

'CHILDREN OF THIS SOIL' NEED NOT WORRY, MODI TELLS MUSLIMS

PM: No talk of NRC at all, lies being spread about detention centres

'Now that some protesters have Tricolour in hand, I hope they will raise their voice against gun... Pakistan-sponsored terror'

LIZ MATHEW & ABHINAV RAJPUT
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22



Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the rally at Ramliya Maidan, in New Delhi, on Sunday. Prem Nath Pandey

IN HIS first remarks following the week-long protests against the new citizenship law, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday distanced his government from a pan-India National Register of Citizens (NRC) and said Muslims who are "sons of the soil" have nothing to fear from either the Citizenship (Amendment) Act or NRC.

In a clear departure from the refrain of his ministers and party colleagues, including Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and BJP working president J P Nadda, Modi said his government had not held any discussions on a pan-India NRC yet.

The Prime Minister also denied that there are any detention centres in the country, saying these were lies being spread by the "Congress, its allies, some ed-

ucated Naxals and urban Naxals".

Barely days ago, at his election rally in Jharkhand, he said that those "spreading the fire" could be "identified by their clothes". On Sunday, Modi said that it was "comforting" to see some protesters holding the national flag.

"Nagrikta sanshodhan kanoon ka virodh karne waalon ke haath

mein jab eint-patthar dekhta hun toh mujhe bahut taqleef hoti hai, lekin jab unhi mein se kuchh ke haath mein Tiranga dekhta hun, toh sukoon bhi milta hai ki chalo, Tirange ko toh thaamne lage. Mujhe ummede hai ki ab jab

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Reality check: Before PM's distancing, there was Shah's underlining

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22



Has often talked about a pan-India NRC

WHILE PRIME Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday that there has been no discussion on a National Register of Citizens (NRC) since the time his government was first elected in 2014, senior ministers and party leaders, including Home Minister and BJP president Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and BJP working president J P Nadda, have made public statements about a pan-India exercise — as recently as earlier this month.

The BJP's manifesto for the 2019 Lok Sabha elections also promised NRC in "other parts of the country in a phased manner". Under the headline, "Combating Infiltration", the manifesto said the party would

EXPLAINED

SIMPLY PUT
WHAT NRC + CAA MEANS TO YOU
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complete the process of NRC in areas where illegal migration has affected people's livelihood and employment. "In future, we will implement NRC in a phased manner in other parts of the country," it said.

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UDAY scheme loses power, sharp spike in discom losses

PRABHA RAGHAVAN & ANIL SASI
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

FOUR YEARS after it was launched, UDAY — the NDA government's "path breaking reform" to revive electricity distribution companies (discoms) — is unravelling.

Discom losses, which had progressively reduced in the first couple of years since the scheme's rollout in November 2015, have rebounded in FY '19 to nearly double the losses recorded the previous year. The UDAY (Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojana) scheme now seems to be charting the same course as the earlier two unsuccessful attempts to set right the distribution sector.

Book losses of discoms, which had reduced from Rs 51,562 crore in FY '16 to Rs 15,132 crore in

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EXPLAINED

No lessons learnt

A WELL-MEANING scheme that was aimed as a pointed intervention to the weakest link in electricity value chain — power distribution — UDAY seems to have faltered in repeating some of the mistakes of the past. The rebound in discom losses in FY '19 alongside the increase in discom dues to generators, has prompted the possibility of a recast of the scheme.

DISCOM PERFORMANCE

Financial Parameters	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19
Loss (Rs cr)	51,562	38,080	15,132	28,036
AT&C losses (%)	20.81	20.28	18.80	18.19
ACS-ARR gap (Rs/kWh)	0.60	0.42	0.17	0.27

Based on provisional/unaudited data entered by states/discoms on UDAY portal; *AT&C and ACS-ARR gap for FY19 based on data submitted by 28 states, P&T data based on submissions by 27 states, rest from Q3FY19 or latest available data on UDAY portal (as on Sept 27); Source: Govt data

PSA detainee from J&K dies in Uttar Pradesh jail

ADIL AKHZER
SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 22

A MEMBER of the banned Jamaat-e-Islami Jammu and Kashmir, who was booked under the Public Safety Act (PSA) in July, died inside a jail in Uttar Pradesh where he was lodged, relatives and officials said.

It is the first death of a political prisoner from the Kashmir Valley in a jail outside the state since August 5, when the central government revoked the special status of J&K and bifurcated the state into two Union Territories.

Officials said PSA detainee Ghulam Mohammed Bhat died inside the Naini jail in Prayagraj. Bhat was among 600 persons from J&K held under "preventive detention", including over 200 in jails outside the Valley, mainly in UP.

According to the family members of Bhat, who was in his 60s, they were informed Friday evening that he was unwell. "Early Saturday morning, I was sent to Uttar Pradesh. As soon as we reached Naini jail in the evening, I was told that my father had passed away," said Bhat's son, Haneef Mohammad.

Bhat was buried in Kulgam village of Handwara in Kupwara district Sunday evening. Haneef said he was first informed several days ago that Bhat was not keeping well. "I told the police to bring him back and that the family would provide treatment here," he said.

"We don't know the cause of death. My father couldn't walk properly... At the jail, officers said he had a liver problem," said Haneef.

Haneef confirmed that his father was a Jamaat member. "He

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

14 of 16 killed in UP protests fell to bullet injuries

MANISH SAHU
LUCKNOW, DECEMBER 22

FOURTEEN OF the 16 persons who were killed during protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act over the last four days in UP succumbed to "firearm injuries", senior police officers from eight districts confirmed to *The Indian Express*.

Of the other two, officers said, Rashid (35) died due to head injuries in Firozabad while Mohammad Sageer (8) succumbed to injuries sustained in a stampede as police tried to disperse protesters in Varanasi.

Those who died from bullet injuries are: Mohammed Wakeel (32) in Lucknow; Aftab Alam (22) and Mohammad Saif (25) in Kanpur; Anas (21) and Suleman (35) in Bijnor; Bilal (24) and Mohammad Shehroz (23) in Sambhal; Jaheer (33), Mohsin (28), Asif (20) and Areef (20) in Meerut; Nabi Jahan (24) in Firozabad; and, Faiz Khan (24) in Rampur.

Late Sunday, police said that a 28-year-old HIV patient succumbed to firearm injuries sustained during Friday's protests in Kanpur.

Police said the bodies of 15 victims were handed over to their families after post-mortem. *The Indian Express* contacted the victims' families for comment and four responded that

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Asim Khan, father of Faiz Khan who was killed in Rampur on Saturday. Praveen Khanna

Two UP districts, two deaths: 'Police just stood and watched'

KAUNAIN SHERIFF M
RAMPUR, SAMBHAL,
DECEMBER 22

ON SATURDAY morning, Faiz Khan (24) was shot in the neck in Rampur. The evening before, Mohammed Sheraz (23) was shot in the lower abdomen in the neighbouring district of Sambhal. Both of them succumbed to their injuries within hours.

Their families say both worked as drivers, and were on their way to work when they were killed in firing during protests in UP against the new citizenship law. And more than 24 hours later, no one knows who killed them.



Mohammad Adil, brother of Mohammad Sheraz. Praveen Khanna

But what their families are really struggling to come to terms with is this: the apathy and negligence that shunted them from one hospital to another, and the pleading with police for hours to hand over the bodies. "The police just stood and watched," says Sheraz's brother, Mohammad Adil.

On Friday evening, according to Adil, Sheraz left for Kashipur in Uttarakhand along with his employer. "Around 4 pm, we received a call that my brother had been shot and taken to Sewa Hospital from Shankar chauraha (epicentre of the protests in Sambhal). When we reached the hospital, they had no oxygen

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THE EDITORIAL PAGE

ECONOMY: THE WORST IS OVER
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KISAN DIVAS

A RED initiative appears in today's edition of *The Indian Express*. This page is an initiative of the marketing solutions team of The Indian Express Group and contains content paid for by advertisers. This page should be read as an advertisement.

