

## NEARBY



### 'You have made it a war-like situation'

GHAZIABAD  
"You [State] have made it a war-like situation," orally observed Allahabad High Court Chief Justice Govind Mathur after seeing the photographs of the clash between Aligarh Muslim University students and the police on the intervening night of December 15-16.

### NORTH ▶ PAGE 5

### Jamia violence: response on setting up panel sought

NEW DELHI  
The Delhi High Court on Thursday sought response from the Centre, the Delhi government and the police on a bunch of petitions seeking setting up of a fact-finding committee to look into violence at Jamia Millia Islamia during protests against the Citizen (Amendment) Act. A Bench listed the case for further hearing on February 4.

### CITY ▶ PAGE 2

### Mercury drops to 5.2°C, the lowest this season

NEW DELHI  
The minimum temperature in the Capital dropped to 5.2 degrees Celsius on Thursday, the lowest this season, according to Regional Meteorological Centre, New Delhi. The minimum temperature was three notches lower than the season's normal, while the maximum settled at 15 degrees Celsius.

### CITY ▶ PAGE 4

### FRIDAY REVIEW ▶ 4 PAGES

## Australians' day out

Players from Down Under struck it rich at the Indian Premier League auction in Kolkata on Thursday, with three of them among the top five buys



**Pat Cummins** became the most expensive foreign buy ever, fetching a whopping **₹15.5 crore** from two-time champion Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR). Rising Pune Supergiant had shelled out ₹14.5 crore for England allrounder Ben Stokes in 2017

while West Indies' left-arm speedster **Sheldon Cottrell** fetched a winning bid of **₹8.5 crore** from KXIP

KKR paid **₹5.25 crore** for England's ICC World Cup-winning captain **Eoin Morgan** while Australia's limited-overs skipper **Aaron Finch** went for **₹4.4 crore** to RCB

**Varun Chakravarty**, KXIP's most expensive buy in the IPL 2019 auction at ₹8.4 crore, was bought for **₹4 crore** by KKR

India's under-19 World Cup captain **Priyam Garg** and exciting batsman **Yashasvi Jaiswal** were snapped up by Sunrisers Hyderabad and Rajasthan Royals for **₹1.9 crore** and **₹2.4 crore** respectively

The oldest player at the auction, the 48-year-old **Pravin Tambe**, was sold to KKR for **₹20 lakh**



**62 players, including 29 non-Indians, were sold for a total of ₹140.3 crore**

Australian all-rounder **Glenn Maxwell** returned to Kings XI Punjab (KXIP) for **₹10.75 crore** after an intense bidding war with Delhi Capitals

Cummins' pace-bowling partner **Nathan Coulter-Nile**, too, enjoyed a big payday with defending champion Mumbai Indians getting him for **₹8 crore**

South African all-rounder **Chris Morris** went for **₹10 crore** to Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB),



**Piyush Chawla** was the most expensive Indian buy with three-time champion Chennai Super Kings paying **₹6.75 crore** for the leg-spinner

REPORTS ON PAGE 18

# Two die in police firing in Mangaluru as anti-CAA protests rock the country

Marchers take to the streets, defy prohibitory orders in many places and brave police crackdowns

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Two persons were killed in police firing in Mangaluru on Thursday as protesters across the country took to the streets against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and the proposed National Register of Citizens (NRC), which in combination could potentially introduce a religious test for citizenship in India.

Police in the coastal city of Mangaluru lathi-charged and later opened fire at protesters they claimed were trying to set fire to a police station and had targeted police personnel in Bunder area.

The police said the exact cause of death of Nausin, 23, and Jalil Kudroli, 49, would be known only after post-mortem examination. The two, who were injured in the violence, died in hospital.

Mobile Internet data service has been suspended in the entire Dakshina Kannada district for two days "to prevent misuse of social media platform", police said. Curfew has been clamped in the Mangaluru City Police Commissionerate area till December 22 midnight, and all educational institutions will remain shut.

Elsewhere across the country, marchers thronged cities, defying prohibitory orders in many places and braving police crackdowns in areas under BJP rule.

People from various backgrounds, across age groups and professions came together in response to calls given by civil society groups and opposition parties, in Mumbai, Kolkata, Jammu, Lucknow, Thiruvananthapuram, Chennai and Patna, and several other towns. In Lucknow, a man died

of an alleged firearm injury as protests turned violent, leading to the arrest of at least 55 persons and the shutdown of Internet in the State capital. More than two dozen vehicles, including a State bus, TV broadcast vans and police vehicles, were torched at different locations as parts of old Lucknow witnessed chaotic scenes.

Thousands gathered at Mumbai's August Kranti Maidan and raised slogans, displayed placards, sported painted faces, sang songs and played music. There were repeated announcements throughout the rally to keep things peaceful. Former IAS officer Kannan Gopinathan and actor Sushant Singh took part in the Mumbai protest.

Kolkata witnessed five rallies, of which the one held without the support of political parties drew no less than 20,000 people. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has dared the Modi government to go for a UN-monitored referendum on the contentious issue.

### Internet blocked

In the national capital, the police – which is under the Union Home Ministry – detained people from various locations and thwarted a demonstration. Mobile phone and Internet services were cut in parts of the city and 19 stations of the Metro Rail in central Delhi were shut but hundreds managed to assemble at Jantar Mantar, an earshot from the parliament building. Around 700 flights were delayed and 20 were cancelled in Delhi.

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**Boiling over:** People shifting former Mangaluru Mayor K. Ashraf, who was injured in protests against the Citizenship Act, to safety on Thursday. ■ H.S. MANJUNATH

## Over 1,200 protesters held, later released



Students during a protest at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on Thursday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

## SAURABH TRIVEDI NEW DELHI

The Delhi police on Thursday detained more than 1,200 protesters, including politicians D. Raja, Sitaram Yechury, Nilotpal Basu, Brinda Karat, Ajay Maken, Sandeep Dikshit and activists Yogendra Yadav, Umar Khalid, from central Delhi during anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act protests in the national capital.

"Around 800 protesters, detained from near the Red Fort, Mandi House and other areas in central Delhi, were let off after a warning. Nearly 300 of them were taken to Surajmal Stadium in Nan-gloi, around 100 to Rajiv Gandhi Stadium in Bawana and another 50 to Keshavpuram. They were all released by evening," said Delhi police spokesperson M.S. Randhawa.

Around 8,000 security personnel were deployed to stop protesters from gathering at Red Fort, Mandi House and other places, except Jantar Mantar, in central Delhi. Reserve police personnel and paramilitary forces were also deployed.

Hundreds of flag-waving students and activists converged near Jantar Mantar in the afternoon after police forcefully evicted them from areas around the Red Fort and Mandi House. Permission for holding any demonstration at the two sites was not granted. A number of protesters offered roses to security personnel with a message of "love in return of hatred". The police spokesperson said the protests ended peacefully.

(With inputs from PTI)  
SEE ALSO ▶ PAGES 2, 3 & 4

# U.S. House impeaches President Donald Trump

Voting was largely along party lines; Senate trial next month

## REUTERS WASHINGTON

Donald Trump on Wednesday became the third U.S. President to be impeached as the House of Representatives formally charged him with abuse of power and obstruction of Congress in a historic step that will inflame partisan tensions across a deeply divided America.

The Democratic-led House's passage of two articles of impeachment on a mostly party-line vote sets the stage for a trial next month in the Republican-controlled Senate on whether or not to convict and remove him from office.

No President in the 243-year history of the U.S. has been removed from office by impeachment. That would require a two-thirds majority in the 100-member Senate, meaning at least 20 Republicans would have to join the Democrats in voting against Mr. Trump – and none has indicated they will.

'No chance'  
The Senate's top Republican, Mitch McConnell, has predicted that there is "no chance" his chamber will re-



**Dissent in writing:** Protesters seeking the removal of U.S. President Donald Trump at the Capitol in Washington.

\* AP  
move Mr. Trump when it holds its trial.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said after the vote that she would wait to name the House managers, or prosecutors, until she knew more about the procedures for the Senate trial. She did not specify when she would send the articles to the Senate.

Mr. Trump, 73, is accused of abusing his power by pressuring Ukraine to investigate political rival Joe Biden, a leading contender for the 2020 Democratic presidential nomination, as well as a discredited theory that De-

mocrats conspired with Ukraine to meddle in the 2016 election.

Democrats said Mr. Trump held back \$391 million in security aid intended to combat Russia-backed separatists and a coveted White House meeting for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky as leverage to coerce Kiev into interfering in the 2020 election by smearing Mr. Biden.

The second article accused Mr. Trump of obstruction of Congress by directing administration officials and agencies not to comply with lawful House subpoenas for testimony and documents.

Mr. Trump, who is seeking another four-year term in the November 2020 election, has denied wrongdoing and called the inquiry launched by Ms. Pelosi in September a "witch hunt".

Mr. McConnell, Senate Majority Leader, said the House of Representatives had conducted the "most rushed, least thorough and most unfair impeachment inquiry in modern history."

(Inputs from AP)  
WHAT'S NEXT? ▶ PAGE 14

# Amid Net shutdown, CM opens free Wi-Fi hotspot

'Centre must focus on jobs, not CAA'

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

On a day when Delhi saw suspension of mobile services, including Internet, for the first time, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal presided over the inauguration of free Wi-Fi hotspot installation at the ITO bus stop here as part of the Aam Aadmi Party government's flagship project aimed at providing free public access to Internet across the Capital.

The irony of the situation was not lost on the CM, who said, "It is ironic that Internet services are down today [Thursday] because the police have asked for them to be shut on the day when we are launching this project...We hope that the situation normalises soon and the services resume."

### 109 hotspots installed

According to the Delhi government, 109 free Wi-Fi hotspots were installed in Delhi to mark the launch of the scheme. Deputy CM Manish Sisodia marked the launch of the project at Vishwavidyalaya metro station.

Internet services were shut down at several locations, including ITO, on a request by the Delhi police,



CM Arvind Kejriwal inaugurating the free Wi-Fi hotspot on Thursday. ■ PTI

which wanted to "curb rumour-mongering" during the anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act protests in the city.

Telecom service providers said, as per "the directive received from the government", services were stopped at a "few locations" from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Chief Minister expressed concern that the law and order situation, not only in Delhi, but the entire country was "deteriorating" day by day.

Mr. Kejriwal said there was no need of the amended citizenship law as it was not going to achieve anything and the government needs to focus on providing jobs to the youth.  
(With inputs from PTI)



# HUNDREDS DEFY CLAMPDOWN, TAKE TO STREETS



(Clockwise from top) CPI(M) leader Brinda Karat raises slogans as she is detained by the police during a demonstration against new citizenship law, in the Capital on Thursday; a student protester staging a novel agitation by offering a rose to a police personnel at Jantar Mantar; students getting ready for the protest at Jantar Mantar; a protester holding a poster in the city; activists belonging to the Left parties and students holding a protest at Jantar Mantar; protesters offering prayers; former JNU student and activist Umar Khalid being detained by the police for defying prohibitory orders at Red Fort. • SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR / SANDEEP SAXENA / AFP / REUTERS

## Jamia Millia to bear medical expenses of injured: V-C

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI**  
Jamia Millia Islamia Vice-Chancellor Najma Akhtar on Thursday interacted with the students injured during police crackdown on the campus and assured them that the university would bear their medical expenses.

Through a video call, she spoke to Ajaz, who is undergoing treatment at Safdarjung Hospital, and interacted with Mohammed Minhajuddin, who lost sight in his left eye, in a lathi-charge by the police on Sunday.

According to an official of the university, Ms. Akhtar wanted to go and meet the injured students but could not do so due to closure of some stretches around Jamia Millia.

Meanwhile, AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan announced ₹5 lakh and a job at the Delhi Waqf Board to Minhajuddin. The Okhla MLA, who is also the Chairman of the Delhi Waqf Board, said he will meet Minhajuddin, an LLM student, to provide him the financial help and appointment papers on Thursday.

## Students, locals walk for kms over restrictions

Red Fort remained off limits for protesters and tourists

**HEMANI BHANDARI  
NEW DELHI**

As Delhi Police barricaded the area around Red Fort, students of nearby schools, tourists, locals and shopkeepers faced issues due to blocked roads.

Munza, a Class XII student of a convent school near Red Fort, walked past the monument holding her younger sister's hand with their mother walking ahead. "When I went to school in the morning, it was all okay. I had taken a rickshaw. But later in school, we were informed about the protest and our parents were called to take us home. No student was allowed without parents," she said, adding that she had to now walk nearly 2 km carrying a heavy bag.

Another worried mother who identified herself as Shikha Jain was on her way to work when she realised that roads were blocked and her two sons aged five and seven studying in two private schools nearby won't be able to come back home in their usual rickshaw. "They should have given an alternative route. Now, I will



Security personnel barricading a road near the Red Fort on Thursday. • SANDEEP SAXENA

have to miss half day's work to make sure my children reach home safe," she said.

Daleep Kumar was on his way to school to bring his son when he was stopped by the police who asked him to show his son's school identity card. He reasoned with them that the identity card is with his son but the official didn't let him go for nearly 20 minutes till he managed to convince him.

Senior citizens - Anoop Kumar (73) and Satish Bhatia (64) - who run a shop in Chandni Chowk and had their vehicles parked at Shanti Van were also

stopped and asked to take a longer route but were later allowed after the situation started to get tense.

Several tourists, including foreigners, also left disappointed as the entry to Red Fort was closed for the day.

Shops in the adjoining Chandni Chowk area mostly remained open and business remained marginally affected. "People who had come for shopping are being troubled because of the blockade. But it hasn't affected business," said Rehman Malik, who runs a speakers' shop.

## Get detained or go back: police to protesters

Those who reached protest site were detained and taken away in buses

**HEMANI BHANDARI  
NEW DELHI**

A huge gathering of protesters was expected at Red Fort on Thursday as a call was given by students of Jamia Millia Islamia to march from the monument to ITO. However, all those who reached the protest site for the purpose was detained in buses and sent away.

"Get detained or go back," Delhi Police officers allegedly told the people who came to the site.

Hundreds of protesters were pushed inside buses parked right outside the Red Fort. Barricades began a km ahead of the main entry point of the Red Fort. People trying to reach the place were stopped at every barricaded point and were asked questions.

"They asked us if we had gone there to take part in the protest or for some other purpose. Before we could answer, we were told that if we had gone to protest, we should either go back or get



Police officers detaining protesters in New Delhi on Thursday. • SANDEEP SAXENA

detained," said Manjari Mishra (26), an M.Phil student from Jawaharlal Nehru University.

As Manjari, stood with her friends Indu Kumari and Kiriti, a police officer came and asked them to leave. "According to Section 144, four persons cannot assemble at one place. We are three and this is not against the law," Indu said. "This is an attack on democracy," said Manjari.

Several smaller groups raised slogans against the amended Citizenship Act

and were taken to the buses within minutes. The police did not allow any protester to stand at the site. Sharif Khan, a local, said: "I came here to encourage the students. This is our country and we are feeling threatened. But the police are not allowing us to stand, especially if they are finding out that we are Muslims."

Throughout the day, Constable Than Singh held a mic and speaker and made sure people didn't assemble. "Chalte rahiye.. aap chalte rahiye [continue walking],"

he said. Protesters did not only walk into detention buses themselves, many were forcibly whisked away by the police. A law student from Delhi University, who identified herself as Swati, was visibly enraged and taken away by female police officers. "Like you say that India cannot become Islamic Republic, it cannot become a Hindu *rashtra* as well. My message for the Supreme Court is that it should protect the Constitution of India," she said.

Former JNU student Umar Khalid also walked in with a bunch of people raising slogans and was detained immediately.

As detainees were being escorted in buses, they continued to shout slogans.

In the afternoon, as the protest died down, the road outside the Red Fort was empty people could be heard murmuring that they would proceed to Jantar Mantar.

## Response of Centre sought on Jamia violence

Bunch of pleas seek setting up of a fact-finding committee to look into violence

**STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI**

The Delhi High Court on Thursday sought response from the Centre, the Delhi government and the police on a bunch of petitions seeking setting up of a fact-finding committee to look into violence at Jamia Millia Islamia during protests against the new Citizenship Act (CAA).

A Bench headed by Chief Justice D.N. Patel, however, declined interim protection to students from coercive ac-

tion, including arrest, while listing the case for further hearing on February 4.

As the Bench, also comprising Justice C. Hari Shankar, rose from the dais after the hearing some lawyers for the petitioners chanted "shame shame". The judges, however, ignored it and left to their chambers.

The High Court was hearing six separate petitions seeking medical treatment and compensation for injured students in the protests

against CAA over the last few days.

The pleas were moved by lawyers, students of Jamia, residents of Okhla, where the university is located, and the Imam of Jama Masjid mosque opposite Parliament House seeking various reliefs, including medical treatment, compensation and interim protection from arrest for the students.

They had also sought appropriate action, including registration of FIRs, against

the erring police officers.

One of the petitioners told the court that around 450 tear gases were fired during Jamia Millia incident which is the highest since 2012.

