

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

MAHARASHTRA: A FAILURE OF INSTITUTIONS
BY SUHAS PALSHIKAR
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SENA, NCP & CONG PARADE MLAs, BJP SAYS ONLY HOUSE TEST MATTERS

We are 162: Show of strength by Opp alliance — on floor of a Mumbai hotel

His MLAs fearful of Ajit whip, Pawar says not one of them will be disqualified

VISHWAS WAGHMODE & ZEESHAN SHAIKH
MUMBAI, NOVEMBER 25

HOURS AFTER the Supreme Court said it would rule Tuesday on their pleas for an immediate floor test in the Maharashtra Assembly, the combine of Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress held a show of strength Monday evening at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Mumbai, parading MLAs and claiming they had 162 on their side in a House of 288.

With their petitions in the Supreme Court challenging Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari's Saturday decision to swear in Devendra Fadnis of BJP as Chief Minister and Ajit Pawar of NCP as the Deputy Chief Minister, the three parties went to Raj Bhavan Monday morning and submitted a letter with signatures of 162 MLAs, claiming they had the required numbers to form a government in Maharashtra.

The letter was signed by legislature party leaders Eknath Shinde (Shiv Sena), Jayant Patil (newly-elected by NCP on Saturday) and Balasaheb Thorat (Congress).

The three parties claimed that 162 MLAs were present at the hotel gathering with NCP chief Sharad Pawar, Shiv Sena Chief Uddhav Thackeray and Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge and Ashok Chavan.

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Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress leaders with their MLAs at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Mumbai on Monday. Prashant Nadkar

Combine seeks immediate floor test, SC to rule today

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 25

AS THE Shiv Sena-NCP-Congress combine dared the BJP to prove its strength and urged the Supreme Court to order an immediate floor test in Maharashtra, and the Chief Minister and Raj Bhavan sought more time, the top court reserved its order Monday, saying it will announce its decision Tuesday morning.

Hearing pleas by the Sena-NCP-Congress combine, Justice N V Ramana, heading the bench

also comprising Justices Ashok Bhushan and Sanjiv Khanna, said: "The question today is whether the Chief Minister enjoys the majority of the House." He made this remark when senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis and some BJP MLAs, said the situation in Maharashtra was "quite different from Karnataka" where the Supreme Court had asked the BS Yediyurappa government to prove its majority on the floor of the House in 48 hours.

Rohatgi maintained that "the

ACB closes 9 probes, draws fire, says not linked to Ajit

SAGAR RAJPUT & MOHAMED THAYER
MUMBAI, NOVEMBER 25

THE ANTI Corruption Bureau (ACB) Monday closed nine "open enquiries" in connection with the alleged multi-crore irrigation scam, but denied this was done to give a "clean chit" to Deputy Chief Minister and NCP leader Ajit Pawar with whose support a BJP-led government was sworn in last Saturday.

The recommendation to close the nine enquiries was

EXPLAINED
Adding fuel to firestorm

THE ACB never named Ajit Pawar in any of its FIRs in the irrigation scandal, but its former chief did tell the HC that the NCP leader intervened in the award of contracts. The ACB move to shut 9 enquiries has added fuel to the political firestorm in Maharashtra.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