Stuck with replicas, retired officer's RTI reveals: 17.3 lakh Army medals pending

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

DIVYAGOYAL
LUDHIANA, DECEMBER 22

DARSHAN SINGH Dhillon holds seven medals in his hand. One, says the retired colonel, is original and the others are "fakes brought for Rs 250 from a market in Delhi". The difference is obvious: With Dhillon's name and service number engraved on its edges, the Samanya Seva Medal is a heavy, beautifully carved round piece of metal; the anonymous fakes are made of cheap metal or plastic, pasted haphazardly on a ribbon.

period wearing these fake medals bought from the market," says Dhillon, 59. Today, 13 years after "early retirement due to ill-health", he is still waiting for one last original medal.

In April this year, Dhillon filed an application under the Right To Information (RTI) Act to know whether there were others like him, waiting for their medals.

After four months, and an appeal, the response he received was startling:

The Integrated Headquarters of Ministry of Defence (Army) replied in August that 17.33 lakh service medals of Army personnel are "in the waiting list" as on July 31, 2019. This included "33,035" medals for Commissioned Officers and "17



Colonel (retired) Darshan Singh Dhillon with his original Samanya Seva Medal (left) and replicas of other medals bought from a market in Delhi. Gurmeet Singh

lakh (approx)" for Personnel Below Officer Rank (PBOR).

Directorate of Military Regulations & Forms under the Ministry of Defence stated that

A separate reply from the

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BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNYY



GOVT & POLITICS

GADKARI: BJP DOESN'T BELIEVE IN DISCRIMINATION
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WORLD



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PM MODI ON CITIZENSHIP LAW, NRC

'Few Opposition parties are spreading all kinds of rumours'

EXPRESS AUDIO

Is the BJP taking notice of the anti-CAA protests?

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

In today's episode of the 3 Things podcast, we look at the ongoing anti-CAA protests across the country and whether they are raising alarm bells for the BJP

FROM PAGE ONE

UDAY scheme

FY '18, have nearly doubled this financial year to Rs 28,036 crore, according to data updated till September-end this year. The data also points to discoms lagging behind in eliminating the gap between the average cost of supply and realisable revenue (ACS-ARR gap). Discoms have also missed the FY '19 UDAY target to bring down their aggregate technical and commercial (AT&C) losses to 15 per cent.

tion where their deficit is under control. Or else, states will be asked to implement different models involving the private sector, like the franchise or PPP models. The Centre is also likely to back up the new scheme by providing some grant support, which it did not do in UDAY.

UDAY — launched by former Power Minister Piyush Goyal in November 2015, under which state governments took over 75 per cent of the debt of their discoms, issuing lower-interest bonds to service the rest of the debt — was packaged as a fix for a sector where the upstream side (generation) was drawing investments even as the downstream (distribution) side was leaking like a sieve. In return, discoms were given target dates (2017-19) to meet efficiency parameters like reduction in power lost through transmission, theft and faulty metering.

The scheme had some positives, though. Of the 28 states that implemented it, 10 have shown either reduced losses or profits in FY '19. Also, even as most states registered an improvement in reducing the ACS-ARR gap and in bringing down AT&C losses, they are way behind in achieving the targets as per the UDAY schedule — a trajectory that bears similarity to how the two previous attempts had run aground.

Admitting that the scheme had run aground after having provided some relief from these accumulated liabilities when it was launched in 2015, a senior government official said the gap between the cost of power supply for discoms and the bills they realise from consumers was pegged at close to Rs 1.5 lakh crore. This was despite states providing support of close to Rs 85,000-90,000 crore to distribution utilities. The gap leads to further stresses and forces discoms to default on payments.

"They (discoms) delay the bills of everyone — private sector and public sector — and the situation is that while UDAY provided some relief from these accumulated liabilities when it was launched in 2015, by the time the last year came, there was again that kind of stress or bills were not being paid," the official said. Even until July 2019, unpaid bills added up to Rs 57,000 crore.

As on December 17, only four states — Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Karnataka — had recorded an ACS-ARR below 0, while the rest recorded gaps ranging from Rs 0.01/unit to Rs 2.13/unit. A major reason for discoms being unable to bridge this gap is delayed tariff hikes by states, say experts.

The Appellate Tribunal for Electricity (APTEL) in September had noted that, between 2015-16 and 2018-19, it had not received any compliance reports related to its earlier orders directing states to ensure timely tariff revisions every year. The UDAY website states that 25 out of 27 states and union territories revised their tariffs by December.

"Just saying that the tariffs have been revised is not enough, because there is little clarity on whether the increase is enough to close the ACS-ARR gap for each state," Lekha Chakraborty, professor at Delhi-based National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, said. AT&C losses, too, remain higher than 15 per cent for most states — only around seven states had recorded losses of less than this amount.

"The problem with UDAY, and any other scheme like this, is that you can achieve (certain targets) in the short term by doing some financial engineering and providing some financial package. But, in order to sustain that improvement, you have to have efficiency gain in that system. This means the AT&C losses need to go down, and billing and collection efficiencies should go up. If you just try to generate profit or minimise losses

PM: No talk of NRC in govt..all lies

Tiranga thaam hi liya hai, toh yeh log ab hathihaar uthane walon, Pakistan prayojit aatankwadi hamle karne walon ke khi-laaf bhi aavaz uthayenge. Main tukde-tukde gang se toh visheshkar kehna chahta hun ki jab Tiranga thaam hi liya hai toh mujhe ummeed hai ki aap Naxali hamalon ke khi-laaf bhi bolenge, urban Naxaliyon ke khi-laaf bhi bolenge," he said, according to a party release on his speech.

"(While it hurts to see stones in the hand of those opposed to the Citizenship Act, it is comforting to see the Tricolour in some of their hands, that they have started to hold the Tricolour now. I hope that since they are now holding the Tricolour, they will also raise their voices against those taking up the gun, against Pakistan-sponsored terrorism. In particular, I hope the tukde-tukde gang will speak out against Naxal attacks and urban Naxals now that they are holding the Tricolour.")

Modi was addressing a rally at Ramlila Maidan, where he launched his party's campaign ahead of the Delhi Assembly elections next year. "Pehle yeh to dekh lijiye, NRC pe kuch hua bhi kya? Jhooth chalayai jaa raha hai. Meri sarkar aane ke baad, 2014 se aaj tak, main yeh sachh 130 crore logon ke liye kehna chahata hu, kahi par bhi NRC shabd par koi charcha nahi huyi hai. Koi baat nahin huyi hai (First, see if anything has happened on NRC. Lies are being spread. From the time my government came in 2014 till today, I want to tell this truth to 130 crore people of this country, that there has been no discussion on NRC. No talk

at all)," he said. Seeking to reassure the Muslim community, he said: "Jo Hindustan ki mitti ke musalman hai, jinke purkhe Ma Bharati ki santaan hai... un par nagarika kanoon aur NRC, dono ka koi lena dena nahin hai. Koi desh ke musalmanon ko na detention centre mein bheja ja raha hai, na Hindustan main koi detention centre hai. Yeh safed, jhooth hain, yeh badiraade vaala khel hai, ye naapaak khel hai (Both the citizenship law and NRC don't have any implications for Muslims who are sons of India's soil, whose forefathers are sons of Mother India. No one is sending Muslims of this country to detention centres, nor is there any detention centre in India. This is a clear lie, it is a game with wrong intentions, a nefarious game)."

"The Congress, its allies, and some educated Naxals in cities and urban Naxals are spreading rumours that all Muslims will be sent to detention centres... Even the educated are asking what's this detention centre... What kind of lie (is this)...," he said.

In what is being seen as a justification for a pan-India NRC, he said infiltrators never "reveal" themselves, unlike refugees who never "hide" their identities. Saying that discussions on NRC were being held even before the BJP came to power, he said it has been implemented only in Assam so far following the Supreme Court's order.

Defending the contentious citizenship law, Modi said it was about giving rights to persecuted minorities from

neighbouring countries, not about snatching away anybody's rights. In a scathing attack on the Opposition, including the Congress, TMC, AAP and Left parties, he accused them of "spreading false and fake news with wrong intentions" that would "damage the country".

Modi said that during the debate on the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, Parliament had missed an opportunity to expose Pakistan for its persecution of minorities and human rights violations because of the Opposition's "love for selfish political interests".

In his almost 100-minute address, meant to highlight the central government's decision to legalise 1,731 unauthorised colonies in Delhi, Modi spent considerable time on reassuring Muslims, asking why he would pass a legislation to take away their rights.