Senior advocates Sanjay Hegde and Indira Jaising, appearing for some of the petitioners, referred to various medical reports confirming grievous injuries. The petitioners also requested the court to preserve the CCTV footage to find out who is right and who is wrong.

## Some protesters stage dharna in Old Delhi

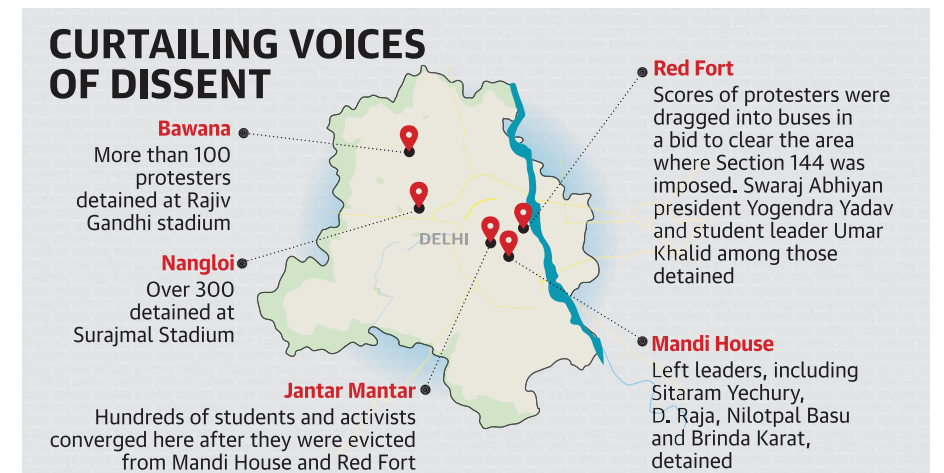
They were pushed away from Red Fort

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI**

Braving freezing cold, hundreds of protesters spent hours squatting on a frosty road near Sunehri Masjid in Old Delhi on Thursday after being pushed back by police from the historic Red Fort.

The cold, the season's most severe, and police restrictions on assembly of a large number of people could not deter the protesters, who shouted slogans, sang and recited couplets on freedom, secularism, and unity.

At Sunehri Masjid, a huge posse of police personnel prevented the protesters from moving forward. Those



who came by bus were detained.

Tricolour and posters of all sizes and colours filled the Shantivana Road as people in the houses along the road watched from their windows.

While some posters opposed the amended Citizenship Act and the NRC in large bold letters in red and black, some took a dig at the government in the form of couplets.

When police urged the

protesters to disperse or move to Jantar Mantar, they said they won't till their colleagues were released.

Security personnel in riot gear stood on the road sides throughout the protest and used drones to monitor it.



IN BRIEF



**AIIMS doctors, students protest despite warning**

**NEW DELHI**  
A section of students, resident doctors and faculty of AIIMS took out a candlelight march at the institute's premises on Thursday, against the amended Citizenship Act and proposed nationwide NRC, despite a warning by the administration of disciplinary action against those holding any protest or strike within the complex.

**Delhi Police use drone to keep track of protesters**

**NEW DELHI**  
The Delhi police used a drone to keep a watch on protesters as they gathered to march against the amended Citizenship Act, from Red Fort to Shaheed Park near ITO, on Thursday. "Drones are used to record happenings and in case of massive law and order situations, where things go out of hand, the recordings help identify those who cause the situation to go out of hand," a senior officer said.

# Capital locked as DMRC closes 19 of its stations over protest

Major transit points like Central Secretariat, Rajiv Chowk closed for hours

**STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI**

As protests rock the Capital over the amended Citizenship Act (CAA), the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) on Thursday closed as many as 19 metro stations across the network. Several commuters were left stranded especially at key interchange stations with their plans for the day going for a toss.

"How long can they keep metro stations shut? People have to go on with their lives," said Zanaab Khan, who was stuck at Rajiv Chowk, attempting to make her way to the demonstration at Jantar Mantar.

The first few stations to be closed were Jamia Millia Islamia, Jasola Vihar Shaheen Bagh and Munirka on the Magenta Line; Lal Quila and Jama Masjid on the Violent Line and Chandni Chowk and Vishwavidyalaya on the Yellow Line. Subse-



Delhi Gate Metro Station wears a deserted look on Thursday. ■SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

quently, the DMRC closed entry and exit gates of Patel Chowk, Lok Kalyan Marg and Udyog Bhawan on the Yellow Line; Pragati Maidan and Barakhamba Road on the Blue Line and ITO, Khan Market and Mandi House on the Violent Line.

DMRC officials said that the stations were closed following directions from Delhi Police in view of the protest

marches that took place in Red Fort, Mandi House and Jantar Mantar. Major transit points like the Central Secretariat and Rajiv Chowk were also closed for nearly six hours and two hours respectively. However, the interchange facility was available to commuters during this period, officials said.

Janaki Fernandes, also part of the protests, said

that the shutting down of metro stations was "dictatorial and terrifying". Terming the move "draconian", she asked "Is the government showing that it is afraid by curbing all this?"

Others, however, argued that the government was well within its rights to take security precautions. Ram Anand, who had been waiting at the Rajiv Chowk Metro Station for about half an hour, said that the move caused inconvenience to the public but it is the government's wish, they can do whatever they want to control the situation."

Meanwhile, DMRC officials said: "As a precautionary measure amid protests, Delhi Metro had to close the gates of a few metro stations. The safety of our passengers and security of metro property is paramount to us and we have to ensure the same as per the advice given by authorities."

## Remove objectionable content: police to social media

Details of accounts sent to companies

**SAURABH TRIVEDI  
NEW DELHI**

The Delhi police cyber cell has asked social networking companies to shut down 50 accounts for spreading rumours during the protest against amended Citizenship Act (CAA) in the Capital, said a police officer on Thursday.

The officer added that they have identified 70 accounts on social media, which were spreading rumours regarding the Act and posting various deepfake videos. Fifty such accounts were kept under the scanner for the last two days.

The details of these 50 accounts have been sent to the social networking companies and they have been asked to shut these accounts with immediate effect, he added.

"The accounts were operating from outside Delhi. We have also blocked more than 20 websites for posting inflammatory material. We are also keeping an eye on Pakistani twitter handles engaging with twitter accounts in India," the officer added.

Meanwhile, the intelligence wing of the Delhi police has issued a fresh advisory and instructed police to immediately hold a meeting with Imams of all mosques in the city and asked them to request people to maintain peace.

**Meeting with Imams**

"We held a meeting with U.P. and Haryana Police to stop the mass movement of protesters to Delhi. We are meeting with Imams of various mosques and requesting them to stop any kind of protest after Friday's prayer meeting," the officer added.

He added that they have requested the people to reach out to local police or any other senior officers in case if they have any doubt over the CAA or if they want to share any information with the police.

"We are requesting teenagers to maintain peace and not to circulate any unverified videos or any other inflammatory material on social media. Do not be part of rumour-mongering," he added.

## Work from home, stay off protests: MNCs

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NOIDA/GURUGRAM**

Protests against the amended Citizenship Act in Delhi had an impact on citizens in Gurugram and Noida on Thursday with several companies asking their employees to work from home and cautioned against joining the demonstrations.

Some of the multinational companies in these towns have asked their employees to remain vigilant and cautioned them against engaging in social media debates and demonstrations, employees of multiple firms said on condition of anonymity.

Around 11 a.m., some companies in Noida emailed their staffers to work from home.

# Delhi, Gurugram face bottlenecks over anti-CAA stir

Barricades put up by police to stop protesters result in heavy congestion on major roads

**STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI/GURUGRAM**

Several arterial roads and major parts of central Delhi witnessed heavy congestion on Thursday due to barricades put up by the police to prevent people from reaching the protest venue.

Traffic snarls were common across the city with the situation on the border areas turning worse as the Delhi police barricaded roads and imposed traffic restrictions to clampdown on planned protests against the CAA.

The movement of traffic from Gurugram to Delhi and



Traffic jam on Delhi-Gurugram expressway on Thursday. Manoj Kumar

Noida to Delhi was among the worst affected.

Ritu Raj, who lives in DLF

Phase-3, left for IGI from U block at 8 a.m. But he got caught in the traffic jam till

9.15 a.m and his relative missed his flight to Chennai.

The traffic jam extended from Rajokri flyover to IFFCO Chowk, which is around 5 km from the point of barricading by the Delhi police on the Delhi-Gurugram border. The congestion then spread to another five kilometre till the Signature Towers on the Gurugram side due to restriction on entry to Delhi.

Commuters took to Facebook and Twitter to share their experiences and caution fellow drivers headed towards Delhi.

The traffic restrictions

have been imposed to stop the movement of protesters from Delhi-NCR, a police officer said.

The Delhi Police and Gurugram police Twitter handles were regularly advising motorists to take alternative roads due to restrictions.

A senior police officer said that they had deployed extra traffic police personnel to manage vehicle movement. They kept updating social media with traffic updates. The traffic became normal after 4 p.m. on most of the roads. The traffic in central Delhi was cleared after 9 pm.



## Jamia website gets hacked

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The website of Jamia Milla Islamia was hacked on Thursday evening with messages in support of the students' movement against the CAA having been uploaded on to it.

"Brave students of Jamia keep fighting against the oppression. Don't let the movement die. Every time they hit you rise up stronger!..." wrote the hacker who went by the name of 'Dark Night'.

Spokesperson for the university confirmed that the website is maintained by a third party and that the server of that organisation had been hacked.

The message on the website went on to attack the CAA and the NRC, stating that "Modi-Shah thinks we are dumb like their followers but we the students read. We know how the first people would be declared foreigners by NRC and then everyone will be absorbed back through CAA expect our muslims [sic]."

## Air quality of Delhi-NCR

City	Index	Category
Delhi	362	Very poor
Gurgaon	298	Poor
Ghaziabad	391	Very poor
Faridabad	375	Very poor
Noida	378	Very poor
Greater Noida	351	Poor

Legend: Good (0-50), Satisfactory (51-100), Moderate (101-200), Poor (201-300), Very poor (301-400), Severe (>401)

## Mercury drops to 5.2°C, the lowest this season

Capital's air quality enters 'very poor' category; light rainfall likely tomorrow

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The minimum temperature in the Capital dropped to 5.2 degrees Celsius on Thursday, the lowest this season, according to Regional Meteorological Center, New Delhi.

On Thursday, the air quality of the city deteriorated to the upper level of 'very poor' category and is expected to be 'severe' in some parts of the city on Friday, chiefly owing to slower winds, according to government-run monitoring agency System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR). The minimum temperature on Thursday was three notches lower than the season's normal, while the maximum settled at 15 degrees Celsius, 7 degrees colder than the season's normal, said India Meteorological Department.

Both minimum and maximum temperatures are likely

## Dispersed crowds hold massive anti-CAA protest at Jantar Mantar

Delhi Police stopped many from taking out rallies at Mandi House, Red Fort

ELISHA VERMANI  
SIDHARTH RAVI  
NEW DELHI

Thousands of protesters opposing the amended Citizenship Act, who were stopped by the police from taking out rallies from Mandi House and Red Fort, and the ones who were detained during the day, made their way to Jantar Mantar to hold demonstrations denouncing the Act on Thursday.

"After today's protests, this day will go down in history," said Yogendra Yadav, addressing a crowd at Jantar Mantar on Thursday evening. He was detained from Red Fort here earlier in the day.

Permission for Left parties' protest march from Mandi House to Jantar Mantar had been denied shortly before it was scheduled to begin. "The police were detaining people left, right and centre and tried to scatter us," said Srinjoyee Dutta (27), an ad hoc professor at Indraprastha College for Women.

"I saw the police taking away at least four bus loads of people from Mandi House," said Shuddhabrata Sengupta, an alumnus of Jamia Milla Islamia. If the government wants to divide the protesters, the city will witness more protests," he added.



Yogendra Yadav addressing students and leaders of Left parties at Jantar Mantar on Thursday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

A large crowd gathered at Barakhamba metro station awaiting an update about the latest location of the protest following police action at Mandi House. After some initial confusion, the protesters were informed about a protest at Jantar Mantar by the police.

Several protesters expressed discontent over the authorities' attempts to disrupt the protests. "As students, we have the right to carry out peaceful protests and we should be allowed to exercise it," said Kirtana, a student of Shiv Nadar University.

Amid loud chants of "Azadi", "Inquilab Zindabad" and other slogans and songs, those protesting at Jantar Mantar included students, professors, members of political parties, members of the civil society and locals alike.

Calling the amended Citizenship Act "unconstitutional" and "unsecular", Nivedya P.T. from IP College For Women said, "The government should not have brought in a legislation that discriminates against a particular section of the society and we all stand against it."

Prodipto Deb, a student of Ambedkar University who was also present at Mandi House said, "I am here to stand in solidarity with students of Jamia, Aligarh and Assam. However, the violence in AMU and Gauhati University has gone largely unreported and we must remember that as well."

Many senior citizens were also part of the protests on Thursday. Ahmed Raza, (66),

a retired scientist from the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, said: "I am here to stand against the brutal and fascist law that has been introduced by the government. The way the judiciary has surrendered to this regime of goons is absolutely unfortunate." Sonia Kidwai (62) and Deblina Kohli (59), who also took part in the protest, said, "We are responsible citizens and we feel this law is unfair."

National Secretary of CPI-backed All India Trade Union Congress, Sukumar Damle, said: "This rally is against the Act that is meant to divide this country and puts the issues of the working class on the back burner. The Act is meant to divert people's attention from the real issues in this country, like economic slowdown and inflation." This Act is not only against the Muslims, but everyone and therefore, we demand its abrogation, he added.

Around 8 p.m. as various social activists, including Medha Pathkar and Mr. Yadav were addressing the crowd, commending their resolve, protesters dispersed after being pushed out of the area by the police.

More protests have been planned in the coming days.

## Don't resort to violence, carry out peaceful protests: AAP

70% of the poor people will not be able to produce papers: CM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The political blame game over the amended Citizenship Act continued to play out even as multiple protests against it unfolded across the Capital on Thursday.

Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) convenor Arvind Kejriwal expressed "extreme worry" in regard to the law and order situation in the country as AAP also urged citizens to not resort to violence and carry out protests against the Act peacefully.

## Tiwari's invite

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Delhi chief Manoj Tiwari invited Mr. Kejriwal and his counterpart from the Congress, Subhash Chopra, for a public reading of the Act at Central Park in Connaught Place on Friday. Mr. Chopra accused both the AAP and BJP of seeking to "harm peace and harmony" and affecting a "curfew-like situation" in the city in a bid to "gain political mileage."

"There is fear among the people belonging to all religions and faiths as to what they will do when they will be asked to produce papers



There is fear among the people belonging to all religions and faiths as to what they will do when they will be asked to produce papers to prove their citizenship

ARVIND KEJRIWAL  
Chief Minister

to prove their citizenship. The poor in our country do not possess such papers... nearly 70% of them would not have such papers. As a consequence, these people would be told to leave the country. Where will they go?" Mr. Kejriwal said. The Chief Minister further appealed "with folded hands" to the BJP-led Centre to repeal it.

In response, Mr. Tiwari invited Mr. Kejriwal and Mr. Chopra for a public reading of the Act. "I will read the Act in their presence. If there are issues with it, they should point those out. The CAA seeks to bestow and not snatch citizenship... then why are Mr. Kejriwal and Mr. Chopra trying to mislead our Muslim brothers in relation to it?" he said.

Addressing a meeting of the District and Block Congress Committee presidents, Mr. Chopra alleged that a curfew-like situation was prevailing in Delhi and that the common people were "now afraid to step out of their homes".

"The closing down of metro stations and heavy traffic jams across the Capital have created a very disturbing situation... with the declaration of Section 144 in Delhi, people cannot step out of their houses and the Capital is in the grip of fear and insecurity," Mr. Chopra alleged.

## AAP shadow-boxing

AAP, he added, were "shadow-boxing to get a political upper hand" in the run-up to the Assembly elections.

## To bee or not to be



A bee sitting on a flower in front of the North Block on Thursday. ■ R V MOORTHY

## 'Students boycotting exams ineligible to register for next'

Schedule will be posted on JNU website

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) has warned its students who are boycotting exams that they will not be eligible to register in the next semester if they fall short of the academic requirements of the institution.

In JNU, evaluation of students is conducted in different modes - home assignments, quizzes, term papers, presentations, sessional examinations etc., it said.

Since bona fide students are prevented from writing the end-semester examinations by some protesting students, the Deans of Schools and Chairpersons of Special Centres will prepare the schedule and post on the JNU website," the university said.

exams' to the students, the university said.

"Those who refuse to write the exams on their own will, in spite of the fact that the university is making every effort to conduct the examinations, will not be eligible to register in the next semester if they do not fulfil the academic requirements as per university ordinances," the university administration said.

Willing students will have the opportunity to write the exams, it added.

"Protecting the academic interests of bona fide students is the top priority. Deans of Schools and Chairpersons of Special Centres will prepare the schedule and post on the JNU website," the university said.

## High Court dismisses Nirbhaya case convict's petition claiming juvenility

Bar Council told to act against lawyer for filing forged affidavit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Thursday dismissed plea of one of the four convicts facing the gallows in the Nirbhaya gang rape and murder case that claimed that he was a juvenile at the time of the offence in December, 2012.

