were injured, including six Chinese who were taken to hospital.

"One of the Chinese workers later died in the hospital. He had injuries to his head," local police chief Monirul Islam told AFP, adding it took over 1,000 policemen to restore calm.

China is a close ally of Bangladesh, and Chinese state-run and private firms have invested billions of dollars in the South Asian country's infrastructure projects -- mostly in power, energy and transport sectors.

The presence of large numbers of Chinese workers in Bangladesh, as in other countries where Beijing is investing heavily, has caused some tensions with locals, and officials

said similar clashes occurred a year ago.

Police said more than 6,000 people -- including some 2,000 from China -- work at the power plant site.

Regional administrator Ram Chandra Das told AFP that authorities have ordered a probe into the incident.

"The situation is now calm," he said, adding no arrests had been made.

In April 2016, four people were killed after police opened fire on villagers protesting against the construction of two China-backed power plants in southeastern Bangladesh.

In October that year Chinese President Xi Jinping made a historic visit to Bangladesh and the two countries signed \$20 billion worth of loan agreements.

The latest clashes come just weeks before Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is to visit Beijing.

China's investments in Bangladesh are part of Xi's signature Belt and Road Initiative.