Beginning his speech by making the crowd chant "Vividhata mein ekta, Bharat ki visheshtha" (Unity in diversity is India's speciality), the Prime Minister criticised the violence during the recent protests against the new citizenship law. He targeted Opposition parties for not appealing for peace, saying their "silence" showed their indirect support for vandalism. He asked his rivals to burn his effigy if they wished, but to refrain from targeting other private and public properties.

Praising the police forces, which have faced criticism from some quarters for allegedly using excessive force against students and protesters in some places, the Prime Minister noted that

over 33,000 police personnel had sacrificed their lives in the line of duty since independence.

Questioning Opposition Chief Ministers who have announced that their states will not implement the new citizenship law, Modi asked whether they were aware of the Indian Constitution and the law of the land.

He quoted former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot's reported statements in support of granting citizenship rights to persecuted minorities from neighbouring countries, and asserted that his government had done what was promised by the Congress when in power. He said the Congress had not been able to fulfill its promise due to vote-bank politics.

Modi targeted West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for "changing" her stand due to "vote-bank politics". "Didi, what has happened to you? Why have you changed and why are you spreading rumours? Elections and power come and go, why are you so scared? Have faith in the people of Bengal. Mamata didi reached the UN (United Nations) from Kolkata. A few years ago, she used to plead in Parliament to stop Bangladeshi infiltrators and help the persecuted refugees from there," he said.

The Prime Minister concluded by talking about his attempts to improve India's ties with Islamic countries, citing results like Indian prisoners being freed and an increase in the Haj quota.

Before PM's distancing, there was Shah's underlining

But, signalling a climbdown, Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi told The Indian Express on Friday: "As far as NRC is concerned, it is limited to Assam. There is no plan of NRC in any other part of the country. You are talking about an unborn baby."

In the run-up to the Lok Sabha elections, Shah had raised the pitch in West Bengal, where the BJP sought to use the "illegal immigrant" issue as a major poll plank to consolidate the Hindu votes against the Mamata Banerjee-led TMC government in the state.

Addressing a poll rally in Darjeeling on April 11, Shah said: "We have promised in the manifesto that after Narendra Modi returns to power, the NRC will be implemented across the country. The BJP will carry out the task of picking every infiltrator and throwing them out. But every Hindu and Buddhist refugee will be meticulously identified and given Indian citizenship."

On May 1, addressing another poll rally in West Bengal, Shah said CAB would be followed by NRC. "First we will pass the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill and ensure that all the refugees from the neighbouring nations get Indian citizenship. After that, NRC will be made and we will detect and deport every infiltrator from our motherland," he said.

In a YouTube video uploaded on BJP's official website on April 23, Shah is seen as saying: "First the CAB will come. All refugees will get citizenship.

Then NRC will come. This is why refugees should not worry, but infiltrators should. Understand the chronology — CAB will come and then NRC. NRC is not just for Bengal, it's for the entire country."

In fact, Shah raised the issue as early as on September 8, 2018, when, while addressing the BJP National Executive meeting at Dr Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi, he said: "Our stand on NRC is very clear, every infiltrator will be identified and will be thrown out of India."

A few days later, on September 17, 2018, he asked former Congress president Rahul Gandhi to clarify his position on NRC and illegal migrants. Alleging that they were a threat to national security, he said they should be taken off the voters' list.

Even after becoming the Home Minister, Shah continued to speak on NRC, outside Assam too.

During the debate on the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill in Lok Sabha on December 9, Shah categorically said NRC would be brought across the country. "We don't need to set a background for the NRC. We will bring the NRC across the country. Not a single infiltrator will be spared," Shah said.

In the debate in Rajya Sabha two days later, he was silent on NRC. However, while replying to a question in Rajya Sabha on November 21, Shah said: "The process of National Register of

Citizens (NRC) will be carried out across the country. No one, irrespective of their religion, should be worried. It is just a process to get everyone under the NRC."

In the run-up to the Maharashtra and Haryana Assembly elections in October, Shah repeatedly talked about a pan-India NRC at his rallies.

Although he toned down the rhetoric during the Jharkhand poll campaign, while addressing a rally in West Singhbhum on December 2, Shah said: "...the Congress says don't implement NRC, don't send infiltrators. We will implement NRC in the entire country and send each and every infiltrator outside the country by the 2024 elections."

On December 14, addressing an election rally in Jharkhand, Rajnath Singh said a nationwide NRC was "inevitable", and nothing could deter the government from implementing it. "Subsequent to NRC exercise, we shall sit together and take a call about the fate of illegal migrants who have settled here with a humane approach, unlike the way they are being treated in several other countries," he said.

On December 19, even as protests spread across the country, Nadda asserted that the CAA would be implemented and, "going forward, NRC also will be brought in". "India is marching ahead under Prime Minister Narendra Modi and will continue to do so. The Citizenship (Amendment) Act will be implemented, so will the NRC in future," he said.

by increasing tariffs, you are building in theft into the system," said Devendra Kumar Pant, Chief Economist, India Ratings and Research.

The biggest problem, though, is that the outstanding dues of discoms towards power purchases have risen sharply, after registering a decline immediately post-UDAY — a clear sign that the scheme is losing impetus after some initial success. This, according to officials, could be an indication of financial stress in some discoms, entailing the risk of fiscal surprise from their future bailouts. Queries sent to the power ministry's spokesperson on Sunday did not elicit a response.

2 UP districts

cylinders available, and referred us to a private multispecialty hospital. Sheroz was bleeding heavily, and we tied a shawl around his abdomen. The police saw us rush-

ing him in the ambulance. But they did not accompany us or ask the hospital to help. They just stood and watched," Adil says.

At the private hospital, says Adil, the gates were shut due to the lockdown, and it took the ambulance siren for the staff to allow them inside from another gate. But the situation inside was similar — no oxygen cylinders. "The doctor told us that due to the clampdown, they were out of oxygen cylinders for the last three days. They asked us to rush to a hospital in Moradabad," says Adil.

However, during the 40-minute ambulance ride, Sheroz's condition deteriorated. "Sheroz was motionless by the time we reached Moradabad. The doctor at the hospital told us that due to the delay in providing oxygen, my brother had died in the ambulance," he says.

The family was then directed by hospital authorities to take the

body for post-mortem. "However, the police documents were yet to reach the mortuary, and the staff locked up the facility and left at midnight" says Adil.

After more than a 24-hour delay, the family says, the body was handed over around 11.30 pm Saturday. "But we haven't received the post-mortem report or the FIR. The police say they have videos of the stone-pelting and firing. But no arrest has been made," says Sheroz's father, Ameen.

Sambhal SP Yamuna Prasad told The Indian Express that "investigation is still underway" in the case and that "an FIR has been registered against unknown accused". Prasad, however, did not comment on the family's claim that the post-mortem report has not been handed over.

Around 60 km to the east, Faiz Khan left home on Saturday morning to report for duty at the taxi stand near the Civil Lines road.

On June 20, President Ram Nath Kovind, in his first address to MPs after the 17th Lok Sabha was constituted, said: "Illegal infiltrators pose a major threat to our internal security. This is leading to social imbalance in many parts of the country, as well as putting huge pressure on limited livelihood opportunities. My government has decided to implement the process of National Register of Citizens on priority basis in areas affected by infiltration. Security along the border will be further strengthened to prevent infiltration." The presidential address is considered to be the policy declaration of the government.

Meanwhile, while Modi said there are no detention centres in India, Minister of State (Home) Nityananda Rai, while replying to a question in Rajya Sabha on December 11, said instructions have been issued to all states for setting up detention centres to detain illegal migrants or convicted foreigners pending deportation to their country. "Consolidated instructions on the subject contained in model detention/holding centres manual have also been circulated by the government to all state/Union administrators on 9-1-2019. Government has approved detention centre in Matia, Goalpara Assam at an estimated cost of Rs 46.51 crore," he said.

In September, The Indian Express had also reported on the ongoing work to build the detention centre in Assam's Goalpara.

At the mosque just 3 km from the stand, hundreds of protesters had gathered in answer to a call by clerics. "Around 11 am, we got a call from an unknown person that my son had been shot. They asked us to come to the district hospital," says Faiz's father, Asim Khan, who runs a sweets shop.

"When we reached the hospital, my son was still breathing. But for over two hours, there was no one to treat my son. When my family started protesting, the police came with lathis, and took him away, saying he needs to be put on ventilator," says Asim. "They put him into an ambulance, and only I was allowed to accompany them. I was told that we are being taken to Moradabad."