The court asked Bar Council of Delhi to take action against the convict's advocate, A.P. Singh, for filing forged affidavit regarding the convict's age. Justice Suresh Kumar Kait also



imposed cost of ₹25,000 on the advocate, who did not appear in the court despite several communications sent to him on behalf of the

court.

Besides Pawan Kumar Gupta, who moved the plea claiming juvenility, the other three convicts in the case are Mukesh, Vinay Sharma and Akshay Kumar Singh.

A 23-year-old paramedic student was gang-raped and brutally assaulted on the intervening night of December 16 and 17 in 2012 in a moving bus in south Delhi by six persons before she was thrown out on the road. She died on December 29, 2012 at a hospital in Singapore.

## 5 held for duping people with credit card offers

50 SIM cards and 17 mobile phones seized from their possession

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NOIDA

Five men were arrested in Greater Noida on Thursday for allegedly duping "hundreds of people" on the pretext of providing credit card offers, the police said.

The police have recovered 50 SIM cards and 17 mobile phones from the possession of the accused and are investigating the exact amount of fraud and number of people

conned by them, a senior police officer said.

"A complaint was received at the Surajpur police station on Wednesday from a local who alleged he was tricked into sharing the OTP number for online transactions done illegally through his credit card by one of the accused, Senior Superintendent of Police, Gautam Buddh Nagar, Vaibhav Krishna said.

"An investigation was ta-

ken up immediately and the accused were tracked down. It appeared that he was not working alone. The police suspected that he was part of a fake call centre-like set-up," Mr. Krishna told reporters.

The police caught four more of his partners at the instance of Ajay, the key accused. They were working together as a gang, the police said.

## Opium worth ₹1 cr en route to Haryana seized in Greater Noida

2 held; cash worth ₹25 lakh seized from their car: police

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NOIDA

Over 60 kg opium, having an estimated worth of ₹1 crore in the market, was seized in Greater Noida and two persons were arrested while transporting it, the police said on Thursday.

The police have also recovered cash worth ₹25 lakh from their Delhi-registered car, while two of the accomplices of the accused managed to escape, they said.

"The opium was being brought from Chhattisgarh

and was being taken to Kurukshetra in Haryana where it was to be supplied at some hotels and farm houses," Senior Superintendent of Police, Gautam Buddh Nagar, Vaibhav Krishna said.

"Overall, 63 kg opium was seized and ₹25 lakh cash was found in the car of the accused. Two of the accused have been arrested and their SUV was impounded," Mr. Krishna told reporters.

The arrested accused have been identified as Arun

Bhuiya, a native of Jharkhand, and Satish from Kurukshetra in Haryana, the police said.

The accused who are absconding have been identified as Dinesh Yadav and Vishweshwar Yadav, both from Jharkhand, the police added.

An FIR has been registered in the matter at Beta II police station in Greater Noida under provisions of the Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, the police said further.

## Police custody extended in money laundering case

NIRNIMESH KUMAR  
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Thursday extended till December 26 the police custody of former Fortis Healthcare promoter Shivinder Singh in a money laundering case involving Religare Enterprises Limited (REL) and Religare Finvest Limited (RFL).

His custody was extended on a plea by the Enforcement Directorate that

sought his further custodial interrogation for seven more days to confront him with digital evidence and some shell companies' directors who had been summoned.

Shivinder Singh, his brother and three other accused in the case were arrested in October for siphoning off ₹2,397 crore at RFL, the lending of the REL.

## DELHI TODAY

Talk: Lecture on "The Running of Indian Schools in the Gulf: Challenges and Opportunities" by Ambika Gulati, Principal, The Millennium School, Dubai. Chair: Ambassador K.P. Fabian at India International Centre (IIC), 6:30 p.m.

Talk: Lecture on "Gandhi and Art of Social Change" by Prof. Akeel Bilgrami and Dr. Abhay Bang at IIC, 6:30 p.m.

Talk: Naina Sharma, Clinical psychologist will speak on "How to enhance emotional intelligence for better relationships", at India Habitat Centre



**Timings DELHI**

FRIDAY, DEC. 20		
RISE	07:09	SET 17:29
RISE	00:52	SET 13:21
SATURDAY, DEC. 21		
RISE	07:09	SET 17:29
RISE	01:55	SET 13:58
SUNDAY, DEC. 22		
RISE	07:10	SET 17:30
RISE	02:57	SET 14:36

**Delhi Weather**

	max	min
Delhi City	12	10
Safdarjang	12	10
Palam	13	09

**Delhi Palam Today**  
17°C Dense fog during very cold morning. Day will be cool with partly cloudy sky.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
18°C Rise in night temperature. Short spell of light rain and thundershower would occur at some places.

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**BRIEFLY**

**Punjab implements new Motor Vehicles Act**

CHANDIGARH  
The Punjab government on Thursday implemented the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019, nearly three months after the law was passed by the central government.

# HC on AMU clash: you have made it a war-like situation

Court issues notices to Centre and State govt., posts next hearing for Jan. 2

ANUJ KUMAR  
GHAZIABAD

“You [State] have made it a war-like situation,” observed Allahabad High Court Chief Justice Govind Mathur after seeing the photographs of the clash between Aligarh Muslim University students and the police on the intervening night of December 15-16.

The observation was made when the two-member Bench was hearing the criminal writ petition filed by advocate Aman Khan. He was in the three-member team, the first to visit the campus after the clash that left four with serious injuries.

“We presented the High Court photographic and video evidence and asked for a judicial inquiry into the police excesses,” Mr. Khan, an alumnus of AMU and a member of Human Rights Law Network, told *The Hindu*.

The court has issued notices to the Centre and the



One of the photos submitted as evidence in High Court shows police breaking students' vehicles. \*SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

State government and short counters have been called from the IG (Law and Order), SSP Aligarh and the Vice Chancellor of AMU. For any detentions, Mr. Khan said the Chief Justice has asked to file habeas corpus immediately.

“The CJ said if students can't come, their families can approach,” he said.

He said when his lawyer Fazal Abadali raised concern over the preservation of evidence, particularly the CCTV

footage, the Chief Justice observed none could destroy it. The next date of hearing has been listed for January 2, 2020.

**‘Positive step’**

“The government advocate wanted it to be listed on the 6<sup>th</sup>, but the CJ refused,” Mr. Khan said, adding that it was a positive step towards securing justice for the students who were subjected to severe lathi-charge and rubber bullets and pellets.

## Protest turns violent in U.P.'s Sambhal

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GHAZIABAD

Two U.P. Roadways buses and two private vehicles were gutted as the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act turned violent in Sambhal in western Uttar Pradesh on Thursday.

Sources said the police were caught off guard by the number of protesters.

“Thousands of protesters laid siege to the Chaudhary Sarai area of the town in the afternoon. The police were not prepared to handle such a spontaneous surge,” said a local media reporter, requesting anonymity.

Alok Jayaswal, Additional Superintendent of Police denied the charge.

## Anti-CAA protests in many districts of M.P.

Stone-pelting on police in Khandwa

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
BHOPAL

Protests against the new citizenship law and the proposed NRC swept through a dozen districts of Madhya Pradesh as the Congress-ruled State joined the nation-wide agitation against the Centre's twin controversial measures.

The protests were held against the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) in 12 districts – Bhopal, Shajapur, Khandwa, Khargone, Seoni, Gwalior, Betul, Ratlam, Barwani, Sagar, Ujjain and Panna, a police officer said.

Prohibitory orders under CrPC section 144, banning assembly of people, were clamped in 43 of the 52 districts in the State, he said.

The protesters included members from various sections of the society.

**‘No untoward incident’**

MP Police State Situation Room Inspector Harman Lakra said the protests were peaceful and no untoward incident has been reported from any of these 12 districts.

Prohibitory orders have not been imposed in nine districts – Guna, Shivpuri, Alirajpur, Dhar, Betul, Dindori, Hoshangabad, Tikamgarh and Niwari districts, he added.

In some districts, the CrPC section 144 was clamped on Wednesday and in others on Thursday morning, he added.

In Khandwa, protesters returning from the site of an anti-CAA agitation pelted stones at police, resulting in tension in the communally sensitive town, officials said.

Police wielded batons to disperse the stone-pelting crowd which damaged a car, they said.

**Section 144 defied**

Defying prohibitory orders imposed in the town, a large number of people gathered in the Idgah area to protest against the CAA and the proposed nation-wide implementation of the NRC.

After the end of the ‘Save the Constitution’ protest, agitators were returning from the site in form of a rally when the police intervened, an official said.

The police asked the protesters, who were raising slogans, not to take out the rally, he said.

This angered the marchers who pelted stones at police personnel in Imlipura and Bada Bam areas, causing tension in the communally sensitive town, the official said.

Police baton-charged the stone-pelters, who damaged a car and a few other properties, he said.

## Akali leader murder: main accused surrenders

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
BATALA (PUNJAB)

The main accused in SAD leader Dalbir Singh Dilwan's murder case surrendered before the police here on Thursday.

Batala SSP Opinderjit Singh Ghumman said that Balwinder Singh was produced before a court, which sent him to police remand till December 23.

Earlier this month, while seeking action against the accused in the Akali leader's murder case, a large number of Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) activists led by party president Sukhbir Singh Badal had held a demonstration outside Batala SSP's office here.

Former Akali sarpanch (village head) Dalbir Singh Dhilwan (51), was allegedly shot dead by his neighbour Balwinder Singh and his two sons Major Singh and Mandeep Singh at his native village Dhilwan in Dera Baba Nanak nearly a month ago.

The accused had pumped six bullets into Dalbir, while he was having a walk along with his son on the village outskirts.

Later, his legs were chopped off with a sharp-edged weapon.

Dalbir was a two-time village head and also the vice president of Batala unit of the SAD.

## U.P. police clean chit to ‘namak roti’ video scribe

Jaiswal was booked for ‘tainting’ govt.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
MIRZAPUR

The Uttar Pradesh police has given a clean chit to a journalist who was booked for allegedly maligning the image of the State government after he shot a video showing just salt and rotis being served to students of a primary school here.

However, a representative of the village head who was also booked under the same charges in connection with the case, has not been cleared, police said.

The video, shot by journalist Pawan Jaiswal, of Shur Primary School under Aharaura police station had gone viral on August 22, sparking an Opposition backlash against the BJP government in the State.

The State government had suspended two teachers and a case was registered

against Mr. Jaiswal, a journalist with a Hindi daily, and the representative of Hinauta village head Rajkumar Pal for allegedly maligning the image of State government.

The case was registered 10 days after the video went viral.

**‘No evidence’**

“We have given a clean chit to the journalist as no evidence was found against him during our investigation,” Superintendent of Police Dharamvir Singh said on Thursday.

Mr. Singh said Mr. Jaiswal was called by the gram pradhan's representative to shoot the video in the school.

The police have filed a chargesheet against the representative of the gram pradhan, the district police chief said.

## Ajmer Dargah spiritual head calls for clarifications on CAA

‘Address doubts and fear among Muslims about their status’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
JAIPUR

Ajmer Dargah *Dewan* (spiritual head) Zainul Abedin Ali Khan on Thursday called for “clarifications” on the Citizenship Amendment Act to address the doubts and fear among Muslims about their status as citizens of the country. “No law should hurt public sentiments or pose a threat to the country's unity and communal harmony,” he said.

**Panel sought**

In a statement released at the historic Dargah in Ajmer, Mr. Khan said that though the CAA, on the face of it, did not pose any danger to the citizenship of Muslims living in the country, the Centre should appoint a high power committee to vi-

**No law should hurt public sentiments or pose a threat to the country's unity and communal harmony**

ZAINUL ABEDIN ALI KHAN  
Ajmer Dargah spiritual head

sit different regions in the country and interact with the people to get their views.

Mr. Khan also appealed to the Centre to issue guidelines to the police forces to not use force on the agitating students and deal with them as if they were criminals. “At the same time, the students should not take law into their own hands. As citizens of the country, they must show restraint and meet the expectations of their parents.”

Meanwhile, a large num-

ber of civil rights activists, members of Left parties, lawyers, teachers, students and activists of civil society groups took out a massive protest march against CAA at Khasa Kothi Circle in Jaipur. Unlike in Delhi and other States, the demonstration was peaceful and there was no detention of any protester.

The BJP announced that it would organise a rally in support of CAA on Friday, in which several Pakistani Hindu migrants along with Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad and BJP vice-president Avinash Rai Khanna would participate. The rallyists will offer floral tributes at Shaheed Smarak and march to Raj Bhawan to submit a memorandum to the Governor.

## Two college students shot dead in Chandigarh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
CHANDIGARH

Two college students from Haryana were shot dead by unidentified assailants at their rented accommodation in Sector 15 area here, police said on Thursday.

The victims, both in their early twenties, have been

identified as Ajay, a student of a private university, and Vineet, who was attending a government college here, Superintendent of Police (Central) Ram Gopal said.

The incident took place late Wednesday night when the victims were with their friend Mohit on the second

floor of the building, Mr. Gopal said.

**Friend escapes unhurt**

The victims were taken to PGIMER where they died, the SP said. Mohit, who managed to escape unhurt, was being quizzed by the police.

The police officer said a

case has been registered. CCTV footage was also being scanned.

Police suspect it could be a case of old rivalry. Notably, the area where the incident took place lies close to Panjab University and has a sizeable number of college students living on rent.

## Left parties hold protest against CAA

They want the new law to be withdrawn

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
BHUBANESWAR

Hundreds of leaders and workers of several Left parties staged a demonstration opposing the controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Act on the Mahatma Gandhi Marg here on Thursday.

Stating that the amended Citizenship Act was against the Constitution, the demonstrators demanded that the new law should be withdrawn without delay.

The leaders observed that granting citizenship to foreigners on the basis of their religion and exclusion of Muslims from its purview amounted to sacrificing secularism and ethos of the Constitution.

The parties which took part in the demonstration include CPI(M), CPI, Forward Block and CPI(M-L). Many senior leaders of these parties in the State took part in the protest.

CPI(M) Odisha State Committee secretary Ali Kishor Patnaik also criticised Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik for supporting the Act. The BJD's support to the CAA and opposition to the National Register of Citizens was mischievous, he said.

A separate demonstration was also organised by the CPI(M-L) Red Star where the demonstrators burnt the effigies of the Prime Minister, the Union Home Minister and Chief Minister.

### Internet restored

**KOLKATA**  
The West Bengal government on Thursday afternoon gave its nod to resumption of Internet services in Howrah district besides Baruipur and Canning in South 24 Parganas district, an official said.



# Policemen injured as protest turns violent in Ahmedabad

Protesters pelt stones after police lob tear gas shells to disperse crowd

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
AHMEDABAD

A protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in the Shah-E-Alam area here turned violent on Thursday, with at least five policemen injured in stone pelting. The police lobbed teargas shells to disperse the mob of around 2,000 in the Muslim-dominated area.

Protesters shouted slogans and held placards saying, "No CAB No NRC." When the police tried to disperse them, the crowd started throwing stones and brick pieces.

A video clip aired by a local news channel showed agitators hurling stones at police vehicles. Some policemen at the site can be seen taking cover behind moving police vehicles from the stones coming from both sides of the road.

Another video showed some people thrashing a policeman who fell from a moving police bus.

Assistant Commissioner of Police R.B. Rana was among the policemen injured in the



Street drama: Police charge with lathis to disperse the crowd at Shah-E-Alam in Ahmedabad on Thursday. (Below) an agitator gives a rallying cry while being detained. • VIJAY SONEJI



stone pelting. "I think at least five policemen were injured. I am not sure about the exact

number," Mr. Rana said. Ahmedabad Police Commissioner Ashish Bhatia said

the situation was now under control. "We will identify the perpetrators and lodge FIRs against them. Barring the stone pelting in Shah-E-Alam area, no untoward incident took place in the city today. We have detained some people," he said.

## Lathi charge at Mirzapur

Earlier in the afternoon, the police lathi-charged people who gathered in Sardar Baug garden in Mirzapur area to protest against CAA and NRC. The police dispersed nearly 200 protesters as they had not obtained permission

for the demonstration, and at least 20 of them were detained, said police inspector F.M. Nayab.

The protest had been organised by Left parties, including CPI, CPI (M) and their associated organisations such as the All India Democratic Students Organisations and Socialist Unity Centre of India (Communist). "We had taken permission for the protest, but it was cancelled at the last minute. However, we had announced yesterday that we will go ahead with the protest," said Bhavik Raja, a member of the All India DSO.

Elsewhere, Muslim outfits took out protest marches in different parts of Gujarat, including Morbi and Banaskantha districts, demanding a rollback of the CAA and NRC. Alp-Sankhyak Adhikar Manch, an organisation working for the minority communities, had given a call for Ahmedabad bandh on Thursday.

Markets and shops in some Muslim-dominated areas, including Juhapura, Jamalpur, Gomtipur and Teen Darwaja, remained closed, but elsewhere it had no major impact, the city police said.

In view of the shutdown call, the police on Wednesday had said no rally or protest would be allowed.

