



**NEARBY**  
**Students gherao JNU V-C's house**

NEW DELHI  
 Jawaharlal Nehru University Vice-Chancellor M. Jagadesh Kumar alleged on Monday that protesting students forcibly entered his house and confined his wife inside for several hours.

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**DMRC employee found dead at Metro Bhawan**

NEW DELHI  
 The body of a 33-year-old DMRC employee was found in the basement of Metro Bhawan on Monday. The police suspect the employee died by suicide.

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**AIIMS Trauma Centre suspends admissions**

NEW DELHI  
 Admission of patients to the emergency department of the AIIMS Trauma Centre in Delhi is likely to be suspended for over a month after Sunday's blaze rendered the operation theatre complex non-functional.

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# Why not increase the VVPAT count, asks SC

Random checking working fine, says EC official

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
 NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court said on Monday that it was in favour of increasing the random physical verification of Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) in the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections, though the idea was met with stiff resistance from the Election Commission.

Deputy Election Commissioner Sudeep Jain said the current practice of physically checking the VVPAT paper slips of one randomly selected polling station in an Assembly constituency and each Assembly segment in the case of the Lok Sabha election was "all that is needed." There was no need whatsoever to extend the physical count of VVPATs.

**'Based on data'**  
 Mr. Jain told a Bench of Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi and Justice Deepak Gupta that VVPATs were "working absolutely right" and everything that the ECI did was based on expert statistical data. He said the Election Commission, on its own, constantly bettered its parameters.

A visibly annoyed Justice Gogoi responded to Mr. Jain's comments, asking him why the EC had not introduced VVPATs on its own af-

**No institution, however high, including the judiciary, should insulate itself from improvements...**  
 We are only asking you (Election Commission) to do a little more for the sake of purity of the elections. We would like you to increase the physical counting. This is not about casting aspersions on you, but this is a question of satisfaction. Anyway, two is better than one, is it not?  
 RANJAN GOGOI  
 Chief Justice of India

**We believe it is not required. Statistical data and expert views back everything we do. Now this is working absolutely right... But still we look to constantly improve our parameters**  
 SUDEEP JAIN  
 Deputy Election Commissioner

ter introspecting on its parameters. "It was the judges of this court that pushed you into introducing the VVPATs in the first place. If you are so conscious of improving your parameters, why did you not take the first step to introduce VVPATs in elections? Why did the judges of this court have to think for you?" Justice Gogoi said.

**Swamy case**  
 In 2013, in the Subramanian Swamy case, the Supreme Court held that the paper trail through VVPAT of votes cast was an indispensable requirement of free and fair elections.

"You [Mr. Jain] may not

have been in the Election Commission at the time, but do you know how much of opposition the Supreme Court had to face from the Election Commission to bring in VVPATs?" Justice Gogoi asked.

The Chief Justice said, "No institution, however high, including the judiciary, should insulate itself from improvements."

The court directed the Election Commission to file an affidavit by Thursday, explaining why it seemed to be "fully satisfied" with restricting the counting of VVPATs to one polling station.

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# Goyals step down from Jet board

Banks assume control of cash-strapped airline, to look for new investors

LALATENDU MISHRA  
 MANOJIT SAHA  
 MUMBAI

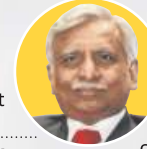
Ending a nearly two month-long struggle to remain in control, Jet Airways' power couple Naresh Goyal and his spouse Anita on Monday resigned as directors from the board of the company.

Their exit paves the way for recapitalisation of the financially challenged airline through a resolution plan.

The resignations of Mr. and Mrs. Goyal were accepted at a hurriedly convened board meeting here. Mr. Goyal, a former travel agent who founded Jet Airways in 1993, also ceased to be the chairman of the company, ending his 25-year tenure at the helm. Another director Kevin Knight, who represented Etihad Airways on Jet's board, has also resigned.

**Turbulence in the air**

- Reports of cash flow problems emerge in August 2018 as airline defers board meet on Q1 results
- Rating agency ICRA downgrades its long-term loans
- Jet posts fourth straight quarterly loss as in Dec. 2018
- Salaries to senior executives and pilots remain unpaid



- Servicing of loans delayed
- 60 aircraft grounded, mostly due to non-payment of dues to lessors
- On March 25, 2019, company's board approves issue of 11.4 crore equity shares to lenders upon conversion of ₹1 of outstanding debt
- Resignations of founder-chairman Naresh Goyal & wife Anita accepted
- Banks to infuse ₹1,500 crore, by way of debt, as immediate funding support



The future role of Etihad in the Indian carrier remains unclear.

With Monday's resignations and following a fresh board approval, the banks will soon take charge of the

airline with a 50.1% stake. Following this, Mr. Goyal's holding will reduce by half from 51% to 25.5%, Etihad Airways' from 24% to 12% and public shareholding from 25% to 12.5%. It is learnt

that Mr. Goyal will pledge 16% of his residual stake, resulting in the decline of his effective stake to below 10%.