In Moradabad, the father claims, the ambulance went to the mortuary. "The police or the doctors did not even inform us about the time of death. But our trauma did not end there. We told

them to hand over the body to us. But hours later, the police told that post-mortem would take place in a hospital in Moradabad. The police insisted that the body would be handed over only if we did not file any complaint," says Asim. "The police have not recorded our statement or given us the post-mortem report," he says. Rampur SP Dr Ajay Pal Sharma did not respond to calls from The Indian Express seeking comment. A local police officer said that "the post-mortem report is being finalised and a detailed FIR will be lodged accordingly". The officer confirmed that the statements of the family and eyewitnesses are yet to be recorded.

Army medals

are being worked out and under active discussion. The names of the companies cannot be divulged." Bharat Bhushan Babu, ADG,

Media and Communication, Ministry of Defence, said: "We do not want to comment on this matter as of now."

Army sources told The Indian Express that of the two categories of medals awarded — gallantry and non-gallantry — the backlog is mostly in the second category, for "services rendered... under active service conditions".

Gallantry medals, such as Shaurya Chakra and Maha Vir Chakra, are presented in ceremonies while non-gallantry medals, such as Uccch Tungta Medal for high-altitude areas, are dispatched by post once orders are issued, sources said.

Dhillon was a bomb disposal expert whose medals include those for serving "eight years in the North-East and six in J&K".

PSA detainee

had appeared before police on July 16 and later shifted to a jail outside the state," said the son.

Kupwara Deputy Commissioner Anshul Garg said: "Bhat was booked under PSA. We had sent him to the Srinagar Central Jail. It was the decision of the Home Department to send him outside the Valley. We had no information that he was ailing, and Prayagraj authorities informed us of the death yesterday. We are not aware of the cause of death."

Bullet injuries

they were yet to receive the post-mortem reports. Faiz's brother, Faraz Khan, told The Indian Express: "He was shot in the abdomen, there are over a dozen eyewitnesses and the police know who can shoot from the front. Once the post-mortem report is given to us, we will know if he died in police firing."

IG (Law and Order) Praveen Kumar said: "In most cases, autopsies reports suggest that the victims died in firing by protesters." He said that detailed reports have been sought from the districts.

In Lucknow, a police spokesperson said that the autopsy report of Daulatganj resident Wakeel confirmed death due to "firearm injury". "It mentions blackening near the exit spot, suggesting that he was shot from close range," he said.

In Kanpur, Circle Officer Manoj Kumar Gupta confirmed that Aftab and Saif died due to firearm injuries sustained "during violence that took place near the mosque in Naji Basti".

Aftab told me that police had fired on him," said Aftab's brother-in-law Mohammad Rizwan. Saif's brother Mohammad Zaki said, "Eyewitnesses told us that my brother was shot by police."

Bijoor SP Sanjeev Tyagi said Anas and Suleman died due to firearm injuries sustained during clashes in the Nahtaur area.

Bilal and Shehroz died during protests, and the autopsy report has confirmed firearm injuries, according to Sambhal Additional SP Alok Kumar Jayswal. Sheroz's family said they were yet to receive the post-mortem report.

Meerut Additional SP Akhilesh Narayan Singh said Jaheer, Mohsin, Asif and Areef died due to firearm injuries during violent protests on Friday.

In Firozabad, SP Sachindra Patel said the post-mortem report had confirmed that Rashid died after sustaining "lacerated wounds" and Nabi Jahan died due to firearm injuries during protests in the Nalband locality.

Rampur District Magistrate Anjaneya Kumar Singh cited the autopsy report to confirm that Faiz Khan's death occurred due to a firearm injury. And in Varanasi, Circle Officer Sudhir Jaiswal said that eight-year-old Sageer died in a stampede after police used force to disperse protesters in the Bhelupur area.

WITH KAUNAIN SHERIFF M

FULL REPORTS ON www.indianexpress.com

RESPECTING OUR DAUGHTERS STARTS WITH EDUCATING OUR SONS



CHIEF MINISTER ARVIND KEJRIWAL IN A DIALOGUE WITH STUDENTS OF CLASSES 6-12 OF ALL DELHI SCHOOLS, ON WOMEN'S SAFETY

The progress of any nation can be judged by how women are treated in that nation. Rising number of cases of sexual violence, misbehaviour and crimes against women is a source of great worry for our country. In light of these concerns, a dialogue on women's safety is being organised for all students of classes 6-12 in Delhi schools, where all boys will take a pledge to respect girls and women.



23 DECEMBER, 2019 AT 11AM

दिल्ली सरकार
आप की सरकार

Directorate of Education, Government of NCT of Delhi



0-50 Good 51-100 Satisfactory 101-200 Moderate 201-300 Poor 301-400 Very poor 401-500 Severe

BRIEFLY



Air quality is in the 'very poor' range

AQI improves as wind picks up speed

New Delhi: The city's air quality was in the 'very poor' category Sunday after remaining in the 'severe' range for the past couple of days. Weather experts attributed the improvement to change in meteorological conditions, especially rise in wind speed.

The city recorded a maximum temperature of 14.6 degrees Celsius Sunday, which is seven degrees below normal, and a minimum temperature of 7.4 degrees Celsius, as per IMD.

A forecast by the Centre-run SAFAR Sunday said low temperature and reduction in the atmospheric mixing layer height, in which pollutants are suspended, were among the factors influencing the capital's air quality. Some areas in NCR are expected to enter the 'severe' category by Tuesday. **ENS**

Property row: Man's body found in MP

New Delhi: Days after a 64-year-old businessman, Arun Sharma, was allegedly kidnapped and murdered by five men, police have found his body from Madhya Pradesh's Morena district. Police said the victim, who owned the TV brand Televisita in the 1980s, went missing from his house in Greater Kailash on November 15. Additional CP (Crime) B K Singh said a man named Rishi Rajpal Chauhan (64), his son Hitesh and three other men were arrested on December 4. Police said Chauhan and his son allegedly planned the murder due to row over a plot of land worth Rs 3 crore in Gurgaon.

Businessman shot at

New Delhi: A 48-year-old businessman was allegedly shot at by two unidentified persons in Dwarka's Bindapur Sunday. Police said the incident took place when the victim, Rajesh Chawla, was sitting inside his office around 11.30 am. "Witnesses said they saw two men enter Chawla's office and fire three-four bullets... He sustained two bullet injuries in his abdomen and is undergoing treatment," said an officer. Chawla runs a company that supplies building material to contractors. Police are scanning CCTV footage to identify the accused. **ENS**



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with BJP leaders Harsh Vardhan, Manoj Tiwari, Vijay Goel, Hardeep Puri, Shyam Jaju, Hans Raj Hans, Parvesh Verma, Vijender Gupta and others, at Ramlila Maidan on Sunday. Prem Nath Pandey

RAMLILA MAIDAN RALLY

Illegal colonies to water, PM takes on Delhi govt in poll warm-up rally

ABHINAV RAJPUT
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

IN A speech that lasted an hour and a half, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday targeted the AAP government and the Congress over a host of issues that concern the national capital — from dirty water allegedly being supplied to a "delay" in fixing boundaries of unauthorised colonies, from transport to pollution.

Speaking at a rally held to "thank the PM" for beginning the process to regularise 1,731 illegal colonies, Modi, speaking at Ramlila Maidan, said the Delhi government has kept its

eyes closed on the biggest problem facing the city — of drinking water.

"If we believe them then the whole of Delhi gets clean water, but I want to ask—do you believe them?" he said. "Do you fear suffering from diseases seeing the water quality? These people want to prove that you are also lying."

Modi said the capital records the maximum sale of water purifiers in the country, and asked: "Why do people have to spend so much? And people who cannot buy it have to live with polluted water?"

The Delhi government and the Centre had faced off recently after Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan released a report by the

Bureau of Indian Standards suggesting Delhi has the worst water quality in the country. The AAP-led government has questioned the credibility of the survey.

Without taking Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's name, Modi said that had Delhi government not created political hurdles, work on Metro's Phase IV would have started long back. He also accused the AAP government of delaying the process of fixing the boundaries of unauthorised colonies.

He said that even decades after Independence, a large population of Delhi lives in fear. "People's life was narrowed down to words like illegal, unauthorised, sealing, bulldozer and cut-

off dates. When polls came, deadlines were extended but problems remained. But we have given a permanent solution to the problem," he said.