# CAA-NRC cast shadow on Goa arts festival, 4 artworks sealed

Stand by each piece of work, says curator Sudarshan Shetty

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
PANAJI

The citizenship law over which protests have erupted across the country has cast a shadow on the Serendipity Arts Festival here with an exhibition featuring artworks related to the newly enacted Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) as well as the National Register of Citizens (NRC) "temporarily sealed" on Wednesday.

On being reopened a few hours later, three of the 27 artworks in the exhibition, 'Look Outside This House', curated by leading artist Sudarshan Shetty as part of the visual arts segment of the festival, were found to be either removed, non-functional or shut.

## 'Troubled, pained'

While the Serendipity Arts Foundation that organises the annual multi-disciplinary festival cited a "technical glitch" as the reason, Mr. Shetty said he felt "troubled and pained at the situation we have come to," and that

he stood by "each piece of work in the show."

One of the videos is that of 'Miyah poets' of Assam, which talks of violence and discrimination and the alleged threat of statelessness due to the country's changing socio-political climate. The second one invited viewers to write on wall-sized canvases with ink created out of carbon in the air and featured some anti-CAA/NRC scribbles three days into the festival.

The third video, which was supposed to showcase sensor-fitted goggles for the blind, carried the caption, "Due to the ongoing protests against the Citizenship Amendment Bill in the Northeast, we could not procure the goggles for the blind in time for this show."

A statement quoted Mr. Shetty as asking such a caption should be a problem. "Or why a few by chance scribbles on a white wall about the [CAA/NRC] by exhibition visitors ... or two poems of lament about the

NRC and politics about immigration by poor men who have lost their family members to violence, should have upset/ disturbed/ frightened people is difficult to accept," he said.

The foundation was not available for comment.

## Band members held

Meanwhile, four members of the band Dastaan, which performed at the festival on Tuesday, were arrested by the Goa Police on Wednesday for allegedly hurting religious sentiments. Band members Sumant Balakrishnan, Anirban Ghosh, Shiva Pathak and Nirmala Ravindera, were arrested under Section 295-A of the Indian Penal Code.

A complaint by Venkat Krishna Kunduru alleged the band insulted the Hindu religion by mixing chants of 'Om' and abusive language. All four were released on bail bonds of ₹20,000 each, a senior police officer said.

The festival will continue till Sunday.

# FTII hunger strike against high fees enters fourth day

Management firm on hike, students want Ministry to intervene

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE  
PUNE

The indefinite hunger strike called by students of the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) to protest steep annual fee hikes as well as the allegedly prohibitive cost of the FTII entrance exam entered the fourth day on Thursday, with the administration refusing to yield to the students' demands.

A total of 11 students – six from the FTII and five from the Kolkata-based Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute (SRFTI) – are now on relay hunger strikes in Pune and Kolkata.

As many as 400 FTII alumni, several eminent film personalities among them, have signed a petition condemning the joint entrance fee hike and urging the Information and Broadcasting (I & B) Ministry to give urgent attention to the issue of the students' hunger strike.

A statement issued by the FTII Students' Association (FTIIA) said that since "the [FTII and SRFTI] authorities are turning a blind eye to the situation the students request the immediate intervention of I&B Minister Prakash Javadekar in the matter."

"Even as the health of the students deteriorates on the fourth day of our strike, the administration is not heeding our concerns...While four students had initially gone on strike on December 16, two more from the 2018 batch have joined the protest," said Rajashri Majumdar, general secretary of the students' association.



A doctor examines one of the students who is on a hunger strike at the FTII campus on Thursday. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"The fee structure and the admission fee are a huge burden for current and future students, many of whom, including my daughter, have taken bank loans and other education loans to pursue their studies. Keeping in mind the deteriorating health of the students, I would request higher authorities to urgently address this issue," said Anuradha Ghosh, a parent of one of the students sitting on strike.

The students' association maintained that the joint entrance test (JET) fee to the FTII and the SRFTI ranged from ₹4,000 to ₹10,000, a sum clearly beyond students from the middle and lower middle class sections.

"While premier postgraduate institutes like the FTII and SRFTI should stand for affordable education for all sections of society, the present entrance exam fee and the overall tuition fees are excessive and prove that the government is bent on mak-

ing education unavailable for the financially underprivileged sections by turning institutes like these into profit-making machines," read the FTIIA statement.

The FTII administration has convened a special governing council meeting on December 27 in Delhi to address the crisis.

However, the students' association accused the administration and the I & B Ministry of "ignoring the fact that the lives of the striking students are at grave risk" by convening the governing council meeting eight days hence, instead of trying to resolve the issue as quickly as possible.

"The Chairman of FTII is refusing to prepone the date of the governing council meeting and despite repeated attempts, the Ministry is not responding to our calls or emails," claimed the students' association, adding that the hunger strike would continue till their demands were met.

# Pawar to meet PM, seek help for farmers

State needs over ₹25,000 cr. assistance, aid that Fadnavis sought is pending: Patil

SHARAD VYAS  
MUMBAI

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar will again meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi to seek Central assistance for drought and rain-hit farmers of Maharashtra. The last time the two leaders had met, the subsequent change in guard in the State had set off speculation that the two had exchanged more than pleasantries.

State Finance Minister Jayant Patil on Thursday said he would request the NCP chief to visit the PM to seek

I have requested the Centre to increase the assistance while the previous help remains pending

JAYANT PATIL  
State Finance Minister

Central assistance. Maharashtra needs over ₹25,000 crore in help while ₹14,000 crore has already been sought from New Delhi, he said. The last time round, former chief minister Devendra Fadnavis sought help but it is yet to arrive, Mr. Patil said. He presented his revised

demands to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday. The Maharashtra delegation, which Mr. Patil led, had on Wednesday urged the Centre to contribute ₹14,000 crore towards the damage caused by natural calamities. "Today, I have requested the Centre to increase the assistance while the previous help remains pending when it was demanded by the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) chief minister," Mr. Patil said.

Mr. Pawar had met Mr. Modi in Parliament over farmers' distress in Maha-

rashtra on November 20. Following the meeting, his nephew Ajit Pawar had joined hands with the BJP and was sworn in as deputy chief minister in an overnight ceremony. He then resigned in less than 80 hours, resulting in the collapse of the BJP-NCP government.

The senior Pawar had later claimed Mr. Modi had suggested that the BJP and NCP come together in Maharashtra and Pawar's daughter be made a Cabinet minister at the Centre. "I had politely declined his offer," Mr. Pawar had said.

## For a brighter future



Young protesters: Schoolchildren urge Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray to stop "unreasonable" fee hikes by private schools, during a rally organised by the Jay Jawan Jay Kisan Sanghatana at Vidhan Bhavan in Nagpur on Thursday. • S. SUDARSHAN

# Pune NGO develops 'cheaper, more reliable' meter to measure strength of concrete

Research foundation claims its 'maturity meter' reduces margin of error and is priced lower than foreign meters, which are currently in use



Cost-effective: The India-produced maturity meter kit is priced between ₹50,000 and ₹5 lakh. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE  
PUNE

The Pune Construction Engineering Research Foundation (PCERF) has developed what it claims is the country's first indigenous Concrete Maturity Meter that determines the strength of concrete used in construction. PCERF is a non-profit organisation that works to introduce new and cost-effective technologies in the sector.

The device can help in significantly reducing the margin of error in estimating the

strength of a structure while cutting project costs as well. "This diminutive device, which we have dubbed as the 'Intelligent Concrete Maturity Meter', is affordable and easy to use. It will be available at 30% to 40% of the cost of the foreign maturity meter that is in use in the market," said Vishwas Lokare, president, PCERF.

Despite the importance of concrete in infrastructure construction, its in-place strength is often erroneously estimated by using the cumbersome and time-consuming

'standard cube' or cylindrical tests, said Dr. Hemant Dhonde, an executive member of PCERF, who developed the instrument along with another structural engineer, Dr. Rajesh Ghongade.

## Improving accuracy

"These methods are destructive and less accurate, which leads to many glitches in the development of the structure. To counter that, the Maturity Method, which is a 30-year old proven Non-Destructive Testing method, is used to estimate the real-

time and realistic strength development of in-place concrete," Dr. Dhonde explained.

Considered as more reliable, the method is based on the principle that concrete strength is directly related to its hydration (temperature) and age (time). However, it is mostly used in major infrastructure enterprises in foreign countries and seldom in major Indian construction projects. A foreign-produced maturity meter was also used in the construction of the Bandra-Worli Sea Link in

Mumbai. "The Indian maturity meter will be able to measure the strength of concrete accurately at a lower cost, to the advantage of the construction sector. The equipment has been tested and is ready for commercial use," said Mr. Lokare.

The device, which can be directly connected to mobile phones, has been specifically developed to suit the techniques and skills of end users in India.

"By using this maturity meter, one can have savings

of around 10% to 12% of the overall project," said Mr. Lokare.

The foreign-made maturity meter kit is available in the range of ₹3 lakh to ₹5 lakh, while the India-produced maturity meter kit is priced between ₹50,000 and ₹5 lakh, he said.

He said PCERF had recently filed a patent for the meter. The device will be presented at the 16th edition of an International Expo called 'Constro 2020' organised by PCERF, to be held next month.

# Indo-Russian military exercise concludes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
PUNE

The air force component of 'Ex INDR A 19', a joint exercise between India and Russia, successfully concluded on Thursday at the Air Force Station in Lohegaon in Pune.

As part of the exercise, the Indian armed forces and their Russian counterparts undertook joint air, land and sea operations. The exercise was conducted simultaneously at Pune, Goa and Gwalior, a defence release said.

The exercise provided an opportunity to enhance the IAF's operational capability, synergise joint operations and improve interoperability with Russian Federation Air Force to operate under the UN mandate. "Several airborne and ground assets of the IAF, including Su-30 MKI, Jaguar, Mirage-2000, indigenously developed Light Combat Aircraft (Tejas), IL-76, AEW&C, AN-32, Mi-17V5, indigenously developed air defence system AKASH and air defence radars, were used during the operation," the release said.

The Russian Air Force contingent, comprising 80 personnel from various branches, interacted with their Indian counterparts and shared their branch specific work experience, it said.

During the closing ceremony, the chief guest, Air Officer Commanding of the Air Force station Air Commodore Rahul Bhasin V.M., congratulated all the participants for successfully completing the exercise.



## IN BRIEF

**Dileep, other rape accused inspect visuals**

**KOCHI**  
The six accused in the woman actor's rape case, including actor Dileep, inspected the visuals of the alleged rape that was recorded in a memory card of a cell phone. They inspected the visuals in the court in the presence of the judicial officer, the special prosecutor and two forensic experts on Thursday. The Supreme Court had allowed the actor to bring in an expert, watch the visuals and frame questions regarding their authenticity.

**Kerala court stays expulsion of Sister Lucy**

**KALPETTA**  
Sister Lucy Kalappura, who was expelled from her congregation, got interim relief when a munsif court at Mananthavady in Wayanad stayed the decision of the congregation to oust her from a convent at Karakkamala in the district. Sister Lucy of the Franciscan Clarist Congregation (FCC), under the Karakkamala church of the Syro Malabar diocese, Mananthavady, was expelled on August 7 for "failing to give a satisfactory explanation" for her lifestyle "in violation of rules".

**'No change in stand against Shane Nigam'**

**KOCHI**  
The meeting of Kerala Film Producers Association said that there is no change in its stance against actor Shane Nigam as none of the meetings or talks had happened for any amicable settlement of issues raised by the producers against the young actor. The producers had banned the actor as he had allegedly not been co-operating with quite a few producers to complete the films by providing dates.



**Faces of protest:** Historian Ramachandra Guha being detained by the police during a protest against Citizenship (Amendment) Act in Bengaluru on Thursday; and, water cannons being used to disperse DYFI activists in Thiruvananthapuram. \*SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT & S. GOPAKUMAR



## Bengaluru defies Sec. 144

### Cries of 'Azaadi against CAA' rend the air

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT BENGALURU**  
Hundreds of protesters defied Section 144 that was imposed across Karnataka and gathered at Town Hall and Mysore Bank Circle in the city on Thursday to voice their anger against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the imposition of Section 144.

In the morning, they came in twos and threes to avoid detention, but by noon, the crowd had swelled and the police had to requisition additional buses, even from private operators, to remove them. Women, shouting slogans of 'azaadi', were seen being escorted in autorickshaws.

It was only by 4.30 p.m. that people began to leave, but many vowed to return on Friday. Organisers, on the condition of anonymity, said they would continue their protest.

A large number of protesters gathered near S.J. Park Circle and started shouting

### Chidambaram offers to appear in court for Guha

**CHENNAI**  
Former Union Minister P. Chidambaram said on Thursday that if historian Ramachandra Guha challenged his "illegal arrest and detention," even if it were for a few hours, he would love to appear and argue his case. "Ram Guha was not violating any law when he was arrested. He was alone! Sec 144 'prohibition' was not attracted," Mr. Chidambaram tweeted.

'azaadi', and holding placards demanding that the CAA be repealed.

### March voiced

Many voiced their anger against Prime Minister Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah. At 1 p.m., hundreds of protesters started marching towards Town Hall, but the police stopped them. Mallige, an activist said, "Protests were carried out peacefully, and people did not indulge in violence. Still, the police imposed Section 144. Every citizen has a right to express opinion and protest peacefully. We are not going to stop, our protest will continue."

## Left leaders, activists held in Hyderabad

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD**

The Telangana police on Thursday arrested the leaders of the Left parties, the Telangana Jana Samiti (TJS) and students and youth organisations when they tried to take out a rally in protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), and the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

Leaders and activists gathered at the Exhibition Grounds following a call given by the Left parties as part of their nation-wide protest on Thursday. The police stopped them as they tried to proceed towards Public Gardens, near the Legislative Assembly, citing the prohibitory orders in force.

The Left leaders, however, contended that they were given permission to hold the rally.

As the leaders tried to move forward in a procession, the police arrested them. CPI national secretary K. Narayana, former party MP Azeez Pasha, CPI State secretary Chada Venkat Reddy and TJS president M. Kodandaram were among those arrested by the police.

## Centre's crackdown autocratic: Pinarayi

### Anti-CAA protests continue in Kerala

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Thursday lent his support to the growing protests against the Centre's alleged move to stifle public expression of resistance to the "anti-Muslim" bias in the recently enacted Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 2019.

In a social media post, Mr. Vijayan condemned the arrests of CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury, Polit Bureau member Vrinda Karat and CPI general secretary D. Raja in New Delhi and historian Ramachandra Guha in Bengaluru. CPI(M) State secretary Kodiyeri Balakrishnan joined him in censuring the Centre.

Mr. Vijayan said that by arresting protesters, incarcerating their leaders, and robbing citizens of the freedom of movement and speech, the BJP-led NDA alliance at the Centre had displayed an authoritarian character not witnessed in the country even during the dark days of Emergency.

The "repressive character" of the Centre was evident in its decision to dis-

allow the Left parties and the students of Jamia Millia Islamia their constitutional right to dissent.

The Centre had shut down Internet and mobile phone networks in parts of New Delhi to choke freedom of expression and prevent citizens from mustering themselves in defiance against the law, he wrote.

He said the Centre could not force the entire nation into silent submission. He wanted the law to be revoked. Kerala has cobbled together a united political front against the Act, he said and pointed out the State was in the forefront of the growing protests against the Centre's "illiberal actions."

Demonstrations resounded across the State for the second consecutive day on Thursday. In Thiruvananthapuram, the police fired water jets to disperse a group of DYFI activists who attempted to storm the Raj Bhavan. SFI activists held protest in Kollam. CPI State secretary Kanam Rajendran led protest in Kochi. The Jamat-e-Islami and the Muslim Youth League staged protest rallies in Malappuram.

## Kin of accused in Disha case move SC

They seek compensation of ₹50 lakh

**LEGAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI**

The relatives of the four accused in the Disha rape and murder case, who were killed in a shootout with the police, moved the Supreme Court on Thursday, seeking a CBI probe into the deaths.

The relatives also sought compensation of ₹50 lakh each for the families of the accused.

The petition asked the court to call for all the police records prior to and after the "encounter" that occurred in the early hours of December 6. The petition also wanted the CBI investigation to cover the conduct of Cyberabad Police Commissioner V.C. Sajjanar.

On December 12, the court set up an inquiry commission, led by Justice V.S. Sirpurkar (retired), to probe the circumstances of the "encounter" deaths.

The Commission, which includes Justice Rekha Bal-

dota (retired) of the Bombay High Court and retired CBI Director Karthikeyan, was given six months to complete its investigation. Advocate K. Parameshwar was appointed counsel for the Commission.

The court also stayed the proceedings in the Telangana High Court and the National Human Rights Commission into the incident.

The accused — Mohammed Arif, Chintakunta Chennakeshavulu, Jollu Shiva and Jollu Naveen — were taken to the scene of the crime around 60 km from Hyderabad in the early hours of December 6 for a reconstruction of the crime scene.

According to the police, the accused surprised their escorts, grabbed their guns and tried to kill them in a bid to escape. The members of the team then retaliated and the accused were killed in the crossfire.