EXPLAINED



SIMPLY PUT
WHAT NOW IN MAHARASHTRA?
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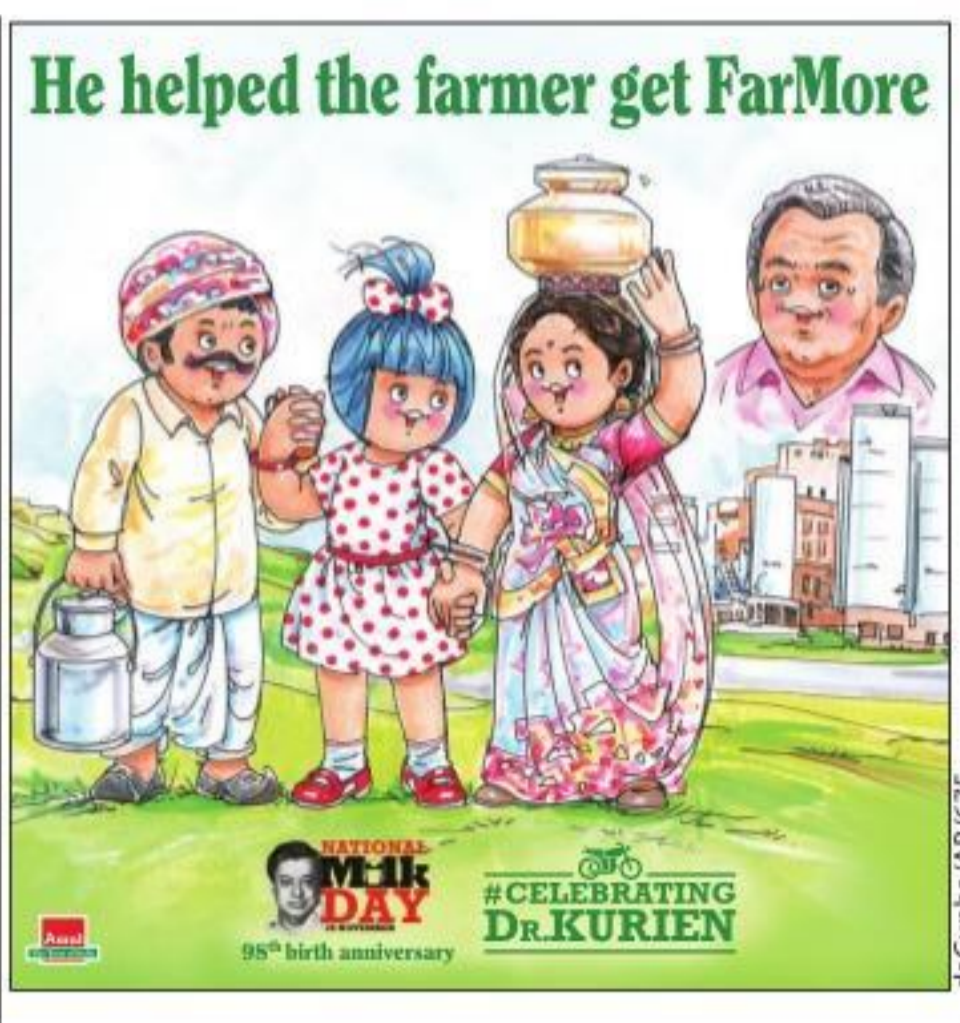
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CONSTITUTION DAY: OPP MAY SKIP JOINT SITTING OF PARLIAMENT TODAY

PROTESTS IN LOK SABHA AND RAJYA SABHA

BJP LEADERS SAY CONFIDENT OF NUMBERS
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Mamata's counter to NRC: All refugee colonies in Bengal to get land rights

SANTANU CHOWDHURY
KOLKATA, NOVEMBER 25

DAYS AFTER Union Home Minister Amit Shah said in Parliament that the National Register of Citizens (NRC) would be implemented across the country, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced on Monday that attempts would be made to regularise all refugee colonies of up to three acres — on state government, central government as well as private land — and those living in these colonies would be given land rights.

Her move comes amid the Centre's attempt to pass the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill in the ongoing Winter Session of Parliament.

"We have decided to regularise all the refugee settlements, solely because it has been a long time now — nearly 50 years. Since (March) 1971, they have been left hanging without a home or land. I believe refugees have the right," Banerjee told reporters after a Cabinet meeting.

In January, the TMC government had given freehold land rights to residents of 94 refugee colonies which were on state



'Since 1971, they have been without a home or land'

CHANGES IN NEW CITIZENSHIP BILL

New Delhi: The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, slated to be introduced in Parliament, will not be a replica of the last Bill that lapsed with the term of the 16th Lok Sabha, but will have "additional clarifications". A senior MHA official said it will provide some definitions with regard to illegal immigrants and refugees. PAGE 8

government land and had promised the same for another 237 colonies on private and central government land.