"Even to fix boundaries they were demanding that the date be extended to 2021. Seeing their speed, I said things won't work like this... we took the work in our hand and the Bill to regularise was passed in both Houses of Parliament," he said.

Praising the police force, which has faced criticism of late for its heavy-handedness in dealing with protests, especially those led by students, the PM said that police always comes to people's help, and highlighted that over 33,000 personnel had

died on duty since Independence.

"When there is any problem, police doesn't ask for religion, the officer doesn't look at the weather condition but stands behind you... in Delhi's (Anaj) Mandi, when there was a fire, police did not discriminate on the basis of religion but rather saved people's lives," he said.

This was met with chants of 'Delhi Police zindabad'. He said the opposition was extending indirect support to violence being meted to the police by being silent on the issue. He asked the crowd to repeat the slogan 'Shaheedon Amar Raho' with him and requested people to visit the Police Memorial at India Gate.



Protesters at Nizamuddin Basti on Sunday. Abhinav Saha

At Nizamuddin protest, some say police scrutiny has increased

JIGNASA SINHA
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

"WE WANT to live without fear of the government and the police. I feel as if police are constantly watching us and waiting for something wrong to happen so they can take action against us," said Farzana Baig, who held a placard that read "Pehle lade goron se, ab lade choron se (Fought the British before, we'll fight thieves now)."

Baig was among hundreds of protesters who gathered at Musafir Khana Park in Hazrat Nizamuddin to protest against the new citizenship law.

Baig said she doesn't feel her children are safe ever since she heard about violence against protesters. "Today, police are not doing anything and are just

standing outside the lane. What if one of the groups here started marching on the road? We can see three-four policemen standing in the Dargah every day, even when there are no protests. Cops have started patrolling this area after protests at Jamia"

Colin Gonsalves, a senior Supreme Court advocate, spoke about how the new law and the proposed National Register of Citizens are unconstitutional. He said people must oppose the government that "only believes in spreading Hindutva".

Umar Khalid, a former JNU student and activist, said, "Muslims who live in India are not 'accidental' Muslims. They made a choice years ago and the government must think about their loyalty rather than question them."

Khalid said one must not trust a government that changes

its stance on NRC every day. "The government is trying to distract us from economic issues with these new policies. People are dying in Assam, UP and other states. We must act now."

Another silent protest was held at the Central Park in Connaught Place, which students from JNU, DU and Ambedkar University attended. The protesters sat in a circle, singing songs against the new law and police excesses.

The protest was organised by 'Delhiites for Constitution' — a newly formed group that invited students and artists to share their views. Addressing the gathering, CPM leader Brinda Karat said the government was using a "trishool" — of the new law, NRC and National Population Register — to attack the unity of the country.

Woman shot dead by tenants after argument

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

A 45-YEAR-OLD woman was shot dead in her house, allegedly by her two tenants, in South West Delhi's Sagarpur Saturday. Family members have alleged that the accused shot the woman, Vijenderi, after an argument over their "drinking habit".

According to police, the woman, who lived with her husband Kuldeep and two children, was alone in her house when the accused allegedly shot her in the neck and fled. Her two children, who were playing outside, found her body after they heard the gunshot and rushed inside.

"We received a call around 6 pm Saturday. The woman was

The victim allegedly had an argument with the two tenants over their 'drinking habit' around two days ago

rushed to the hospital by neighbours and was declared dead by doctors," said Devender Arya, DCP (South West).

Around two days before the incident, her family claims, the woman had an argument with the two tenants over their "drinking habits". Police said they are verifying the family's claims and suspects have been identified.

Kuldeep, property dealer, had rented out a few rooms in their house.

Man held for string of ATM thefts across states

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

A 27-YEAR-OLD man was arrested from South Delhi for allegedly committing ATM thefts across seven states, including 15 cases of uprooting ATMs, police said Sunday. The accused, identified as Wakil, was arrested by the Special Cell of Delhi Police from a bus stand in Lado Sarai.

According to police, Wakil is a part of a gang from Mewat that uproots ATMs with gas cutters and loots the machines. "The gang would target ATMs near highways and without security guards. At night, the gang would take their vehicle, cut the ma-

chine and take it. They have been involved in cases in Madhya Pradesh, UP, Haryana, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh," said Pramod Singh Kushwah, DCP, Special Cell.

Police said that Wakil and his associates used spray paint to block CCTV cameras. Investigators received information that the mastermind of the gang and one of his associates would come to Delhi. "We laid a trap near the bus stand but only Wakil, who was carrying a pistol, came. He has confessed to the crimes," said an officer.

Wakil has allegedly looted as much as Rs 1 crore in this manner and has invested in properties in Delhi, said police.

Earlier Cong would lie to people, now BJP has done it, says Kejriwal, hours later

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

HOURS AFTER Prime Minister Narendra Modi finished his speech at Delhi's Ramlila Maidan, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal hit out at him, saying residents of unauthorised colonies had been cheated yet again by the Centre.

Referring to news reports that the PM will distribute conveyance deeds to a few people at the rally, Kejriwal tweeted: "What about registries? Have unauthorised colonies been betrayed again? People were hoping registration will start today but is it a betrayal again? Earlier Congress would lie to people, now BJP has done it."

He also said the Centre should call a meeting with all Chief Ministers and parties to "find solutions". "Let's concentrate on jobs, inflation and economy please. People are in distress. They need urgent measures. I urge Centre to call a meeting of all CMs and all parties; take everyone in confidence and find urgent solutions," he tweeted.

Since the Lok Sabha election results where AAP finished third in Delhi, Kejriwal has stayed away from attacking the Centre and its policies directly. Over the past week, however, he has taken on the Centre, first on the new citizenship law and then on unauthorised colonies. Assembly polls in Delhi are expected in February. Ever since the Bill to regularise unauthorised colonies was passed in Parliament, the Centre and Delhi government have squabbled over who should get credit. Later in the day, at an event



The CM at Karawal Nagar on Sunday.

to inaugurate sewer line laying work in Karawal Nagar, Kejriwal said: "To date, other political parties have only played politics on the issue of development of unauthorised colonies and no government has actually worked for its development... every party has deceived residents of unauthorised colonies by promising them regularisation and development after coming to power. It has been 70 years since Independence, no government has ever worked for the construction of roads, or installation of sewage systems or water pipelines, or towards cleanliness of drains in these colonies."

He added: "Our honourable Prime Minister gave a speech at Ramlila Maidan today. I had expected they would begin the registration process like they were claiming for the last six months. But they did not do it even today. BJP leaders were claiming that 100 property owners will receive registration papers before the assembly elections, and the rest will receive registration after the elections... They have bad intentions, and BJP is deceiving the people just like Congress did."

Drop mid-year JNU fee hike, find other source of funds: MHRD panel

ARANYA SHANKAR
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

THE THREE-MEMBER panel formed by the HRD Ministry to "recommend ways to restore normal functioning" of Jawaharlal Nehru University told the ministry that there should be "no alteration of fees during the middle of the academic session" and that alternate sources of funding should be explored. The recommendations were made in a report submitted on November 24.

The ministry formed the committee after widespread protests by the student community against a hostel fee hike. It had former UGC chairperson V S Chauhan, AICTE chairperson Anil Sahasrabudhe and UGC secretary Rajnish Jain as members.

As per the initial hostel fee hike, service charges for maintenance, mess workers, cook and sanitation, and utility charges for power and water consumption were introduced for the first time. Rent for a single room was increased from Rs 20 per month to Rs 600 per month, and for a double-sharing room from Rs 10 per month to Rs 300 per month.

After several days of protests inside and outside the university campus — on two occasions students were lathi-charged by the police for breaking barricades and attempting to march to the Parliament and President House

— a high-level committee set up by the university decided to give 50% concession to all students and 75% concession to Below Poverty Line (BPL) students. The recommendations of the three-member committee have not been taken into consideration yet.

Other recommendations state that any change in the hostel manual should be done only after proper discussion with all members, and that the fee revision should be put off till the next academic session.

JNU students say they were not part of the discussions to raise hostel fee. Referring to the service charge component, which is earmarked for salaries of mess workers and other staff, the committee recommended: "The manner of dealing with the salaries of university's hostel staff should be a policy decision that needs to be taken by MHRD/UGC."