## Land belonging to Kalki group attached

**SANJAY VIJAYAKUMAR CHENNAI**

Nearly 907 acres of land belonging to the Kalki group, owned by self-styled godman Kalki Bhagwan has been provisionally attached under the provisions of the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, sources said in Chennai on Thursday.

About 400 acres is located at Satyavedu in Andhra Pradesh and other parcels are in Arani, Udhagamandalam, on the outskirts of Coimbatore, near Madurai and in Belgaum.

Sources said the Initiating Officer of Benami Prohibi-

tion Unit (BPU) under the Income Tax Department, Chennai, had issued attachment orders under Section 24(3) of the Act, and sent them to the respective Sub-Registrars. The provisional attachment is for 90 days.

In October, the I-T Department conducted searches on the group and said preliminary estimate of unaccounted cash receipts was ₹409 crore from the financial year 2014-15 onwards. About 90 kg of gold, and over 1,000 carats of diamonds and ₹150 crore of unaccounted cash were also unearthed, sources said.

## Unlike Bengal, Kerala may update Population Register

It may be updated between April 15 and May 29 next year

**K.S. SUDHI KOCHI**

Kerala may update the National Population Register (NPR) though the West Bengal government, which also opposes the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), has stalled it.

Early this week, the West Bengal government withdrew all activities related to the NPR. The Census Cell of the Home and Hill Affairs Department had communicated to the officials concerned that all activities regarding the preparation/updating of the NPR have been suspended. No activity regarding the NPR may be taken up without the prior clearance from the State government, it informed the officials.

The anti-NPR campaigners had criticised the register as the first step towards the preparation of the Na-

tional Register of Citizens.

In Kerala, updating of the NPR is scheduled between April 15 and May 29 next year. The register will be updated along with house listing and housing census to be carried out in the State.

### Slum areas

The details of slum areas in each municipality will have to be obtained in connection with the first phase of the census and the updating of the NPR, said a communication issued by the Director of Census Operations, Kerala.

The objective of the NPR, according to the website of the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India, is to "create a comprehensive identity database of every usual resident in the country. The database will contain demographic as well as

biometric particulars."

It is "mandatory for every usual resident of India to register in the NPR."

The website defines a usual resident "as a person who has resided in a local area for the past six months or more or a person who intends to reside in that area for the next six months or more," it said.

### Issued before row

In Kerala, the notifications regarding the updating of the NPR were issued before the controversy over the CAA surfaced.

There has not been any directive from the State government regarding stoppage of the NPR, said senior officials.

A senior functionary with the directorate maintained that he was unaware of any order for stopping the process.

## Green concern



**Wasted wetland:** Construction material dumped at the Pallikaranai marshland in Chennai on Thursday. \*B. VELANKANNI RAJ

## NIA takes over CPI(M) workers case

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT KOZHIKODE**

The National Investigation Agency (NIA), Kochi, has taken over the case of the two CPI(M) workers — Alan Shuhaib, 24, and Thaha Fasal, 24 — who were booked under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) for alleged links with Maoists.

They were charged under Sections 20 (punishment for being member of terrorist gang or organisation), 38 (offence relating to membership of a terrorist organisation) and 39 (offence relating to support given to a terrorist organisation) of the UAPA, official sources said.

The students of Kannur University were taken into custody by the police on November 1. The court had earlier observed that there is prima facie evidence to show that Shuhaib and Fasal have connections with Maoists.

## Release MGNREGS wage arrears, Kerala tells Centre

**N.J. NAIR THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**

Kerala is again stepping up pressure on the Centre to immediately release the ₹1,14 crore due to the State for the 12.98-lakh Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) workers that had been pending since July.

A vast majority of the women workers hailing from 25 lakh families below the poverty line have been forced into distress since the wage component alone amounting to ₹898 crore has not been disbursed for the past five months.

Minister for Local Self-Government A.C. Moideen has taken up the issue with

Union Rural Development Minister Narendra Singh Tomar seeking his urgent intervention to clear the arrears.

The government had flagged the issue on October 18 when the arrears was about ₹483.31 crore, but it did not elicit any response from the Centre and it kept on mounting over the past few months.

As per the provisions of the Act, the unskilled workers engaged under the scheme are entitled to get their wages every fortnight, failing which they could initiate legal action for securing the dues. But quite often the disbursement of arrears gets delayed, mostly citing minor audit objections.

## A.P. farmers observe bandh against '3 capitals'

Police deployed in additional strength as tension prevailed in several areas

**RAJULAPUDI SRINIVAS VIJAYAWADA**

Andhra Pradesh police put in place tight security in the Capital Region on the banks of river Krishna as farmers announced a bandh on Thursday, protesting the government's proposal to set up three Capitals in the State.

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy recently said Capitals may be set up at Visakhapatnam, Kurnool and Amaravati.

Protesting the proposal to shift the Secretariat and A.P. High Court from Amaravati, farmers staged 'dharnas' and raised slogans demanding withdrawal of the 'three capitals' proposal immediately.

Tension prevailed in Ta-



Villagers burning tyres in Guntur district to protest against the State government's proposal to develop three capitals.

depalli, Mangalagiri, Thulur, Undavalli, Penumaka, Mandadam, Nelapadu, Penumaka, Neerukonda, Bethapudi, and other villages as local residents came out of

their houses and staged rasta rokos enforcing the bandh.

"We voluntarily gave about 32,000 acres of fertile land for setting up the Capital in the region. Now, the

government is deceiving us with the new proposal to set up three capitals," the farmers said and demanded withdrawal of the proposal.

As Section 30 of Police Act and Section 144 were in force in the area, the police appealed to the agitators not to violate the orders and warned that stern action would be taken against violators, and those causing inconvenience to the public.

Additional forces were deployed at the Secretariat, Assembly, temporary High Court and other structures in the wake of the bandh.

The police have also tightened security on the Prakasam Barrage and in the Capital Region to avoid any untoward incident.

## Two ex-DRDO officials get 3-year jail for fraud

Case relates to ₹45-crore fake project

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT BENGALURU**

Two former officers of the Centre for Airborne Systems in DRDO, Bengaluru, were on Thursday sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment in a cheating case.

The special judge for CBI cases at Bengaluru also imposed a fine of ₹35,000 each on Commander K. Harikumar, former logistics officer; and K. Venkatesh Prasad, former senior officer at the DRDO centre.

The CBI had registered a case against South End Technology, Bengaluru, and other unknown private persons and public servants on a complaint received from

Customs (P&V), Chennai, alleging evasion of customs duty, fraudulently declaring that certain imported items were meant for government use.

During investigation, it was found that a fake contract procurement agreement was prepared for ₹45 crore for supply of items under a fake project, 'Development of a Prototype Data link, Limited Phase-II Test and Integration Facility'.

After the probe, a chargesheet was filed before the designated court at Bengaluru against the accused, including the proprietor of the private firm. The proprietor died during trial.



IN BRIEF



Minister's phone stolen in his LS constituency

**BEGUSARAI**  
A personal assistant of Union Minister Giriraj Singh has lodged a complaint with police here that the mobile phone through which the BJP leader operates his social media platforms, has got stolen, the police said on Thursday. An FIR was registered on Wednesday here by Avanih Kumar, who is accompanying Mr. Singh on a tour of his parliamentary seat. The phone is a Samsung S10 plus had a SIM card issued in his name. PTI

CBI seeks sanction to prosecute six officials

**NEW DELHI**  
The Central Bureau of Investigation has sought prosecution sanction against six Karnataka officials, including two IPS officers, for their alleged role in the I-Monetary Advisory (IMA) group scam. "The agency has requested the authorities concerned for the sanction to prosecute IPS officers Hemant Nimbalkar and Ajay Hilori," said an official.

Alert after 'intrusion' of 4 terror suspects in T.N.

**CHENNAI**  
A high-level of security alert has been issued across Tamil Nadu following the alleged intrusion of at least four terror suspects. The SUV-borne suspects on an "unknown mission" were sighted near Salem three days ago. Heightened security arrangements are in place at vital installations, places of worship, major railway stations, bus stands, malls and other areas of public gathering.

# Pact to open door for U.S. defence firms

They can cooperate with Indian private sector for future agreements, including the one on fighter jets

**DINAKAR PERI**  
NEW DELHI

The Industrial Security Annex (ISA), signed between India and the U.S. at the second 2+2 dialogue in Washington, will open the door for U.S. defence companies to partner with the Indian private sector for several multi-billion dollar deals in the pipeline, including the one for 114 fighter jets. The two sides also took stock of the steps being taken to operationalise the foundational agreement, the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA).

With this, three of four foundational agreements are through. The Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-spatial Cooperation (BECA) is still under negotiation as both sides try to iron out few reciprocal issues.

"We hope that this [ISA] will enable smooth transfer of classified technology and information between private



**Boosting ties:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar with Mark Esper and Mike Pompeo in Washington during the 2+2 dialogue. ■ REUTERS

entities of the U.S. and India," Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said at a press conference after the talks. U.S. Secretary of Defence Mark Thomas Esper stated that the ISA would "facilitate collaboration between our defense industries by supporting the secure transfer of key information and technology."

The ISA is a part of the General Security Of Military

Information Agreement (GSOMIA), which India signed with the U.S. long back. It became critical as India opened up the defence sector to the private sector and the Strategic Partnership policy, which has few big military platforms and is reserved for the Indian private sector. U.S. companies are in the race for multi-billion dollar deal for 114 fighter jets, among other deals.

"The IAF and Navy fighter competitions are a once in a generation opportunity. We are offering some of the best technology widely employed by the U.S. Navy and Air Force, including the F/A-18 Super Hornet and the bespoke F-21," said Joel Starr, Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, US State Department, at a conference in Hyderabad on Wednesday.

After decade-long negotiations, India signed the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Understanding (LEMOA) in 2016 and third agreement COMCASA last year. Mr. Singh also highlighted the operationalisation of COMCASA and the maritime cooperation. "Our Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) cooperation has been extremely useful. We have sent an invitation to the U.S. to nominate a liaison officer for the fusion centre in India," he said. The Indian Navy has invited friendly nations to

post liaison officers at the Information Fusion Centre for Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) that was set up last year. Mr. Singh stated that one of the major movements over the last year has been steps to operationalise the COMCASA, which enables most of the U.S.-origin platforms to have a "secure communication capability." Mr. Singh said they had been holding meetings and taking necessary steps to open a COMCASA account. "This will be discussed in the Military Cooperation Group format, including our agreement to explore cooperation in defence-space and defence-cyber and special forces," he added.

Defence officials said the account of \$5 mn, from which any deductions would be done for services or information sought from the U.S. under the COMCASA had been created and work was on to develop a tactical data link.

## NITI Aayog seeks ideas on population policy

Think tank to hold consultation today

**JAGRITI CHANDRA**  
NEW DELHI

Government think tank NITI Aayog will hold a national consultation on population stabilisation on Friday to explore ways to strengthen the country's population policy and family planning programmes.

The event, being held in partnership with the Population Foundation of India, will include officials from the Centre as well as seven States – Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Kerala and Ta-

mil Nadu – and experts on the subject. "The conference will contribute to a NITI Aayog working paper to help India in its vision for attaining population stabilisation as voiced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 15, 2019," said a press statement from NITI Aayog.

The officials will brainstorm over recommendations like treating population stabilisation and family planning as a national priority and ensuring inter-governmental convergence.

## Portugal sets up Gandhi prize

The first edition will be dedicated to animal welfare

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI

Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa on Thursday announced the setting up of a Gandhi Citizenship Education Prize while attending the second meeting of the National Committee for the Commemoration Mahatma Gandhi's 150th Birth Anniversary, chaired by President Ram Nath Kovind at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

The only foreign Prime Minister to be a part of the committee, Mr. Costa said Portugal would launch the prize in order to promote

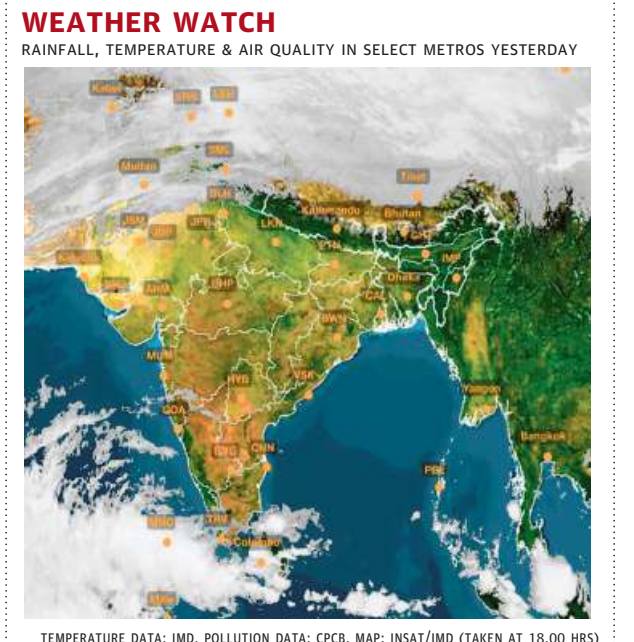


Antonio Costa

edition of the prize would be dedicated to animal welfare. Gandhi had said "the greatness of a nation can be judged by the way its animals are treated".

The committee includes Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, his Cabinet colleagues and Chief Ministers, apart from Gandhians.

Mr. Modi told the gathering that the world was keen to learn about Mahatma Gandhi, and it had become India's responsibility to remind everyone of his relevance today.



**WEATHER WATCH**  
RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY  
TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18:00 HRS)  
**Forecast for Friday:** Cold day conditions likely in some pockets over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh. Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karikal.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	18.0	11.0	Kozhikode	—	35.0	24.0
Ahmedabad	—	27.0	15.0	Kurnool	—	32.0	19.0
Aizawl	—	20.0	8.0	Lucknow	—	17.0	9.0
Allahabad	—	18.0	9.0	Madurai	—	30.0	23.0
Bangaluru	—	25.0	17.0	Mangaluru	—	38.0	21.0
Bhopal	—	24.0	11.0	Mumbai	—	31.0	23.0
Bhubaneswar	—	27.0	12.0	Mysuru	—	00.0	00.0
Chandigarh	—	13.0	9.0	New Delhi	—	28.0	18.0
Chennai	—	30.0	25.0	Patna	—	15.0	5.0
Coimbatore	0.2	29.0	21.0	Port Blair	—	31.0	25.0
Dehradun	—	17.0	8.0	Puducherry	1.2	30.0	23.0
Gangtok	—	13.0	6.0	Pune	—	28.0	16.0
Goa	—	34.0	22.0	Raipur	—	26.0	15.0
Guwahati	—	25.0	12.0	Ranchi	—	22.0	6.0
Hubballi	—	29.0	18.0	Shillong	—	16.0	6.0
Hyderabad	—	28.0	18.0	Shimla	—	12.0	5.0
Imphal	—	21.0	5.0	Srinagar	—	8.0	4.0
Jaipur	—	21.0	10.0	Thiruvananthapuram	—	34.0	24.0
Kochi	—	32.0	24.0	Tiruchi	—	31.0	23.0
Kohima	—	21.0	5.0	Vijayawada	—	30.0	21.0
Kolkata	—	21.0	10.0	Visakhapatnam	—	29.0	22.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

**Pollutants in the air you are breathing**

CITIES	SO <sub>2</sub>	NO <sub>2</sub>	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	44	39	20	182	126	■
Bangaluru	9	47	55	124	—	■
Chennai	21	42	42	124	—	■
Delhi	11	54	110	428	361	■
Hyderabad	3	78	46	170	135	■
Kolkata	17	50	34	197	144	■
Lucknow	21	8	86	342	—	■
Mumbai	6	24	42	206	131	■
Pune	84	33	63	193	129	■
Visakhapatnam	9	31	56	154	—	■

In observation made at 4:00 p.m., Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 391 indicating a severe level of pollution. In contrast, Eloor, Kerala recorded a healthy AQI score of 28.

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)  
**SO<sub>2</sub>:** Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.  
**NO<sub>2</sub>:** Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.  
**CO:** Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.  
**PM2.5 & PM10:** Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

## Onion imports yet to bring price relief to customers

Bulbs likely to reach Delhi, A.P. retail markets over weekend

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI

The first onions imported by the Central government in a bid to counter domestic shortages and tame soaring prices are set to enter the retail market – mostly in Delhi and Andhra Pradesh – by Saturday, according to officials from the Consumer Affairs Ministry.

On Thursday, the Ministry announced that public trading agency Metals and Minerals Trading Corporation (MMTC) has contracted to buy an additional 12,500 tonnes of onions from Turkey, taking the total contracted imports to 42,500 tonnes.

However, customers suffering under a prolonged price surge are yet to see any of these imported onions.

According to Ministry officials, just over 1,000 tonnes of imported onions have arrived in the country so far. That initial shipment arrived at the Mumbai port last Sun-

### Expensive affair

On Thursday, the price of onions reached ₹160/kg in Chennai, the most expensive among major metros. The average price was ₹112/kg



City	Onion price	₹ PER/KG
Chennai	160	
Pune	150	
Kolkata	130	
Bhubaneswar	128	
Thiruvananthapuram	125	
Bangaluru	120	
Dehradun	120	
Hyderabad	120	
Mumbai	120	
Patna	120	

day, but due to procedures to fumigate and clean the onions, their arrival in the retail market has been delayed. The initial buyers are state-run National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED), which has been supplying subsidised onions in the National Capital Region, and the Andhra Pradesh State government, said a Ministry official.

