

NEARBY



SC rejects review plea of Nirbhaya case convict

NEW DELHI  
The Supreme Court on Wednesday dismissed a petition filed by one of the four convicts in the Nirbhaya gang rape-and-murder case to review its May 5, 2017 judgment confirming his death penalty. The court refused Akshay Singh's plea to grant him three weeks' time to file a mercy petition before the President of India.

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Tharoor wins Akademi's 2019 award for English

NEW DELHI  
The Sahitya Akademi on Wednesday announced its annual literary awards for 2019 for works in 23 languages, including one for Shashi Tharoor's non-fiction book about British rule in India.

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Kejriwal blames opposition for violence

NEW DELHI  
Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal expressed his concern over the law and order situation in the city, accusing "the opposition" for fuelling incidents of violence. City BJP chief Manoj Tiwari challenged the AAP and the Congress for a debate on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

CITY ► PAGE 2

# Tribunal reinstates Mistry as Tata Sons executive chairman

Appellate body rules that decision to remove him from the top post was illegal

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH  
NEW DELHI

Three years after Cyrus Pallonji Mistry was unceremoniously removed from the post of executive chairman of Tata Sons, the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) on Wednesday ruled that the decision was "illegal", paving the way for his reinstatement.

The replacement of the present 'executive chairman' and the reinstatement of Mr. Mistry will, however, come into effect after four weeks, during which Tata Sons has the option to challenge the tribunal's verdict before the Supreme Court.

Additionally, the tribunal clarified that Mr. Mistry will be reinstated as director of 'Tata Companies' with immediate effect.

The tribunal also ordered Ratan N. Tata and the nominee of the "Tata Trusts" to desist from taking any decision in advance which requires a majority decision of the board of directors or in the annual general meeting.

It also declared as illegal the conversion of Tata Sons Limited from a 'public company' to a 'private company' by the Registrar of Companies. The tribunal remarked that the decision to convert the company as private was "prejudicial" and "oppressive"

## Back at the helm

Three years after he was removed as executive chairman of Tata Sons, Cyrus Mistry was reinstated on Wednesday by the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal. Key points from the ruling:



Changed equations: A file photo of Ratan Tata, left, and Cyrus Mistry. • PTI

- NCLAT said resolution passed by the board of directors on October 24, 2016, removing Mistry as executive chairman of Tata Sons was illegal
- Mistry to be reinstated after four weeks, during which time Tata Sons can appeal against

the verdict before the Supreme Court

- Tata Sons ordered to go back from 'private company' to 'public company'
- Ratan Tata and nominees of trusts told to desist from taking any decision in advance

- Told to 'create healthy atmosphere removing the mistrust' between Tata Group and Shapoorji Pallonji Group
- NCLAT said there

was nothing on record to suggest that the board of directors or any of the trusts at any time expressed displeasure about the performance of Mistry

- While the board of directors brought in a motion to remove Mistry on the ground that Tata Trusts had lost confidence in him, none of the purported reasons for his removal was discussed or deliberated

sive" to the minority shareholders, including the Shapoorji Pallonji Group.

FULL COVERAGE: PAGE 15

The Shapoorji Pallonji Group is in business with the Tata Group, i.e. Sir Dorabji Tata Trust and Sir Ratan Tata Trust, for more than four decades.

Earlier, Mr. Pallonji Shapoorji Mistry, father of Mr. Cyrus Pallonji Mistry, was appointed as the executive chairman of Tata Sons.

For better protection of the interest of all stakehol-

ders, the tribunal said that in future at the time of appointment of the executive chairman, independent director and directors, the Tata Group, which is the majority group, should consult the minority group – the Shapoorji Pallonji Group.

It also barred Tata Sons from invoking its power under Article 75, which empowers Tata Sons Limited at any time to transfer "ordinary shares" of any of the shareholders, against Mr. Mistry and others.

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## Tata Group likely to move Supreme Court

The Tata Group is likely to move the Supreme Court against the NCLAT judgment to restore Cyrus Mistry as the executive chairman of Tata Sons Ltd. "Tata Sons strongly believes in the strength of its case and will take appropriate legal recourse," said Shuva Mandal, group general counsel, Tata Sons. ► PAGE 15

## Council votes for 28% GST on all lotteries

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ  
NEW DELHI

The GST Council broke its tradition of taking decisions by consensus at its 38th meeting on Wednesday, with a first-time vote on a proposal to tax all lotteries at the uniform rate of 28%. After Kerala pushed for a division, States voted 21-7 in favour of the proposal. There were no proposals or discussion regarding overall GST rate changes at the meeting, said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

A presentation on revenue augmentation made by State and Central officials contained data and projections of revenue collection and compensation cess collection, but did not make any suggestions to increase or cut rates, she said.