The committee had also recommended that MHRD or UGC provide funds to meet the shortfall "due to which the JNU administration had to resort to the revision of hostel fee". UGC agreed to release a grant of Rs 6.41 crore to help the institution, three days after the report was submitted.

The committee had met members of the administration, students and teachers before they made the recommendations.

JNU V-C M Jagadesh Kumar did not respond to calls or texts on the issue.

PAK REFUGEE SETTLEMENT AT MAJNU KA TILA

At home with baby Nagarikta, who found a mention in Modi's speech

SOURAV ROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

"APNA GHAR chorke kyun koi jana chahenga (why would someone want to leave their home)?" asked Dayal Das (43), a native of Pakistan's Sindh province, who entered India in 2013 with his extended family, and has since been staying here as a refugee.

"Exploitation by feudal lords and zamindars was a major reason behind our decision to

move. The inability to properly celebrate festivals like Holi and Diwali, resistance to cremations, and forcible conversion of girls compelled us to take this decision," Das said.

Having spent the initial years in Delhi's Bijwasan, the family moved with other Hindu refugees from Pakistan to a patch of land near North Delhi's Majnu Ka Tila four years ago.

Das is now the 'pradhan' of the settlement comprising around 700 families. He became

a grandfather to a girl on November 24. On December 11, the Modi government tabled the Citizenship Amendment Bill in Parliament.

The family, then, decided to name the child 'Nagarikta', which means citizenship. Arti Das (21), the mother, said, "I have no clue who came up with the name. Sab khushi-khushi mein ye naam rakh diya (We just did it with happiness)."

On Sunday, little Nagarikta found mention in Modi's



speech in Ramlila Maidan Sunday. Many of her family members, including Das, his son Iswar Lal and their neighbours attended the rally. The BJP made arrangements for their travel. However, Nagarikta was back home, fast asleep on her mother's lap.

After Modi's speech, as one TV crew after another de-

Nagarikta with her family at Majnu Ka Tila. Abhinav Saha

scended at the family's door, Nagarikta let out an occasional cry as her mother obliged to requests of mediapersons - "Thoda iss side rakhie na, light ke taraf (Move her where the lighting is better)".

A cut-out of Modi adorned the backdrop, under the thatched roof of a brick-wall structure of three rooms lit by solar lights. A water connection was provided some months ago, the family said.

Lal (22), Nagarikta's father, is

a hawker who sells cell-phone covers for a living. "We are not hoping to get jobs as none of us are educated. We shall get by doing some odd jobs, starting some business perhaps. But the next generation can look forward to a bright future," said Paramanand (21), a family member.

Sona Das, another family member, said it's not as if there weren't good people back home in Pakistan. "Aisa nahi ki kuch acche log nahi the."



To honour struggle, contribution of a great leader

December 23, the birth anniversary of the fifth Prime Minister of India, Chaudhary Charan Singh, is celebrated every year as Kisan Diwas

■ **Abhishek Pathak**

HERE CAN be no denying that the agriculture sector is the backbone of economic health for any country, particularly India. It is considered to be the primary sector of economy for developing countries, whereas less important for industrial countries. Vast majority of Indian population is engaged in this sector, with about 70% population being directly involved in the sector. In economically advanced countries, this ratio is very small — 5 per cent in the UK, 4 per cent in the US, 16 per cent in Australia, 14 per cent in France, 21 per cent in Japan and 32 per cent in Russia.

In recent times, the contribution of agriculture to the GVA has decreased from 15% in 2015-16 to 14.4% in 2018-19. The decline was mainly due to decrease in share of GVA of crops from 9.2% in 2015-16 to 8.7% in 2017-18.

The agriculture sector provides the masses with livelihood; contributes to national income; supplies food and fodder; provides raw material like cotton, jute textiles, sugar, edible and non-edible oils etc; contributes to foreign exchange resources; and adds to overall economic development etc.

Every year, on December 23, India celebrates the contribution of its farmers and agriculture sector through Kisan Diwas (Farmer's Day), commemorating the birth anniversary of the fifth Prime Minister of India, Chaudhary Charan Singh.

Being from the farmer fraternity himself,

Chaudhary Charan Singh knew and understood the trials and tribulations of the community very well. In his tenure as prime minister of the country, he launched many schemes and initiatives for the development of the agrarian sector and farmers.

A staunch believer in the fact that true India resides in its villages, he worked for the rural people throughout his life. Very early on in his political career, in 1939, he introduced Debt Redemption Bill which sought to provide relief to peasants from moneylenders. In April 1939, he drafted a Land Utilisation Bill, which had abolition of landlord system in UP at its core. The All-India Congress Working Committee at its meeting in Calcutta in December 1945 approved Charan Singh's Congress manifesto draft on land and agriculture, which ensured the abolition of the landlord system. After Independence, the farming community found in him a representative of power, political skill and effectiveness.

Thus began a journey of lifelong commitment to the upliftment of the farming community, which first saw Charan Singh abolish the zamindari system in UP, on July 11, 1952, as agriculture minister in the UP government. The successful enactment of the legislation made it a landmark achievement in the peasant history of India.

His efforts in drafting, articulating and implementing the Uttar Pradesh Zamindari and Land Reforms Bill in 1952, which gave ownership of land to the tenants, made him a rising star in the Uttar Pradesh political circle. In 1953, Charan Singh got the Consolidation of Holdings Act passed, and



implemented it successfully in 1954. Being an organic intellectual with a Gandhian philosophy, Charan Singh relentlessly struggled for the prosperity of agriculture sector and farming community and in making rural people self-reliant.

In an hour-long speech at the Congress's annual session at Nagpur in 1959, he fervently criticised Nehru's proposal of joint and cooperative farming. His fiery speech was appreciated by newspapers while it was decried by Congress's national leadership. In his mind, the idea of peasant pro-

prietorship was in tune with Gandhi's idea of rural democracy and decentralisation of economic resources.

After moving away from Congress in 1967, he formed the Bhartiya Kisan Dal (BKD) and also the first non-Congress government in Uttar Pradesh and assumed the office of chief minister. Leading from the front with farmers' issues at its core, BKD emerged as the second largest party after Congress in Uttar Pradesh. After Emergency, Janata Party contested and won the 1977 general elections on BKD's party

symbol, with Charan Singh as the Union Minister who took several measures in the interest of the farmers, for example, exempting unmanufactured tobacco from excise duty, reduction in excise duty on all chemical fertilizers and others.

His emergence in the political scene of state and national politics led to the politicisation of peasantry and its assertion in electoral politics, which pressurised successive governments into reducing taxes and increasing subsidies, providing free electricity, water, among other things.

Charan Singh also authored many books, including *India's Economic Policy: The Gandhian Blueprint*, where he outlined a Gandhian solution to India's agrarian sector problems and urged the decentralisation of Indian economy.

It is to this end that every year on his birth anniversary, Kisan Diwas is celebrated with much fervour and spirit among the farming community. On the occasion, Kisan Gosthis are organised in which the scientists and farmers share the knowledge on various aspects of farming and on using technological advancements. Lectures are organised for the farming community on Vermicomposting, Apiculture, Mushroom Production, Dairy Farming, Clean Milk Production, and Nutrient Management.

The scientists visit the farmers' field and share knowledge regarding the importance of micro-irrigation, crop diagnostics, organic farming, composting of biodegradable waste management and integrated pest management and precautions to be taken before and after spraying of pesticides/chemicals/insecticides.

Kisan Diwas is celebrated at state and national level by organising various programmes, debates, seminars, quiz competitions, discussions, workshops, exhibitions, essay writing competitions and functions. Today, Charan Singh's legacy may have faded into oblivion, but his contributions in liberating Indian peasantry and Agriculture sector from the clutches of the landlord system will forever be etched in the minds and hearts of the Indian farming community.



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Number of Farmers Purchasing Subsidised Fertiliser
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No. of Retailers
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अपनी पहचान बताओ, खाद ले जाओ.