Retail prices in Delhi have not dropped below the ₹100 per kg mark for the last two weeks (since December 5). In fact, they peaked at ₹145 per kg on Wednesday, according to data from the National Horticulture Board. The situation is particularly severe in southern India, with onions selling for ₹160 per kg in Chennai on Thursday, and ₹120 per kg in Hyderabad and Bangaluru.

## Ration cards to look similar across country

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
NEW DELHI

The Centre has designed a standard format for ration cards as it moves ahead with 'one nation, one ration card' initiative and has asked State governments to follow the pattern while issuing fresh ration cards.

Currently, the central government's ambitious initiative is being implemented on a pilot basis in a cluster of six States. It wants to implement this facility across the country from June 1, 2020.

Under the initiative, eligible beneficiaries would be able to avail their entitled foodgrains under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) from any Fair Price Shop in the country using the same ration card.

"In order to achieve the aim of national portability, it is necessary that ration cards issued by different States and Union Territories conform to a standard format," a senior Food Ministry official said.

## Speedy trials shouldn't bury the cause of justice: SC

Bench sets aside death penalty of a rape accused convicted after a 12-day trial

**LEGAL CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI

Speedy disposal of a case should not be at the cost of justice, the Supreme Court had said in a judgment setting aside the death penalty of a man in a rape and murder case.

The court found the man was convicted after a 12-day trial and without proper legal representation. In fact, a legal aid lawyer appointed for him was given no time to even prepare his defence.

Expeditious trials should not bury the cause of justice, said the three-judge Bench led by Justice U.U. Lalit.

"Expeditious disposal is undoubtedly required... However, the attempts to expedite the process should not be at the expense of the basic elements of fairness and the opportunity to the accused, on which postulates the entire criminal administration of justice is founded,"

the judgment said. The Bench said "what is paramount is the cause of justice and keeping the basic ingredients which secure that as a core idea and ideal, the process may be expedited, but fast tracking of process must never result in burying the cause of justice."

## Raped and set ablaze, U.P. girl dies

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
KANPUR

An 18-year-old girl, whose family had alleged that she was raped and set ablaze in Fatehpur, succumbed to her burns at a hospital here, officials said.

The police, who had registered an FIR last week, are investigating the claim that she set herself afire after a village panchayat put an end to her relationship with a relative. "She had suffered from organ failure following serious injuries and we tried to resuscitate her, but she could not survive," Head of the department (surgery) at the hospital, Sanjay Kala, said.





## Protest and order

Authorities should facilitate expression of views, not suppress rights

The duty of the state to preserve public order should never extend to the suppression of political views contrary to those of the government. It is quite unedifying for the state to use its power to regulate public protests to negate the people's right to assemble peacefully. The State-wide clamping of prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure in Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka are stark examples of the misuse of regulatory power to suppress the lawful exercise of constitutional rights. As protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act escalate in several cities and towns, the invocation of Section 144 in a whole State does not seem to be in conformity to the general rule that such a restriction on fundamental freedoms should be "reasonable, least invasive and bona fide". On top of it, Internet and mobile phone services were suspended and some Metro Rail stations shut down in Delhi. Restrictions wider than necessary tend to suppress rather than regulate. Were all these steps justified, especially in the light of judicial pronouncements that draw the limits of the power to regulate assemblies? The apex court has often said an order under Section 144 has to be reasonable and be "minimal". It meant that the order should be limited to specific localities, and in response to a particular situation. "Such restraint should not be allowed to exceed the constraints of the particular situation, either in nature or in duration," it observed.

A widespread protest may indeed regress into violence, but "the perception of threat to public peace and tranquility should be real and not imaginary or a mere likely possibility," the court observed, while examining the lawfulness of the police action on a gathering of peaceful protesters at Delhi's Ramlila Maidan in 2011. In this backdrop, the action of the police in Bengaluru and Delhi in preventing protesters from gathering, and the denial of permission to hold any protests in several other places, was excessive. An orderly assembly armed with a permission that contains limits on duration and number is normally not likely to degenerate into violence. It is somewhat satisfying that in most cities, the protesters gathered peacefully or courted arrest. However, the incidents of disturbances from a few cities, including the police firing in Mangaluru, underscore the burden cast upon the state in protecting the constitutional guarantees of peaceful dissent on the one hand, and public order on the other. On the political side, India's leadership will have to respond to the widespread public fears over the implementation of the new naturalisation norms. On the administrative side, however, the authorities should aim to facilitate the exercise of the people's rights, rather than suppress them.

## Not unimpeachable

Trump is unlikely to be removed as President, but the rebuke will hurt

United States President Donald Trump made history, albeit not in the way he would have dreamed, when he became only the third incumbent to get impeached by the House of Representatives. On Wednesday, the House impeached him on two articles, one each for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress. The first article relates to Mr. Trump withholding \$391 million in military aid and a White House meeting unless Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky agreed to investigate the business dealings of the family of Democratic presidential frontrunner Joe Biden — in other words, a bid to discredit domestic rivals through foreign influence. This article, which identifies a violation of the oath of office and a breach of national security, passed by 230 votes to 197, with the entire Republican membership opposing it. The second article relates to the charge that Mr. Trump obstructed the Congressional probe into abuse-of-power allegations by urging witnesses not to cooperate and asking federal government agencies to disregard subpoenas. This passed by 229 votes to 198. Now, the matter passes into the hands of the Senate. Given that a two-thirds majority, or 67 Senators, is required to convict and to remove Mr. Trump from office, and the chamber is split between 53 Republicans, 45 Democrats and two independents who caucus with the Democrats, an acquittal is expected.

Yet, two things are certain: first, no matter Mr. Trump's popularity with his constituents and the current global mood leaning towards nativist populism, the impeachment is a stain on his reputation and a historic rebuke that will never fade in the annals of infamy. Second, and more worrying for prospects of harmony within the American union, the impeachment will drive a deeper wedge between the two opposing political discourses of a polarised electorate. Already, the Democrats led by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi have indicated that they might withhold articles of impeachment from the Senate for some time, effectively delaying the trial in the Upper House until there is more clarity around the rules that the latter will set for the trial. If this becomes a protracted and hostile engagement across the two chambers, it could muddy the waters during the upcoming election year and make the campaign even more vicious than that of 2016. Going beyond the impeachment, however, it might be possible to bridge the chasm between Mr. Trump's detractors and supporters only if a conversation is initiated to retrieve the spirit of bipartisanship on issues such as immigration, trade, climate change, gun control, racism and minority rights. The alternative route may well lead directly to a political purgatory for one of the world's oldest democracies, and that is likely to hurt.

# In thrall to its own violence

In its second innings, the Modi government has turned its back on conciliation, with dire consequences for the polity



HARISH KHARE

As to why the Narendra Modi regime has succeeded in pushing the country into a needless, but harmful, instability, a clue is available in Union Home Minister Amit Shah's opening remarks when he piloted the Citizenship Amendment Bill in the Rajya Sabha. The Minister cockily argued that his government was perfectly aware that the proposed amendment would be a controversial law, but he was prepared to be disagreeable. The Minister's refrain was that if there was a 'problem', it had to be 'solved', because, unlike the earlier ruling arrangements, the new regime was not given to procrastination.

That is perhaps the rub. After the 2019 Lok Sabha mandate, the composition and character of the Modi government stand changed. The new team has gone out of its way to convey a new sense of urgency to take up the old priorities. This clear-headedness has turned out to be a mixed blessing.

### Breaking with Vajpayee era

There is no one in the inner councils of the decision-making who has had any kind of familiarity with the Atal Bihari Vajpayee-L.K. Advani era's working and how it tried to govern this complex land; it was a regime that successfully managed to fight a war with Pakistan, exploded 'the bomb', and steered the economy out of the Washington-led sanctions against India — and much more, without creating new, debilitating fault

lines at home. The tone and temper of the Vajpayee regime was defined by a prudent impulse. With the passing away of Sushma Swaraj and Arun Jaitley in recent months, the 2019 government has apparently settled into a new working idiom, with a dangerous imbalance at the core of the Indian state. The Prime Minister stands very tall, much taller than all his ministerial colleagues; with the possible exception of the Home Minister, no Cabinet colleague has the stature or the prestige to introduce a note of caution in the face of any proposed policy recklessness or political waywardness.

There is no one like a Lord Peter Carrington, who as Foreign Secretary could tell an overbearing Margaret Thatcher "that she was being impossible" in her treatment of colleagues or in insisting on a policy extremism. Arguably, the Modi government suffers from a lack of equilibrium in its collective working; and, inevitably, the entire ruling cabal ends up feeding the Prime Minister's ingrained confrontationist instincts. This itch for confrontation has produced an unhappy consequence for statecraft and political management: the option of conciliation invariably stands spurned. There is a new fascination for aggression, a new appetite for skirmishes and combats. And, this belligerence is deemed to be politically satisfying and electorally rewarding.

It needs to be recalled that the Vajpayee-Advani government subscribed, during most of its six years in power, to a wise policy prescription: it was inclined to believe that while it was possible for a political party like the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to win a Lok Sabha majority without the Muslim vote, it would be unhelpful to try to govern the country without the



THE HINDU

cooperation and support of the largest minority. Political wisdom demanded that a group numbering over a hundred million people not be allowed to sulk in its corner. In a democracy, the leaders engage in dialogue and seek conciliation, and, as Albert Camus put it in *The Rebel*, it is only "tyrants [who] conduct monologues above a million solitudes."

### No appetite for compromise

In the Modi-Shah era, this preference for accommodation and partnership stands virtually abandoned. The tweaked proposition is: not only can the BJP win a majority without the Muslims' vote, it can also govern without their support and can live without their trust or confidence or affection. Admittedly, from time to time, the ruling party comes up with catchy slogans, paying politically correct lip service to the idea of inclusiveness; but, in day-to-day governance, the accent is on catering to the Hindu majority's sensibilities, and if the minorities take offence, so be it. There is a calculated confidence that any group, however unhappy or large, can be tamed. The post-Article 370 Jammu and Kashmir is cited as a satisfying and successful application of this nonsense, no-weakness, no-accommodation approach.

# Inaccurate diagnosis, draconian remedy

India's black money problem was misdiagnosed; unverified, exaggerated numbers went into enactment of harsh laws



KABEER SHRIVASTAVA

India's fight against foreign black money has returned a whimper. The government's intent cannot be faulted, but since the problem itself was misdiagnosed, the ensuing legislative measures have been bereft of constitutional and economic common sense. They relied too little on persuasion, and far too much on browbeating. The economic results are nothing to rave about.

High on populism, low on constitutional wisdom, the Black Money Act was a draconian law that was bound to fail. At minimum tax rate of 60%, it gave marginal incentive for the hoarders to come clean. Lawmakers overestimated the writ of international laws and made no economically persuasive case. Resultantly, as of May 2019, the total untaxed foreign assets mined was ₹12,500 crore. Wholly recovered, this wouldn't even pay Prasar Bharati's bills for four years. Even this recovery was aided greatly by international exposés such as the Panama Papers in which the government's legislation had no role to play. In comparison, Indonesia recovered about ₹25 lakh crore under similar schemes. The government's initial obsession with browbeating had an ominous start. But, instead of

doing course correction, it passed an even more confiscatory law, the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act.

### Existing laws

The intent of both the laws could have been achieved by a few tweaks in the existing laws. The Income Tax Act has, since 1989, provided for up to three times penalty on escaped tax. Similarly, wilful attempts to evade taxes have, since 1975, been punishable with imprisonment of up to seven years. A protocol for automatic exchange tax information, under which India is now receiving data from Switzerland, was signed in 2011, as was the amendment requiring all citizens to disclose foreign assets with their domestic tax returns.

Post-May 2014, tax control policy is different only in three aspects, all constitutionally suspect. The first relates to retrospective application of tax and penal laws that are so confiscatory and brazenly discriminatory that they walk all over a citizen's right to life, carry on business and own property. The second is about shifting the burden of proof onto the citizen to establish that he is not an offender. Lastly, and this is what makes this new policy rather wicked, citizens can be subjected to criminal trial, without the taxpayer first proving that there has been tax evasion. The results of giving such unbridled powers to agencies have been disastrous.

The Enforcement Directorate, India's money laundering watchdog, secured conviction in less



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

than 1% of case but attached assets worth ₹29,468 crore. In contrast, the agency's equivalents in the U.S. and the U.K. secured conviction in about 50% cases. The Income Tax Department's records were not inspiring either, hovering at near 2% conviction rates in Financial Year (FY) 2016-2017. A Comptroller and Auditor General report showed that in FY 2016-2017 — the demonetisation year — the number of raids more than doubled, as compared to FY 2013-2014, the last year of UPA-II; but in the same period, the undisclosed income detected was less than one-fourth the amount during the latter period.

In medical sciences, intrusive methods of treatment are generally resorted to when diagnosis shows evidence that less risky methods may not be restorative. But, India's fiscal policy seems to be driven by the opposite logic: intrusive first, diagnosis later.

No clear estimate of black money owned by Indians and stashed abroad is available. Between 2008 and 2012, various reports quoted

anywhere between \$500 billion and \$1.5 trillion, some relying on estimates of a Swiss Bankers Association (SBA) report. These turned out to be false. James Nason, an officer of the SBA, has said that the SBA had never published any such report. In March 2019, National Institute of Financial Management reported to the Lok Sabha Standing Committee on Finance, that the estimate is about \$216 billion-\$490 billion. This is one-seventh the estimate quoted ahead of the 2014 elections. In essence, India's foreign black money problem was misdiagnosed and unverified, exaggerated numbers went into satisfying Parliament that draconian financial laws are justified.

### Taking cognisance

For the judiciary, one question that arises is: if the conventional wisdom on black money was based on disinformation, should it take cognisance of it? If yes, how? For example, should the Supreme Court take a relook at its verdict in Ram Jethmalani's case against black money, especially to guide lower courts in their examination of financial crime allegations?

A democratic state cannot unjustly enrich itself by making citizens pay for what is not rightly owed. The belief that the government will act on principles of honour and good faith is an invaluable but fragile national asset. Nani Palkhivala wrote in an article in 1993. He said that fiscal system must have not just legality but also legitimacy. It is denuded of all leg-

itimacy when there is a breach of faith on the part of the government in its dealings with the taxpayer.

International media called demonetisation, among the government's purported measures to fight the black money menace, as a 'massive theft of people's property'. Similarly, the announcement that ₹15 lakh will be deposited in each citizen's account was found to be nothing more than a political bait. In civil cases if a trustee breaches faith this way, trust laws provide recourse. As do penal laws in similar circumstances against agents, servants and even against wives. There is, however, no punitive recourse against political skulduggery. The doctrine of promissory estoppel deserves to be tried in political jurisprudence also.

The government should give up the belief that being an intrusive, browbeating confiscator enriches Indians. It doesn't. This approach is reminiscent of India's imperialistic past and, in its current form, is impoverishing us into an economic depression. The draconian fiscal laws must at once be repealed. Increased international cooperation, technological advances and banking penetration implodes black money more than any law or sermon on patriotism. India's war on black money can only be won through democratic, persuasive and economically-sound means.

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Harish Khare is a senior journalist based in Delhi

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

### Anti-CAA mood

To the cheerleaders of the right wing, the recent backlash against the passage of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act may look like a flash in the pan. But the reality is that discontent has been simmering since the government began the National Register of Citizens (NRC) exercise in Assam. Buoyed by the thumping majority it received, the Narendra Modi government mistakenly viewed it as a licence to impose its Hindutva agenda. To the Opposition, this should have provided the perfect ammunition to take a stand. But, the sad reality is that in spite of the voices raised, the Opposition is as

divided as before. Only a united Opposition can force the government to re-examine the Act.

ABHISHEK S.,  
Bengaluru

■ The nationwide agitation proves that people of our country cannot be divided in the name of religion. Though the CAA is alleged to be anti-Muslim, the solidarity shown by Indians of different hues seeking cancellation of the Act is really amazing. We have witnessed the avowed principle of our nation, 'unity in diversity', in the spontaneous agitations against the Act. It is time the government understood the sentiments and moods of the people and rescinded the

Act, which appears to be against the country's secular spirit.

THARGIUS S. FERNANDO,  
Chennai

■ The article "The last bastions of secular India," (Op-Ed page, Dec. 20) has rightly touched on the rising tide of oppression that threatens to derail minority institutions like the Jamia Millia Islamiya and the Aligarh Muslim University. These institutions have witnessed large scale, albeit peaceful, demonstrations by students, which have been met with alleged high-handedness on the part of the Delhi police. Minority institutions have been feeling the heat for quite some time

now after the NDA government took office for the second time and the assurances by leaders in the BJP have failed to cut any ice with the students of these universities. The shrill cries emanating from the Opposition ranks have also fallen on deaf ears.