**New investor**  
 According to sources, the lenders will invite an Expression of Interest (EoI) for on-boarding of a new investor on April 9. Binding bids will be invited by April 30, and the stake sale process is expected to be completed by May-end.

Jet Airways' lenders, led by the State Bank of India, are being issued 11.4 crore equity shares of the company upon conversion of ₹1 of their outstanding debt. As immediate funding support, the lender consortium will infuse ₹1,500 crore into the carrier by way of debt.

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 STAKE SALE ► PAGE 13

# Garibi Hatao 2.0: Rahul promises to wipe out poverty

**I promise there will be justice for the poor. The Congress guarantees that 20% families belonging to the poorest of the poor category will be given ₹72,000 each annually**  
 RAHUL GANDHI  
 Congress president

**SANDEEP PHUKAN**  
 NEW DELHI  
 Describing it as a 'ground-breaking' promise and a final assault on poverty, Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Monday announced that 20% of the poorest families in the country would be annually given ₹72,000 each under the Nyuntam Aay Yojana (NYAY) or minimum income guarantee scheme, if his party returned to power.

Mr. Gandhi asserted that five crore families and 25 crore people would be lifted out of poverty under NYAY – the acronym suggested by Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi-Vadra to convey a sense of 'justice' for the poor.

"This is a ground breaking idea, and it is a historic day. Final assault on poverty has begun. We will wipe out poverty from the country," Mr.

Gandhi said at a press conference after a Congress Working Committee meeting that reviewed the manifesto. "I promise there will be justice for the poor. The Congress guarantees that 20% families belonging to the poorest of the poor category will be given ₹72,000 each annually," he added.

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 A BLUFF: JAITLEY ► PAGE 10

## Cutting a path



**Mission Rohtang:** The Border Roads Organisation removes snow from the Manali-Leh Highway, in Manali, on Monday. Five BRO teams have been deployed to clear snow on the highway. ■ ANI

# Kalyan Singh faces flak over remarks backing Modi

Congress accuses Rajasthan Governor of violating dignity of Constitutional office

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
 JAIPUR

Rajasthan Governor Kalyan Singh on Monday found himself in the middle of a controversy after his remarks supporting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's return to power in the Lok Sabha election came to light through a video footage.

The video purportedly showed Mr. Singh telling reporters that the nation and society needed Mr. Modi to become the PM again.

"All of us are BJP workers. We genuinely want the BJP to win. We want that Modiji should become the Prime Minister... It is necessary for the nation and so-



Kalyan Singh

Pradesh, apparently made the remarks in the midst of a protest staged by some BJP workers outside his house against the party ticket for the Lok Sabha polls being given to sitting MP Satish Gautam.

**Non-partisan position**  
 Mr. Singh's remarks drew criticism from various quarters, with leaders reminding him that a Governor should be non-partisan and should maintain distance from party politics.

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said Mr. Singh's statements did not suit the dignity of the post he was holding. "We have utmost

respect for Kalyan Singhji... He is holding a [high] Constitutional post. It is expected of the Governors to be non-partisan," he said.

Rajasthan Pradesh Congress president and Deputy CM Sachin Pilot described Mr. Singh's remarks as violating the dignity of his Constitutional office. He said it was unfortunate that Mr. Singh had described himself as a BJP worker.

Mr. Singh quit the BJP in 1999 and rejoined the party in 2004. The 87-year-old BJP leader was appointed Rajasthan Governor in 2014 after Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to power at the Centre.

## AI withdraws boarding pass with photos of PM, Rupani

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
 NEW DELHI

Air India on Monday was forced to withdraw its boarding passes carrying an advertisement featuring Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani following criticism on social media.

Earlier in the day, a passenger shared photos of his boarding pass for travel on March 25 on Twitter and wrote, "my Air India boarding pass prominently flashes Narendra Modi, Vibrant Gujarat & Vijay Rupani... Wonder why we are wasting public money on this Election Commission (sic)."

Following an uproar over the violation of the model code of conduct, the airline said it was "rolling back" the boarding passes.

It didn't divulge the name of the advertiser, but said it found the ad was flouting the code. Airlines carry advertisements given by third parties to augment their non-fare revenue.

The Vibrant Gujarat Summit of the State government was held in Gandhinagar from January 18 to 20, but the boarding passes carrying the ad continued to be in use across Air India's network.

Following the controversy, National Conference leader Omar Abdullah tweeted about a similar experience with GoAir. "I was on a GoAir flight yesterday & also had a similar boarding pass with the PM's photo on it," he wrote.

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## SC to consider AAP govt.'s plea on services

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
 NEW DELHI

The AAP government on Monday moved the Supreme Court seeking constitution of a larger Bench to expeditiously decide the issue of control over administrative services in Delhi.

A Bench headed by Chief

Justice Ranjan Gogoi told the Delhi government's counsel that it will look into the matter.

The apex court had on February 14 referred the issue of control of services to a larger Bench after delivering a split verdict. The two-judge Bench had said the

Centre should have the final word on posting and transfer of bureaucrats in Delhi's administration, but their disagreement on finer details resulted in a split verdict and the matter got referred to a larger Bench.

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