

WORLD

With Trump, Modi set to fire up Houston rally

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● Trump has also agreed to attend

Reuters | New Delhi/Mumbai

With US President Donald Trump by his side, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will seek to fire up thousands of Indian-American supporters at a rally in Texas on Sunday.

Modi is travelling to the United States to speak at the UN General Assembly. Before travelling to the United Nations headquarters in New York, Modi will address a rally at a stadium in Houston that Trump has also agreed to attend.

“The special gesture of President @realDonaldTrump to join us in Houston highlights the strength of the relationship and recognition of the contribution of the Indian community to American society and economy,” Modi said in a Tweet.

Though there have been recent tensions between Wash-



US President Donald Trump meets Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi for bilateral talks during the G7 summit in Biarritz, France. - Reuters

ington and New Delhi over trade and tariffs, the two men have shown a warm personal rapport at previous meetings.

About 50,000 people have registered for the “Howdy, Modi” community event, at which Trump will also speak, the big-

gest crowd that the Indian leader has drawn after a rock-show like rally at New York’s Madison Square Garden in 2014.

Vijay Chauthaiwale, the chief of the BJP’s foreign affairs department, said from Houston that Trump’s decision to attend

the event was a surprise, but testified to the power of the US Indian community as well as the importance Trump attached to bilateral ties, despite recent trade frictions.

“The strategic relationship is stronger,” he said.

Diplomatic victory

Modi’s supporters say he has won a diplomatic victory by getting Trump on his side.

“They’ve developed quite a good camaraderie between them, leaders of the two most influential democracies on earth,” said Shalab Kumar, an Indian-American businessman who founded the Republican Hindu Coalition, modelled on the Republican Jewish Coalition, in 2015.

“They’re finally coming together on one stage, that’s great particularly after abrogation (of Kashmir’s special status). This is probably the biggest endorsement of the United States to Modi, that the move was the correct move.”

In a statement confirming Trump’s attendance in Houston, the White House said the president would discuss with Modi ways to deepen the two countries’ energy and trade relationship.

South Korea serial killer suspect identified after 33 years

Seoul

South Korean police have identified a suspect in one of the country’s most notorious serial murder cases more than 30 years after the first of the 10 killings, they said yesterday.

Between 1986 and 1991 a record number of police officers for a single case were mobilised to try to find the person who raped and murdered women in rural parts of Hwaseong, south of Seoul.

They investigated some



More than two million police officers were mobilised

21,000 individuals and compared the fingerprints of around 20,000 more without success,

and the case inspired South Korean filmmaker Bong Joon-ho’s 2003 box office hit “Memories of Murder”.

But using the latest forensic techniques to retrieve DNA from long-past crimes officers have identified Lee Chun-jae, 56, as a suspect in at least three of the killings, said Ban Gi-soo of the Gyeonggi Nambu Provincial Police Agency.

Samples collected from evidence including a victim’s underwear matched with Lee’s,

the police said.

The suspect is currently serving a life sentence for raping and murdering his sister-in-law in 1994, but denies involvement in the Hwaseong murders and the statute of limitations has expired, meaning he will not be prosecuted, police added.

“I express my deep condolences to the victims and their families, as well as the Korean public, for not having been able to solve this case for a long time,” Ban told reporters.

Thieves nab 2m euro haul from French chateau

Bobigny | France

The owners of a 17th-century French palace said to be the model for Versailles were tied up as their opulent home was ransacked yesterday by robbers who fled with a haul worth two million euros (\$2.2 million), police said.

The Vaux-le-Vicomte chateau, set amid sumptuous gardens about 50 kilometres (30 miles) southeast of Paris, has been owned by the same family since 1875.

A police source said six hooded but unarmed robbers found neckties belonging to Patrice de Vogue, 90, to tie up him and his wife Cristina, 78, in their lodging on the grounds of the palace.

The thieves targeted a safe and stole emeralds and other items, but did not attempt to make off with the chateau’s works of art.



The Vaux-le-Vicomte palace, set amid sumptuous gardens about 50 kilometres (30 miles) southeast of Paris, has been owned by the same family since 1875.

The couple was not injured during the robbery, which occurred shortly before dawn, according to prosecutors in the nearby city of Melun.

“The owners are doing fine and the chateau remains open for visits as usual,” the palace’s

management said.

Patrice de Vogue opened the estate to the public in 1968, and it is now run by the couple’s three sons.

The chateau was built by Louis XIV’s finance minister Nicolas Fouquet, who according to

legend fell from grace in 1661, shortly after the building work was finished, when he staged an elaborate party there and aroused the Sun King’s envy.

Fouquet spent the rest of his life in jail. The monarch then seized the palace and moved its most precious artworks and other objects to Versailles.

It is the largest privately owned heritage site in France, sprawled over 500 hectares (1,200 acres), and has some 250,000 visitors each year.

The chateau often stands in for Versailles for movie and television productions, from the Roger Moore Bond hit “Moonraker” to Sofia Coppola’s “Marie Antoinette”.

It has become a prize spot for celebrity wedding parties, such as the lavish 2007 bash for French basketball star Tony Parker and “Desperate Housewives” star Eva Longoria.

At least 10 killed in car bomb attack in southern Afghanistan

Kabul

The Taliban killed at least 10 people and wounded 90 Thursday after a car bomb targeting an intelligence services building exploded and destroyed a nearby hospital in the southern Afghan city of Qalat, the governor of Zabul province said.

The blast in Zabul was just the latest in a string of deadly Taliban bombings across Afghanistan this week as violence intensifies after US President Donald Trump abruptly ended talks with the insurgents over an American withdrawal from the country.

“This morning a car bomb targeted the NDS (National Directorate of Security) in Qalat of Zabul. The regional hospital



of Zabul was also located there and has been destroyed,” said governor Rahmatullah Yarmal. Atta Jan Haqbayan, the head of Zabul’s provincial council, gave a higher death toll, saying 20 people had been killed in the attack and another 90 wounded. The bombing was later claimed by a Taliban spokesman.

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