C.V. ARAVIND,  
Bengaluru

### Indo-Soviet Treaty

I still remember *The Hindu* front-paging the momentous Indo-Soviet Treaty of 1971. I also remember the trepidation with which we read the prominent news of the despatch by Richard Nixon of the U.S. Seventh Fleet to the Indian ocean. But the news about the

Soviets despatching their own warships as a counter to the U.S. action, reported so inconspicuously in *The Hindu* in a line or two, was what gave us hope and good cheer those days. After nearly half a century, we are given to understand that so much had happened behind the scenes (Op-Ed page, "Calling the U.S.'s bluff in 1971," Dec. 12).

S. JAGATHISHMAN NAIR,  
Thiruvananthapuram

### Prize money

The prestigious Sahitya Akademi award is considered by many as an Indian equivalent to the Nobel Prize. A cursory glance into the list of the past winners would convey the fact that

most of the authors spent 5-6 years in researching, ruminating and writing their masterpieces. Hence, the monetary award of ₹1,00,000 comes across as a pittance. Though the winners get name and fame, the material benefit also matters. A government that spends millions of rupees to promote Hindi and Sanskrit should be in a good position to reward such high achievement in literature more appropriately. The prize money should be increased to ₹5,00,000, which would encourage new writers.

ANNA MARY YVONNE,  
Chennai



# Should the government exit navratna companies?

PARLEY

Disinvesting partial stakes is more fruitful than outright asset sales of PSUs

Last month, the Cabinet approved sale of the government's stake in Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited, a navratna public sector company with oil refining and marketing operations. BPCL's stake alone is expected to raise about ₹60,000 crore for the exchequer this year, and given the fiscal pressures the government is facing on the tax revenue front, such large-scale disinvestment will help. In a conversation moderated by Vikas Dhoot, T.T. Ram Mohan and C.P. Chandrasekhar discuss the implications of BPCL's stake sale. Edited excerpts:

**If we look at India's approach to disinvestment since liberalisation, the focus in the Narasimha Rao government and the UPA years was on offloading minority stakes and listing them on the stock exchange. During the time of the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government, we saw some bold moves on strategic sales with many large, loss-making PSUs like Balco, Modern Foods and Hindustan Zinc being sold off. In September 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said that the government has no business to be in business. In the last six years, we saw a slightly cautious approach until now. For the first time, we are looking at a profitable public sector undertaking (PSU) like BPCL being put up for sale in an import-dependent sector like petroleum. Would you say that this signals a turning point?**

**T.T. Ram Mohan:** I think it's a little early to say that it is a shift because this move seems to be driven primarily by pressures on the fiscal front. So, it is not clear whether they would have opted for something as drastic as this if they had not faced the shortfalls in tax revenues that they are facing now. The effort is primarily to raise revenues in quick time. I think what is missing at the moment is the framework in which this sort of disinvestment or strategic sale is to take place. You have to be very clear about the objectives. Is it primarily about raising revenue?

Is it about improving efficiency? Is it about broadening the capital market? The fact that they're not talking of something similar in the case of public sector banks suggests that this may not be as much of an ideological shift as a matter of expediency.

**Mr. Chandrasekhar, what do you think?**

**C.P. Chandrasekhar:** We have to recognise that this is a culmination of a tendency we've observed over a significant period of time, particularly starting with the Vajpayee government. The original understanding was that you go in for partial disinvestment to public sector equity with two purposes, among many. One was it would allow you to mobilise a certain amount of resources which can be put into some kind of a fund which could be used to modernise, renovate or make viable public sector firms which still have the possibility of being profitable despite being loss-making. This could also be used to put money into firms that were so loss-making that it is best to shut them down, by paying off retrenchment funds to workers and cleaning the books. The other was that having private equity holding in public firms brings in a certain degree of monitoring and discipline of managers in the public sector that comes from outside the government. We have clearly shifted from both of these.

It's now clear that even partial disinvestment or even a strategic sale is clearly to mobilise resources to finance the Budget, which is problematic at multiple levels.

**The CEA recently argued that the private sector does a far better job of taking savings in the economy and making sure that they are ploughed back productively. One of the long-standing problems of India's public sector has been about bureaucratic and political interference and rent-seeking. So, one could argue that this kind of a sale will free up entities like BPCL to scale bigger heights under private management.**



**CPC:** You just have to look at the civil aviation sector where we brought in the private sector in a big way. You have to look at what "competition" has done in the telecom sector. And we know that survival in these sectors for a number of firms was essentially because they were bankrolled by public sector banks.

**TTR:** It is not borne out empirically that the private sector is more efficient. Even in post-liberalisation India, a number of studies show a trend towards convergence in performance between PSUs and private enterprises. Even in banking, until about 2011 when the NPA crisis started, we saw a similar trend. One of the reasons people tend to believe that the private sector is more efficient is because there's something called a survivorship bias in the data. When a public sector enterprise makes losses, it continues to exist. Whereas, if a private sector enterprise makes losses for a long time, it sort of exits the database. So, people will look at public and private sector banks and say private sector banks are doing much better, but they will ignore the many private sector banks that failed and had to be merged with other entities. The problem in comparing the two is that only the survivors of the private sector are left standing and you say they are doing marvellously.

If improving efficiency is the argument, then it logically follows that the focus of disinvestment or privatisation should be on loss-making or underperforming entities. It is not clear why you should take a highly competitive and profitable company such as Concor or BPCL and opt to privatise it first unless, of

**The question one should ask is, if basic engineering and managerial skills are there, then how do we ensure that the enterprise continues to perform well?**

course, your basic motivation is to raise revenue in quick time.

One of the arguments being made about BPCL is that if the government sells it now when it is doing well, then it stands to realise a very good price. But if and when private competition comes into distribution of oil, then BPCL surely will not do well and the government wouldn't realise the same price. That is just pessimistic thinking because you presume that every public enterprise is doomed to fail. The question one should ask is, if basic engineering and managerial skills are there, then how do we ensure that the enterprise continues to perform well? How do you address governance issues so that these public assets are managed well? Instead of asking that, we start off with the presumption that whatever is public cannot do well and should be sold off.

Of course, one can make the argument that within the oil sector, even if you sell BPCL, there will still be public sector dominance. There is HPCL merged with ONGC and there is IOC which is much bigger than BPCL. So selling BPCL will fetch the government revenue without necessarily undermining government dominance in the oil sector. But that's a limited argument to make and one should be careful not to stretch it too far and extend it to PSUs in general.

**In Parliament, when asked about its disinvestment policy, the government said this month that it is not driven by profit or loss but decided on the basis of 'national security, sovereign functions, market imperfections and public purpose.' How would you interpret this differently than the earlier focus of retaining PSUs in strategic sectors?**

**CPC:** The phrases used in the response to the Parliament question is just to obfuscate... The essential purpose of this exercise is to get money for the Budget and getting money in this manner is neither rational nor, in an accounting sense, meaningful because the government will lose hugely in the process and, therefore, the people who are essentially one step removed from the owners of these assets would also lose.

**TTR:** Valuation is the trickiest part in privatisation. Privatisation leads to superior efficiency provided certain conditions are fulfilled – how you privatise is very crucial to the success. One of the most important conditions to be met is that the valuation must be right. There's no point in giving assets away on the cheap, because then it is very easy for the private sector buyer to make supernormal returns on undervalued assets. So getting the valuation right is a tall order and that is where controversies arise. Even in Air India's case, if it is seen to be sold on the cheap, there's bound to be a severe backlash. In general, if you go for strategic sales, where you sell a 100% or majority stake in one go, then the chances of getting the valuation right is lower as there is no price discovery process. Later on, you realise the price was perhaps not right. Whereas with disinvestment, where you unload in tranches, there's a better chance of price discovery over time – the first tranche may be undervalued, but once it is listed and performance improves, the government can realise better valuations in subsequent tranches. This is why contrary to popular perception in the country, a vast majority of privatisation sales the world over have happened through share issue privatisations (disinvesting partial stakes) as opposed to asset sales (what we call

strategic sales). In the literature, there is examination of the virtues of share issue privatisation versus asset sales and it is seen that the former is preferred worldwide. Asset sales typically happen under distress conditions, where governments are under severe fiscal stress and they want to raise revenue quickly. And I would sincerely hope that we do not go down that route except in a few cases.

**If you look at some of the earlier strategic sales like Hindustan Zinc or Paradeep Phosphates, where the government retained a minority stake, the firms have turned around from chronic losses to become quite profitable. And the government got this upside because it retained a stake. Is that an approach we could look at?**

**CPC:** If there is incremental disinvestment even from profitable PSUs, to generate resources to restructure the rest of the public sector, that is something we can discuss.

**TTR:** Yes, you need to have a framework for carrying out disinvestment or privatisation... Is it for strengthening the public sector or is it for dismantling the public sector? The Disinvestment Commission under G.V. Ramakrishna was very clear that privatisation should be for strengthening the public sector. So they ruled out privatisation of core industries and highly profitable PSUs, and they also said the proceeds should be used for restructuring other PSUs or spending on rural infrastructure. The receipts should not be used for the government's revenue expenditure. So I think it would make more sense if the government were to articulate a philosophy under which the privatisation is to be carried out so it will be easier to carry Parliament and the public with you.

Strategic sales are very difficult to pull off due to valuation issues. And we have seen that already in Air India. The government will also have to take into account what happens to employees and their benefits. Although the objective is to quickly sell off assets to bridge the tax shortfall, I think it's going to be very difficult for the government to pull it off.



**T.T. Ram Mohan** teaches Finance and Economics at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad



**C.P. Chandrasekhar** is retired faculty from the Centre of Economics Studies and Planning, JNU



Scan the QR code to listen to the full interview online

## FACTWISE

### A tale of two demands

Dr. Singh and the CPI(M) demanded citizenship for Bangla refugees, but not on the basis of their religion

SRINIVASAN RAMANI

During the debate on the Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB), 2019, BJP Rajya Sabha MP, J.P. Nadda, alluded to comments by former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in 2003 asking for grant of citizenship to minorities who have faced persecution in Bangladesh. He said the government was only implementing this demand. Is the government's assertion that the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) is only in line with what Dr. Singh had asked for, valid?

In 2003, during a debate over the CAB 2003, Dr. Singh addressed Deputy Prime Minister L.K. Advani: "After the partition of our country, the minorities in countries like Bangladesh have faced persecution, and it is our moral obligation that if circumstances force... unfortunate people to seek refuge in our country, our approach to granting citizenship to [them] should be more liberal. I... hope that the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister will bear this in mind in charting out the future course of action with regard to the Citizenship Act."

A similar demand was registered by the CPI (M) in a resolution in its 2012 Party Congress to "sympathetically consider the legitimate demand of the large number of Bengali refugees to recognise them as citizens of India. They had fled their country, erstwhile East Pakistan and then Bangladesh... At the time of the Parliament discussion on the Citizenship Amendment Act, 2003, all political parties from across the spectrum had supported an amendment to protect these citizens who are victims of historical circumstances. Yet even after so many years the law considers them illegal migrants... [the CPI(M)] demands a suitable amendment in Clause 2 (i)(b) of the said Citizenship Act in relation to the Bangladesh minority community refugees. This must be done while protecting the Assam Accord..."

As economist Prasenjit Bose wrote in *The Hindu* online edition (<http://bit.ly/prasenCAA>), "Over 5.21 million persons [from East Pakistan] had registered themselves in Indian check posts as 'refugees' by 1970..."

Another 9.89 million had crossed over in 1971, according to figures provided by the Indian government to the United Nations... While most of the 1971 refugees returned to Bangladesh after the end of the hostilities, a few thousands did not... Although a large majority of the Bengali refugees are Hindus, the post-Partition refugees also include a section of Bengali Muslims, given the specific nature of the 1971 conflict in Bangladesh, which was fought over language and not religion... Since none of these refugees had entered India with valid passports or travel documents, they have become 'illegal migrants'... after the passage of the Citizenship Amendment Act, 2003. Moreover, the 2003 amendment has made it impossible for children born in refugee families to become Indian citizens by birth, if either of their parents is deemed to be an 'illegal migrant'."

#### Qualitatively different

Both Dr. Singh and the CPI(M) demanded exemption for Bangladeshi refugees already in India from being declared as illegal migrants, and to be granted citizenship, not on the grounds of religion, but because they faced persecution. This is qualitatively different from what the CAA 2019 argues for. It chooses to provide citizenship only to non-Muslims from three Muslim-majority nations – Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. It avoids the term "persecuted" but its statement of objects says "many persons belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian communities have faced persecution on grounds of religions" in these three countries and renders only these communities to be eligible for beneficial effects of the Act. This classification could fail the test of constitutionality because of the exclusion of some countries and communities on the basis of religion. The provisions of the Act omit persecuted Muslim sects from the three Muslim-majority nations. Besides, it does not consider other neighbours – Myanmar, Sri Lanka, for e.g., – which have a record of minority persecution.

[srinivasan.vr@thehindu.co.in](mailto:srinivasan.vr@thehindu.co.in)



## NOTEBOOK

### Wielding a pen amidst placards and pellet guns

Journalists must stay in the sidelines while covering protests

SUHASINI HAIDAR

When tear gas first hits you, it is hard to follow the standard operating procedure journalists are given when they go out to cover protests. I was 22, in Srinagar, when I first smelt that now-familiar burning scent of chilli (capsica) mixed with CR/CS/CN chemical gas, which the police dilute according to the strength of the protest. "Don't rub your eyes", "cover your nose and mouth with a wet cloth", "run far from the firing" and "always carry a bottle of water" are all great bits of advice, but not easy to do if you are a journalist carrying tripods and other equipment and trying to get photographs, record visuals, and note down comments of protesters and the police all at once. I was caught off guard the first time, but I learnt quickly to avoid the stinging sensation, streaming eyes, breathlessness

and the headache after. One trick is to stay on the sidelines of a protest, not at its centre. Journalists often interview protesters right in the middle of the marching crowds, but that isn't the best idea. Others try to get as close to police barricades, even stand on top of them to get a better shot, which can be dangerous if protesters decide to knock them down or the police decide to lathi-charge the protesters. In fact, conflict trainers will tell you that the best place to be is at a slight height away from the protest – you can get a view, but not become part of the melee. Also, journalists must take pains not to be identified with either the security forces or the protesters. One way to do that is to not wear khaki or green or camouflage clothes, preferably nothing that resembles a uniform, and avoid t-shirts with political messages. Also, journalists should

always have their press IDs displayed prominently. There's more in journalism manuals about what to do when protests get out of hand or the police decide to get tough. The first sign of that is when police cordons get tight or the street lights go out. Another confusing sign is when authorities start clearing barricades, which could mean they are bringing in fire trucks to use water cannons on the crowds, or buses to arrest them en masse. Either way, this is another clear cue for journalists to step to the side of the protests and get to a vantage point. This is also a good time to change the tape or memory card in your camera, especially as the police often detain journalists and confiscate videos that may show excessive force or a human rights violation by forces. It also makes good sense to steer clear of those in the protest who might purposely push journalists

in harm's way to ensure favourable coverage. Much of what journalists learn about covering protests is on the job. In the 1990s, I covered a protest on Delhi's Parliament Street where a photographer was grievously injured because he tried to climb a fire truck for a good view and it suddenly backed away. During the 2010 student protests in Kashmir, when pellet guns were widely used by the forces, I learned to keep away from police lines, to avoid the sharp stones pelted at them. During the Nirbhaya protests in Delhi, I learned that wearing several layers of clothes helps to avoid "water burns" from the sheer force of water cannons. During the protests against President Mohamed Morsi in 2013 in Egypt, I learned how quickly a protesting crowd can morph into one for regime change, and the story one is covering itself changes.

## The Hindu

### FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO DECEMBER 20, 1969

#### EMS on status of Governors

Mr. E.M.S. Nambudiripad has expressed the view that "a serious review" of the status of the Governors had assumed "immediate importance" in the context of the split in the Central leadership of the Congress and the consequent political conditions in the country, which were "reminiscent of the last days of the Mughal Empire" with the States tending to take more and more independent positions vis-a-vis an increasingly weakening Centre. Commenting on the President's address to the recent Governors' Conference, Mr. Nambudiripad, in a signed editorial in the Marxist party organ, *Desabhimani*, has said that though the homilies of the President were "pleasant to hear" they were bound to remain mere paper declarations when viewed against the practical, political realities in the country. The Marxist leader noted that all the Governors in service today were "the nominees of a particular party or that of the dominant group in that party".

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO DEC. 20, 1919.

#### Entertained by Merchants.

Yesterday morning Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak was taken in a grand procession by the leading sowcars and merchants of Mint street in a motor car with the accompaniment of Tanjore Band. A number of leading sowcars merchants and others graced the procession by their presence and through out the length and breadth of the Mint street, flowers were showered on him and he was garlanded and presented with a lace Dupatta by Messrs Govindas Rathakrishnadas and by the residents of the street through which the procession passed; special mention may be made of the Mint Street residents. The procession passed along Mint Street, thence through Audiappa Naick Street to Govindappanaick Street. He was profusely garlanded at every shop in Mint street and camphor was lighted. Mr. N. Ramdass, a diamond merchant in front of his residence stopped the car of Mr. Tilak and after garlanding him and performing the camphor light "Arti", threw Copper and silver coins and some pieces of gold and precious stones and pearls all round Mr. Tilak, a rare honour which even kings will envy. This ceremony is generally done on marriage occasions in Northern India to ward off evil spirits supposed to be roaming in atmosphere and also to show profound love towards the married couple.