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## No stay on Citizenship Act implementation, says SC

Court says it will hear the 59 petitions on January 22

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday refused to stay the implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 2019, which fast-tracks citizenship by naturalisation process for "illegal" migrants from six religious communities, other than Muslims, who have fled persecution from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sharad A. Bobde instead orally suggested to the government to publicise the actual intent of the Act so that there was no confusion among the public about its objectives and aims.

Protests have broken out all over the country since the notification of the Act on December 12.

"There is need to publicise why the Act [CAA] is passed. There is a need for that," Justice Bobde addressed Attorney General K.K. Venugopal for the Centre. "I agree. We will see to it," Mr. Venugopal responded.

### 'Lot of confusion'

The CJI's comments came on a submission by advocate A.K. Upadhyay that there was a lot of confusion in the public mind about the objectives of the amended Citizenship Act.



Protests continue: Students raising slogans outside Jamia Millia Islamia on Wednesday. • SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

The government has maintained that the amendments made to the Citizenship Act of 1955 were meant to protect and welcome religiously persecuted people fleeing the three neighbouring countries, where Muslims form the majority.

The Supreme Court issued a formal notice admitting 59 petitions filed by people from all walks of life and faiths. The court said it would hear the petitions on January 22. This is its last working day before it closes for the winter vacation till January 1.

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## No threat to Muslim citizens: Naqvi

Union Minister for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi on Wednesday said there was no threat to citizenship of any Indian Muslim or any other citizen due to the Citizenship Amendment Act. He said there were many myths around the Act that needed to be busted. "When you speak to people there is a refrain that 'We will get thrown out [of the country]'. That is absolutely untrue, why would anyone throw anyone out and why?" he said. ► PAGE 12

## Prayer for peace



Open again: After a gap of four and a half months, the historic Jamia Masjid in Srinagar was thrown open for the public on Wednesday. • NISSAR AHMAD (REPORT ON PAGE 5)

## Four held guilty in 2008 Jaipur serial blasts case

Quantum of sentence expected today; 71 persons were killed, around 200 injured in the explosions

MOHAMMED IQBAL  
JAIPUR

A special court here on Wednesday convicted four persons of the serial blasts that ripped through the Walled City of Jaipur 11 years ago, killing 71 persons and leaving about 200 injured. One of the five accused, charged with sending an e-mail which claimed responsibility for the blasts on behalf of the Indian Mujahideen, was acquitted.

Those held guilty of planting the bombs and carrying out the explosions on May 13, 2008, were Mohammed Saif, Mohammed Sarwar Azmi,



The van carrying the blast accused in Jaipur on Wednesday. • ROHIT JAIN PARAS

Saifur Rehman and Mohammed Salman. Special Judge Ajay Kumar Sharma

scheduled the hearing on the quantum of sentence for the convicts for Thursday.

Public Prosecutor Sri Chand said the four persons were convicted under various sections of the Indian Penal Code, Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and Explosives Act in eight cases registered by the Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) of Rajasthan police.

### One acquitted

Shahbaz Ahmed, a resident of Lucknow who was the first one to be arrested three months after the blasts, was acquitted in all the cases for want of evidence.

The convicts were bet-

ween 21 and 25 years old at the time of their arrest.

The eight locations targeted in a series of nine synchronised bomb blasts are situated within a 2-km radius in the densely populated Walled City.

The court pronounced the judgment in the presence of the blast accused amid tight security in the Bani Park District Courts Complex. Three accused - Yasin Bhatkal, Asadullah Akhtar, and Mohammed Aariz - are at present lodged in Tihar Jail in Delhi, facing trial in other blast cases.

## Eight held for Seelampur violence

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Eight persons have been arrested in connection with violence that erupted during protests in east Delhi's Seelampur area on Tuesday, police said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (North East) Ved Prakash Surya said that six persons were arrested from the spot on Tuesday while two others were arrested on Wednesday. "They are all locals of

the area and whether they have a criminal background or not is being verified," he said, adding that others have been identified and action will be taken against them. At least 18 people have also been taken in preventive custody, police said.

Police had on Tuesday registered two first information reports into the incident of violence in which 21 persons, including 15 security personnel, were injured.

On Wednesday, Section 144 (unlawful assembly) was imposed in most parts of east Delhi to maintain law and order in the area. Police also conducted a flag march in the area which was joined by Joint Commissioner of Police Alok Kumar and Mr. Surya. "The idea was to send a message of peace and to request people not to indulge in any unlawful activity," the DCP said.

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