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Baghel goes back on paddy MSP promise, blames Centre

DIPANKAR GHOSE
RAIPUR, NOVEMBER 25

THE CONGRESS government in Chhattisgarh has said that it will acquire paddy at the Centre-mandated MSP of just over Rs 1,800 per quintal this season, instead of Rs 2,500 per quintal as promised in its poll manifesto.

However, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel sought to assure farmers that they would get Rs 2,500 per quintal "in their pockets", saying a ministerial sub-committee had been set up to come up with a scheme that is designed to do this. Blaming the Centre, Baghel said it did not respond to repeated petitions to acquire paddy into the central pool despite the proposed higher MSP.

Over the last few months, the

Rajnath, Gadkari and Bachchan at Express 26/11 event today



EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, NOVEMBER 25

UNION MINISTER for Defence Rajnath Singh and Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari will be chief guests at the 26/11 Stories of Strength event hosted by *The Indian Express* at the Gateway of India on Tuesday to mark the 11th anniversary of the Mumbai terror attacks.

In its fourth edition that coincides with the 150th birth anniversary year of Mahatma Gandhi, the event will showcase inspiring stories of courage, for-



Rajnath, Gadkari to be chief guests; Amitabh Bachchan rehearses for the event in Mumbai on Monday. Pradipt Das



giveness and resilience of more than 100 survivors who have been interviewed by *The Indian Express* over the past decade, personal accounts that resonate uncannily with the message of the Mahatma. Anant Goenka, Executive Director, The Indian Express Group, said: "The voices

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JNU panel for partial rollback after UGC okays more funds

RITIKA CHOPRA & ARANYA SHANKAR
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 25

THE UNIVERSITY Grants Commission (UGC) Monday agreed to release Rs 6.41 crore to Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) to help the institution tide over the funds crunch that led to a substantial hike in the hostel fee.

With the regulator agreeing to release more money, the High-Level Committee (HLC) set up by the JNU administration recommended 50% reduction in service and utility charges for all students, from what it had earlier decided. As of now, these elements are not part of the hostel fee.

The HLC also recommended 75% reduction in these charges for Below Poverty Line (BPL) students, the Registrar said in a circular Monday. The revised rates are to be implemented from January 2020.

This makes it clear that the JNU Students' Union's demand for complete rollback of fee hike

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WORLD

HONG KONG: WIN FOR PRO-DEMOCRACY CAMP PAGE 17

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From Santiniketan to Peking University: Artist's decades-old paintings trace India-China links

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

SOWMIYA ASHOK
BEIJING, NOVEMBER 25

INDIA WAS still under British rule when Chang Xiufeng went to Santiniketan in 1947 to study painting under famous Indian artist Nandalal Bose. He remained in India for 14 years, till he was deported in 1961 after being suspected of being a Communist agent and impris-

oned in Darjeeling. "It was very difficult to go to India at the time," said his daughter-in-law, Wang Yizhu, who is the curator of an exhibition of his work that is currently on display at Peking University (PKU). "There were many Chinese people who had emigrated and were living in India at the time. Chang Xiufeng pretended he wanted to work as a teacher in a Chinese Middle School in Kolkata, so that his visa would get approved."

With 2020 marking the 70th year of diplomatic ties between



Chang Xiufeng, his work at Peking University. Wang Yizhu

India and China, 20 of Chang's 60 paintings from his time in India are on display at PKU's library. While some are inspired by the works of his Indian colleagues, his paintings capture Bengali everyday life and pictures of birds and wildlife. The exhibition, titled 'Land of Peace', traces cultural and artistic exchanges between the two countries, highlighting Chang's paintings and his uncle and scholar Chang Renxia's writings from his visit to India.

Guided by the famous painter, Xu Beihong, Chang went

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