Source : www.urvarak.nic.in | Department of Fertilizers, Government of India

6 HARDLOOK UNAUTHORISED COLONIES

Home at last

For lakhs of homeowners, a chance to put their mind at ease; for political parties, an opportunity; and for the DDA, countless hours of work — what regularising unauthorised colonies means in the capital. ABHINAV RAJPUT reports



At New Ashok Nagar, an unauthorised colony. Abhinav Saha

ABHINAV RAJPUT
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

TWO MEN sit in front of a computer screen inside a large room in South East Delhi's Sarita Vihar. Their supervisor is ready to get to work, but the help desk, set up for residents of unauthorised colonies, is empty for the time being.

The office, set up by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) on December 2, is among 25 across the city that have come up to assist the conferment of ownership rights to residents of 1,731 unauthorised colonies in Delhi, officials said.

This comes after the Centre paved the way for regularisation of these colonies, a move that could benefit 40-50 lakh people. A large part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Sunday address at Ramlila Maidan also focused on how the Centre had done what many governments before it couldn't.

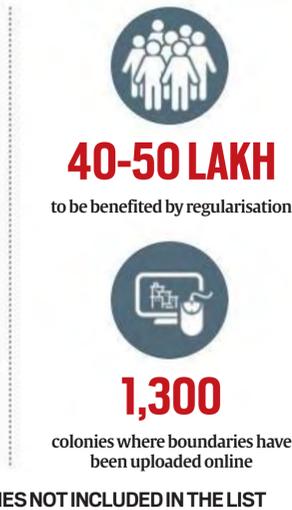
In Sarita Vihar, Naseem Ahmed, in-charge of the help desk, said, "The area is tense due to the recent protest over the new citizenship law, so not many people have turned up. Despite this, 12 people have come since morning." On an average, the centre sees 15 people per day.

Another help desk in South Delhi's Shahpur Jat wore a similarly deserted look, while in East Delhi's Shakarpur, a man was seen enquiring about his missing last name in property papers, using which he wants to get his house registered.

"The queries are mostly for help to access the portal set up by the DDA, so people can get themselves registered or know whether their colonies are in the list that will be regularised. Some also ask whether the general power of attorney is enough, and if registration will be done in the name of different people if building owners are different," said Jagbir Singh from the Shahpur Jat office.

On December 4, a Bill that seeks to provide legal framework to grant ownership rights to people in unauthorised colonies in Delhi was passed by both Houses of Parliament, allowing ownership rights to be given on the basis of power of attorney, agreement of sale, will or possession letter.

DDA vice-chairperson Tarun Kapoor said the DDA, through its portal launched on December 17, has registered over 17,000



69 UNAUTHORISED COLONIES NOT INCLUDED IN THE LIST

people. The next step for them is to upload ownership documents, after which a team of DDA officials will visit the spot for verification. Officials will then help applicants remove the deficiencies, if any.

He said the agency is ready to give conveyance deeds, following which people can get their homes registered with the Revenue Department.

The challenges

Senior DDA officials said the main challenge will begin when people start registering properties, because once they upload full details, these will go to processing centres. There are several properties where more than one person could stake claim of ownership.

Among the biggest challenges is of RWAs demanding that the DDA include in its boundary map areas that are outside the built-up area. "Vacant land inside built-up area is authorised, but not vacant land outside," Kapoor said.

A senior official said there are chances of multiple claimants for a single land, since there are several plots where multiple par-

ties have built properties. Some of these cases are in court.

There is no clarity so far on how thousands of ownership documents will be verified within a short period of time. There is also no information yet on how houses constructed violating structural safety will be dealt with.

According to DDA, the process has begun. It is now for the people to expedite the process of uploading documents.

"On paper, we will give people conveyance deeds. Thereafter, they can get the property registered. But the process of changing the geography of the area and adding facilities like parks, open areas and wider roads will take time," Kapoor said.

Anuj Singh, a resident of New Ashok Nagar who works in an MNC, shares the same concern. "More than getting legal papers, we need the area to be redeveloped. Roads are so narrow that ambulances cannot enter. There are no parks or open spaces for children. How will the DDA give these facilities when there is no land left for such infrastructure?"

"In many colonies, there is barely two feet

of space between two houses. Even riding a bike is difficult. How will parks or community centres be built? Whose land will be acquired? These questions need detailed deliberations. There are also issues over houses having been built by compromising structural safety," he said.

DDA officials, at a later stage, intend to develop new layout plans, so the authority can construct wider roads by offering higher floor area ratio to people. Simply put: a person who parts with some land for the DDA will be able to build additional floors.

The politics

But regularisation goes beyond DDA and Delhi residents. For over three decades, giving ownership rights to residents of unauthorised colonies has been on the agenda of every political party in the city. That the BJP-led Centre has managed to take a step forward in this direction, with the colony mapping exercise underway, would be seen as a win by the party.

Just days before the Prime Minister's Ramlila Maidan speech, Delhi BJP chief Manoj Tiwari had raised the same issue while addressing a public gathering on Surakhpur road in Najafgarh.

Nearby, holding the youngest of three children in her arms, Savita, who came from Karnal in Haryana and settled in Delhi a decade ago, said, "BJP distributed pamphlets, saying we will now get ownership. It will help me get bank loan and construct additional floors, which we have wanted to do for a long time."

On the facilities in her colony, she said, "The AAP MLA has got roads built. Water quality is not very good, but I haven't got an electricity bill in the last two months."

Listening to the conversation, Mukim Sharma pitched in: "We will look at the services given by both parties. We will decide whom to vote for based on who has more to offer to the common people."

For the AAP, which too has focused immensely on unauthorised colonies, the fight for the assembly would be tougher since the BJP is making the issue a poll plank. However, a senior party leader said they are confident: "Every person living in these colonies knows that it was us who got water and roads to their houses. That holds great value. We are sure people will support us."

INTERVIEW: TARUN KAPOOR,
DDA VICE-CHAIRPERSON

'Open to tying up with developers to improve unauthorised colonies'

ABHINAV RAJPUT
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

Where does the process to regularise unauthorised colonies stand at present?

Boundaries have been marked of all colonies and over 1,300 maps have been uploaded. We have given 15 days to raise objections. There are 300 objections, mostly asking for the vacant area outside built-up area to be included in the boundary that has been authorised.

What if people want to construct their house on a plot they purchased outside the built-up area?

We cannot alter boundaries because that will be corruption. They will have to go to MCDs and get the map passed. As per our rule, only built-up area is included or the vacant land inside the colony. We will not allow one to keep extending boundaries forever. We compared 2007 and 2008 maps submitted by RWAs to 2015 and found that the boundaries were extended, so we took only accepted areas where there was a population concentration of 80% or more.

What is the next step?
A committee has been formed comprising officials of the revenue, land, survey of India, which will look into objections received from RWAs. Next is receiving applications, for which a portal has been readied and 17,000 people have registered, which means their accounts have been created. Now a person will upload purchase documents and coordinates of the house through empanelled agencies. This will take some time. We are launching processing centres through which people will visit the place to know the authenticity of the owners' claim. Then there will be calculation of the amount one has to pay. Their details would be made public on the website to know if there's any objection. Then we will execute conveyance deed.

But your past experience with redevelopment, like in case of Kathputli Colony, has been met with resistance.

It has been done in several places in the world. We have learned from Kathputli Colony and there is going to be in-situ in large numbers. Five-six tenders are ready.

Will you give legal status to people's homes before the code of conduct for Delhi assembly polls comes into effect?

We are ready, now it is for people to complete the process and come, we will give it.

There has been criticism that DDA is giving conveyance deed but would not register properties.

Conveyance deed means the government agency is giving its acceptance that this property is being given to a person. The registry is done later, which is a form of government stamp on a contract. The registry is done at the revenue department. With conveyance deed, one becomes the owner, while registry is a government stamp that the contract is correct.

While you are offering change of legal status, what about lifestyle changes like wider lanes, parks?

For that, there are two stages. One is improving the existing status for which DDA will take vacant land which has no owners and develop the area with parks. Earlier, people didn't allow us to enter these colonies. Now that there is no fear, we will redevelop, which means we will build new layout and suggest that roads could be carved out. In that scheme, we will offer higher FAR, for which norms have to be made.

We will tell people that if they surrender a particular area, they will be allowed to build two more floors in a nearby area. The road will be wider and one will get better houses. Or if a developer comes and says he can reconstruct the area by building multi-storied houses with green spaces, we will be open to the idea.

But your past experience with redevelopment, like in case of Kathputli Colony, has been met with resistance.

It has been done in several places in the world. We have learned from Kathputli Colony and there is going to be in-situ in large numbers. Five-six tenders are ready.