FROM PAGE ONE

## Two killed in police firing in Mangaluru

The CAA, passed by Parliament recently, offers a route to citizenship for non-Muslim refugees from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, while the NRC, according to Home Minister Amit Shah, will identify and remove "infiltrators".

An unsigned note circulated by a Central government functionary around noon said when the NRC is rolled out, people will be able to use existing documents to establish citizenship. However, there was no formal announcement from the government regarding concerns raised in the rallies across the country that the hand of the new citizenship regime will be heavy on Muslims and poor people who are unlikely to possess documents.

In Mumbai, actor Sushant Singh, who was removed by television show Savdhan India for his position on the CAA-NRC, said, "I must thank the students of this country for letting us know that India's blood hasn't cooled yet."

Historian Ramachandra Guha was among the people detained in Bengaluru. Smaller cities in Karnataka, particularly Kalaburagi in North Karnataka, witnessed huge turnout for several protests.

In Lucknow Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said protesters who damaged public property will be forced to pay for it. "No protest can take place without permission," he told news agency ANI.

**Policemen injured**  
Several policemen including an Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) were injured in heavy stone pelting when a march turned violent in Shah-e-Alam area of Ahmedabad.

Expressing solidarity with the nation-wide protests, students and various organisations took to the streets across Kerala, even as Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan warned the Centre against using force to crush democratic and peaceful means of protest.

# Don't add fuel to the fire: Centre

Message says NRC merely a normal process to register name in citizens' register

VIJAITA SINGH  
NEW DELHI

As protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) raged across the country, Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy said a countrywide NRC had not been notified so far and no one should fear. Mr. Reddy told *The Hindu* that "political parties and intellectuals should not put petrol in fire, instead they should douse the flames".

The Minister asked students to read the CAA before protesting. "It is not against students, any region or people belonging to any religion... no one is being sent to detention centres. Political parties should behave responsibly. Cine actors also participating in protests, why are they doing so?" he said.

**Ads in newspapers**  
The government published an advertisement in Hindi newspapers to dispel the myths around the CAA and the NRC.

It said that "the NRC has not been announced yet and



**Raging on:** Students protesting against the CAA and the NRC at the Red Fort in New Delhi on Thursday. ■ SANDEEP SAXENA

if it is done so in future, then rules and regulations should be such that no Indian citizen is troubled."

Mr. Reddy said, "Violence was reported only in some rural areas of Lucknow. In Delhi, demonstrations were peaceful. The Northeast is also normal. Political parties and intellectuals should not instigate people on the lines of religion. Students do not know that the CAA is not against them."

No discussion has been held yet on whether those excluded from Assam's NRC would benefit from the CAA,

he said. Around 19 lakh people in the State were excluded from the final register published on August 31, an exercise conducted to segregate Indian citizens living in Assam from those who had illegally entered the State from Bangladesh after March 24, 1971 on the basis of the Assam Accord signed by the Government of India in 1985.

**WhatsApp note**  
A fact-check of the NRC released unofficially by the government and circulated on WhatsApp said that the process was "merely a normal

process to register your name in the Citizens' register." "Just like we present our identity cards or any other document for registering our names in the voter list or getting Aadhaar card made, similar documents shall need to be provided for NRC, as and when it is carried out," the unsigned note said.

"Citizenship can be proved by submitting any documents related to date and place of birth. However, a decision is yet to be taken on such acceptable documents. It is likely to include voter cards, passports, Aadhaar, licences, insurance papers, birth certificates, school-leaving certificates, documents relating to land or home or other similar documents issued by the government," the note said.

To a question on what will happen to those who are homeless, poor, uneducated and do not have documents, the note said, "Such people vote on some basis and they also get the benefit of the welfare schemes of the government. Their identity will be established on the basis of that."

## It's similar to Emergency resistance, says Yechury

'Outpouring of student frustrations'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) are similar to the resistance that students and political parties had mounted against the Emergency, CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury said on Thursday.

A joint protest, which five Left parties organised at Mandi House, was broken up by the Delhi police within 10 minutes of the agitators having assembled there. The police argued that Section 144 was in force, so an assembly of more than four persons would not be allowed. All prominent leaders of these parties, including CPI general secretary D. Raja and Mr. Yechury, were detained.

Breaking with the norm of taking detained leaders to the nearest police station, the police carted them off to north Delhi, many kilometres away, and dropped them at an undisclosed location.

The leaders and those who escaped arrest at Man-



Sitaram Yechury

di House and the Red Fort came to Jantar Mantar to continue protest. "This is more like resistance to Emergency. Look at this generation, they are the inheritors of India. They are agitated over the change in India's constitutional status," Mr. Yechury said. "The protests were an outpouring of frustrations of students and others with the government's lackadaisical approach to the economy. The students are asking what is the government's job. It is to address livelihood concerns. The economy is in recession, unemployment rates are the highest we have ever seen, our farmers are committing suicides."

# Centre 'muzzling' dissent, says Congress

'It is trying to impose the Jammu and Kashmir model of normalcy in other parts of the country'

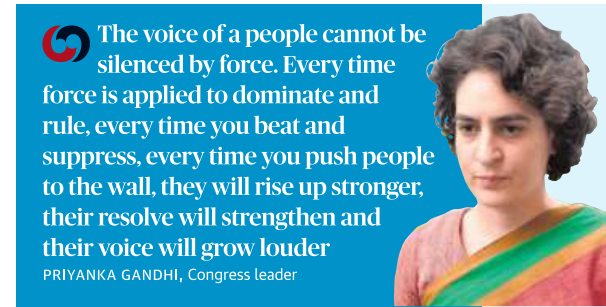
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Thursday accused the Union Government of "muzzling the voice of the people by resorting to draconian measures" including shutting down mobile Internet services and putting up barricades to prevent people from reaching sites of protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

The party said the government was trying to impose the "Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) model of normalcy" in other parts of the country by shutting down the Internet.

Former party chief Rahul Gandhi said the government had no right to "suppress people's voices".

"This government has no



**The voice of a people cannot be silenced by force. Every time force is applied to dominate and rule, every time you beat and suppress, every time you push people to the wall, they will rise up stronger, their resolve will strengthen and their voice will grow louder**

PRIYANKA GANDHI, Congress leader

right to shut down colleges, telephones & the Internet, to halt metro trains and to impose #Section144 to suppress India's voice & prevent peaceful protests. To do so is an insult to India's soul," tweeted Mr. Gandhi, who is away in South Korea leading a party delegation.

Party general secretary

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said there would be a greater fightback by citizens if the government tried to "silence" them.

"Every time force is applied to dominate and rule, every time you beat and suppress, every time you push people to the wall, they will rise up stronger, their re-

solve will strengthen and their voice will grow louder," Ms. Vadra tweeted in Hindi. "Our freedom movement was proof of this, our Constitution is the guarantor of it and our people are the soul of it," she added.

In a series of tweets, former Finance Minister P. Chidambaram condemned the police for preventing citizens including historian Ramachandra Guha from peacefully protesting in Bengaluru.

**'Liberty at stake'**  
"What are at stake – liberty, equality, constitutional morality – are so important that we must seize the moment and push back the authoritarian regime," Mr. Chidam-

baram tweeted. "Ram Guha was not violating any law when he was arrested. He was alone! Sec 144 'prohibition' was not attracted. It is the four policemen who surrounded him who made the solitary peaceful citizen into an 'unlawful assembly!'".

Addressing a press conference, Congress MP Abhishek Manu Singhvi gave out statistics about the dramatic increase in Internet shutdowns since the BJP government came to power in 2014; from three instances of shutdown in 2012 to 134 times in 2018 to 94 times this year so far.

"That tells you its own story. That tells that you want to crush dissent," said Mr. Singhvi.

## Jaishankar briefs U.S. Senate panel on CAA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar had shared India's perspective on Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019, with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the sidelines of Wednesday's India-U.S. "2+2" ministerial meeting in the United States, the spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs said here.

India has been maintaining that the developments regarding the new citizenship code is an internal matter. This, however, did not prevent important legislative outfits in the U.S. from commenting on the new law with the USCFIR calling for sanctions on Home Minister Amit Shah. The issue, ho-

wever, did not figure in the official discussion between the visiting Indian dignitaries, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Dr. Jaishankar and their U.S. counterparts.

In a joint statement issued on Thursday, both India and the U.S. agreed to uphold the "international rules-based order." The statement called upon Pakistan to deny resources to cross-border terror groups.

The document also contained American acknowledgement of Indian support for the recovery of remains of those U.S. soldiers and aviators who were lost in air crashes in the mountains of Arunachal Pradesh during the Second World War."

## Hindu, Sikh refugees support Act

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

As the Delhi Police imposed Section 144 near the Red Fort area in view of protest marches against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), hundreds of Hindu and Sikh refugees from Pakistan and Afghanistan gathered at Rajghat in support of the Act.

"Grant of citizenship will ensure that I can live in this country without any fear of being thrown out. I never got the chance to study back in Sindh, where girls are not allowed to study after a particular age. But here I am hopeful that my daughters can get educated," said 35-year-old Shyama.

## People need reassurance: Assam MLAs

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

A group of 20 Bharatiya Janata Party MLAs on Thursday met Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and sought creation of an atmosphere where the legislators can face the people for removing misconceptions about the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

The legislators said they had to virtually go underground to avoid public ire and steps must be taken to assure the people that their culture, language and existence were not under threat from any piece of legislation.

"I have had to go into hiding [after the anti-CAA protests that left six people dead] and was forced to leave home town Dibrugarh. We cannot let such a situation continue," BJP MLA Prasanta Phukan said.

The Sootea MLA, Padma Hazarika, said the government must hasten implementation of Clause 6 of the Assam Accord, 1985, that guarantees constitutional safeguards for the indigenous Assamese people.

Mr. Hazarika said some protesters had been spreading misinformation on the tea estates of eastern Assam that the CAA would make the Adivasis or "truckloads of Bangladeshi labourers".

Tea industry captains have corroborated the "fear psychosis" that has seen plantation workers stay away from work across many estates in eastern Assam, leading to a fall in production.

## Allow children's right to protest, says UNICEF

Urges govts. to ensure their protection

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The UNICEF on Thursday urged governments across the world to allow children their right to protest and appealed to its member-states to refrain from violence and ensure their protection.

"Children's rights to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression, including in peaceful protest, are enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the most widely ratified human rights treaty in the world. It is incumbent on member-states to ensure that children can exercise this right in a safe and peaceful manner," said UNICEF's Executive Director Henrietta Fore.

The statement from the UN agency is a condemnation of governments crack-



Henrietta Fore

ing down on young protesters globally, on a day of protests across the country against the Citizenship Amendment Act as well as the police crackdown at Jamia Millia Islamia and Aligarh Muslim University.

Ms. Fore urged countries to allow children to protest and to respond to them in a "principled, constructive and supportive way."

## India clarifies on security of Afghan minorities

'Shah comment was on Taliban era'

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE  
NEW DELHI

The present government of Afghanistan has "substantially" addressed the security needs of the religious communities of the country, an official of the External Affairs Ministry said on Thursday. The clarification was made days after Home Minister Amit Shah argued in favour of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, citing persecution of religious minorities in Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

"We are also aware that the current government has substantially addressed the concerns of the minority communities as per their constitutional provisions," Ministry spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said.

"We did not say that religious persecution is taking

place under the present government of Afghanistan. What we have said and that was explained by our Home Minister as well is that during the previous Mujahideen and Taliban regimes, religious minorities were deliberately victimised," Mr. Kumar said.

"Our democracy and other institutions in the country are well equipped to deal with any differences of opinion in a peaceful manner. I do not think any external agency has any locus standi to comment on a matter which is completely internal to India," he said in response to a comment by UNICEF's Executive Director Henrietta Fore, who had noted that struggle for equality all over the world was leading to the loss of freedom for children.

# 'CAA paves the way for foreign aggression'

Plea in SC says the Centre failed to protect the country from internal disturbance

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL  
NEW DELHI

A petition filed in the Supreme Court on Thursday raised a novel argument against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) of 2019 of opening the nation to foreign aggression and internal disturbances.

It said the Centre, through this Act, had failed in its constitutional duty to protect the country from external aggression and internal disturbance.

The court will hear the CAA challenge on January



22. Under Article 355 of the Constitution, the Centre has a duty to protect the States from external aggression and internal disturbance. However, the petition filed by Anis Educational

and Welfare Trust through advocate Ejaz Maqbool, said the new law allowed massive influx of illegal migrants into the country.

**2005 verdict**  
The Supreme Court had held that massive influx of illegal migrants from neighbouring countries amounts to "external aggression and internal disturbance" in a 2005 judgment in Sarbananda Sonowal versus Union of India.

"By virtue of this Act, the Union has not only violated the constitutional mandate

but has in fact devised a procedure to grant citizenship to these illegal migrants, that too in a fast track manner," the petition said.

The Act facilitates the influx of illegal migrants into India and in fact, retrospectively legitimises illegal entry into the nation by enabling them to apply for Indian citizenship.

The Centre, through this Act, has virtually granted citizenship to illegal migrants in failure of its constitutional obligation under Article 355, the petition said.

## Governor asks Mamata to take back remark

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
KOLKATA

On a day when West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee dared the Centre to carry out a referendum on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act across the country, Governor Jagdeep Dhankar urged her to withdraw her comment.

Addressing her fourth anti-CAA rally in a row in Kolkata on Thursday, Ms. Banerjee said, "We would like to know how many [people] are for CAA and how many are against it. If majority does not agree to it, will you [the Prime Minister] resign?" The referendum could be carried out by independent bodies like the United Nations or any impartial international organisation, she said.

"I appeal to CM Mamata Banerjee to please withdraw her reported statement," the Governor said on social media.

Earlier in the day, the Governor, while pointing out that the Supreme Court had not granted any stay on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, urged "all to give up agitational path in the interest of peace so that normalcy returns and the sufferings of people are contained."

Kolkata witnessed five rallies during the day, of which the rally held without the support of political parties drew no less than 20,000 people. The rally, organised by civil society representatives, students and activists, demanded the scrapping of the CAA and the non-implementation of the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

## Infiltrators using Nepal border, says Amit Shah

'Persons from 24 countries nabbed'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday said some forces inimical to India were using the borders of friendly countries like Nepal and Bhutan to push "infiltrators".

Addressing the troops and officers of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) on its 56th Raising Day celebrations, he said that in the last one year "54 infiltrators, including two Pakistanis," have been nabbed at the Nepal border. These infiltrators were from 24 countries, apart from Pakistan. The SSB is tasked with guarding the 1,751-km long frontier with Nepal and Bhutan. It was raised in the aftermath of the 1962 Chinese aggression.

Mr. Shah said India enjoyed very "cordial and friendly" relations with Nepal and Bhutan and the border force had ensured that people from these nations were treated with "respect" at these fronts. The country's 130 crore people were sleeping peacefully because all the border guarding forces like the SSB were protect-



Amit Shah

ing the nation and serving in hostile environments, where temperatures range from -46°C to 47°C.

Mr. Shah promised to the troops that the government would make sure that within one to one and a half years the jawans of all border guarding forces got to spend at least 100 days with their children, families and parents.

"This is a difficult job but as the Modi government has accomplished other difficult targets, this will be done too," he said at an SSB camp in south Delhi. He added that the force would get an additional manpower of 12,055 personnel by the end of next year.

**APPEAL**  
Name of Patient: Shaik Risha, 14 years.  
Hospital Name: Christian Medical College.  
Diagnosis: Acute Proliferative Leukemia.  
Her treatment is for 10 months and total cost of treatment is Rs. 1,50,000/-  
We request Kind Hearted Philanthropists to save her. Kindly send donation by Cheque/D.D/M.O favouring Save Poor Lives and on the back of cheque write A/C Shaikha Risha S/B Account No. 20000913487, State Bank of India, Raja Annamalaiapuram Branch, IFSC Code: SBIN001855, which is exempted under 80G of I.T. Act.  
We request Kind Hearted Philanthropists to save her. Kindly send donation by Cheque/D.D/M.O favouring Save Poor Lives and on the back of cheque write A/C Shaikha Risha S/B Account No. 20000913487, State Bank of India, Raja Annamalaiapuram Branch, IFSC Code: SBIN001855, which is exempted under 80G of I.T. Act.  
Contact: SAVE POOR LIVES REGISTERED PUBLIC CHARITABLE TRUST, (ADMIN DIVISION) Flat No. A1, Ceerob Garden, Ground Floor, Old No.76, Kamarajar Salai, Raja Annamalaiapuram, Chennai - 600 028. Ph: 044-42044165, Mobile: 984607377, Email: savepoorlives@gmail.com Our website: www.savepoorlives.com  
Donation given to patients upto March 2019 for Rs. 4,26,89,335/- and Scholarship 7,30,800/- November donation given Rs. 4,71,734/-