Will you give legal status to people's homes before the code of conduct for Delhi assembly polls comes into effect?

We are ready, now it is for people to complete the process and come, we will give it.

SAINIK FARMS, MAHENDRU ENCLAVE 'Affluent' but unauthorised, these colonies await clarity

SUKRITA BARUAH
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

FOR SEVERAL of Delhi's "affluent" unauthorised colonies, the last two months have entailed hoping and waiting for a change in their status, even as they question the grounds on which they have been identified as such.

The 1,728 unauthorised colonies in Delhi cleared for regularisation by the central government in October do not include 69 neighbourhoods categorised as affluent colonies, along with colonies in forest or protected areas.

The principle for what qualifies as an

unauthorised colony inhabited by affluent persons had been defined in the 2006 report of K K Mathur Committee of Experts. According to it, these are unauthorised colonies "where more than 50% of the plots are of the size of 350 square metres or above".

At the time that the committee had formed its report, only Sainik Farms, Mahendru Enclave and Anant Ram Dairy had been recognised as "affluent" colonies. Several of the localities included in the list now question the tag attached to them, as do residents of Anant Ram Dairy.

However, nothing much has changed since the list of colonies to be regularised was released two months ago.

At Freedom Fighters Enclave in Neb Sarai, residents claim that no building is on a plot larger than 167 square metres, and that 50% of the homes are less than half that size, with most of the 1,000 resident families living in flats.

"Including our colony makes it appear that there is no objective criteria to determine these affluent colonies. After the 1980s, this is the first time that there seems to be movement towards regularisation of colonies and there is a fear that if we are left out now, it will never happen for us," said Prem Deep, president of the area's residents' association.

He said that the association approached

the DDA for reconsidering their status but were told that a go-ahead from the ministry would be required for a re-survey, which has not been received yet.

According to him, in the 10 years that he has been the association president, there has been no survey by any agency to identify the size of houses in it.

The same is echoed by Rajinder Sejwal, president of the association at Chattarpur Enclave. However, Sejwal is still confident that the list will have to be revised.

"Once they actually study the layouts of the colonies and look at the actual sizes of houses, barely 10 of the classified colonies will remain on the list," he said.

Gadkari message to Muslims: BJP doesn't believe in bias

VIVEK DESHPANDE
NAGPUR, DECEMBER 22

UNION MINISTER Nitin Gadkari on Sunday said the BJP-led central government is fulfilling the vision of Mahatma Gandhi and B R Ambedkar through the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and accused the Opposition parties of spreading misinformation on the legislation.

At a rally organised by the Sangh Parivar at Samvidhan Chowk, Gadkari said, "It was Mahatma Gandhi who had said that Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Parsis and Buddhists in Pakistan are welcome to India if they feel discriminated against. And Babasaheb Ambedkar had said in the Constitution that Muslims have over 100 Islamic countries to go to but these minorities have nowhere to go except India. We are only doing that. So, what's wrong in that?"

The rally was organised by Lokadhikar Manch, a front comprising several RSS affiliates. According to rough estimates, about 10,000 people attended it. The march from Yashwant Stadium from Samvidhan Chowk



Union minister Nitin Gadkari addresses a rally in support of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in Nagpur on Sunday. PTI

was attended by former Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis and other leaders.

Among the slogans raised during the march were "Desh ke gaddaron ko, goli maaro saalon ko", "Jinko chahiye azadi, unko de do azadi" and "afvaahon pe dhyan na de, ghuspaithiyen active hai".

Gadkari said, "Some political parties who have been humiliated in elections are desperately trying to spread misinformation about CAA for political gains. I

would like to assure Muslims that BJP doesn't believe in discrimination and they have nothing to worry about."

"When our Muslims go out of the country, they are also seen as Hindus and are recognised as Hindustani. Hindutva is not a narrow-minded concept. In fact, our belief is Hindutva alone is nationalism," Gadkari said.

Referring to "crorepati" Hindus who had to run away from Pakistan to Rajasthan, he said, "I

had met them. They were in a miserable condition with no water and toilets. I was in tears. So, I got them everything and also gave them Rs 5 lakh from my own pocket. Now if we are planning to give such people citizenship, what's wrong in that," he asked.

Gadkari accused the Congress of laying out a red carpet for "foreigners", helping them buy property here and facilitating their entry into Parliament. "When we opened bank accounts under the Jan Dhan scheme, did we say don't give it to Muslims? Did we deprive Muslims of gas cylinders and houses under government schemes," Gadkari asked.

Citing examples of musician Adnan Sami and actor Salma Agha, the minister said, "We gave them citizenship. What did the Congress give Muslims? A puncture repair shop, a scrap shop and a tea stall?"

"Only we (BJP) can give you development," he said.

Fadnis said at the rally, "The Act is in the country's interest and not for discriminating against any community. Some political parties are deliberately spreading rumours and stoking the fire on the issue."

Modi no lesser than god, says Chouhan

MILIND GHATWAI
BHOPAL, DECEMBER 22

FORMER MADHYA Pradesh Chief Minister and senior BJP leader Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Sunday compared Prime Minister Narendra Modi with god for enabling citizenship to persecuted minorities from Pakistan.

"God gave you life, mother gave you birth but Narendra Modiji, you gave them a new life, respect and dignity. Narendra Modi aap bhagwan se kam nahi ho (Narendra Modi, you are no lesser than god). Is it not true?" he asked a gathering of Sindhi and Punjabi communities in Indore in the presence of party's working president JP Nadda.

The BJP had organised a meeting on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in Indore.

Citing stories of women and girls who came from Pakistan, Chouhan said devotees were not allowed to go to temples in that country, women were raped, some forcibly made to perform nikah and some killed for refusing to marry. He said when he was the CM, he had asked the district collector not to act against these people although their visas had expired. "Abhinandan karo Narendra Modi ka, Vandan karo Amit Shahji ka," Chouhan said, adding that he wondered why some people were opposing CAA, which grants citizenship.

Speaking at the event, Nadda said he does not think Rahul Gandhi has read history because he does not empathise with those who suffered due to the partition. He accused the Congress of misleading the country on CAA.

CAA, NRC in tune with Constitution: Yediyurappa

Oppn demands judicial inquiry into Mangalore violence

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, DECEMBER 22

THE CITIZENSHIP (Amendment) Act (CAA) and National Register for Citizens (NRC) are in line with the Constitution and its secular values, Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa said here on Sunday even as protests are set to mount in the state over the next few days over the CAA and NRC.

"My appeal to the people is that the CAA and NRC are nationalistic laws and they will not cause harm to any Indian. CAA and NRC are in tune with the Constitution and its secular values," Yediyurappa said in a statement.

Last week witnessed protests around Karnataka in defiance of prohibitory orders imposed for three days from December 19. Two persons were killed in Mangalore during the protests on December 19 following police firing in Bunder area of the city.

With the prohibitory orders lapsing on Saturday night, police granted permission for protests to be held by various groups in closed spaces such as fields and auditoriums from Sunday. A major protest is scheduled on Monday at the Idgah Maidan.

The Chief Minister in his statement accused leaders of opposition Congress and JD(S) of misleading people on the issue although the Opposition has been questioning the handling of protests by the government more than CAA and NRC per se.

"All opposition to CAA and NRC have no basis and fears on the



Karnataka Chief Minister, B S Yediyurappa

issue are unfounded. There are misconceptions on the two issues and opposition leaders, including Siddaramaiah and H D Kumaraswamy, are trying to mislead the people," he said.

"My feeling on CAA and NRC is all the opposition leaders have not read or understood the Act. At least these leaders should read the details of the CAA when the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha discussed it for days. I want to ask why the Congress leaders are silent about Dr Manmohan Singh's speech in Rajya Sabha in 2003 stressing the need for an amendment to the then existing CAA," he said.

Siddaramaiah and Kumaraswamy have questioned the handling of protests by the government in the past few days.

"I demand that the Chief Minister dismiss the Home Minister and officers concerned over the violence. A judicial inquiry should be conducted," former chief minister Kumaraswamy said following a visit to Mangalore on Sunday.

"I want to ask the government when permission was given in the afternoon of December 18 for protests why a video conference was held and a decision was taken at 7 pm to ban the protests. Groups had already communicated to supporters about the

protest. At many places, people came out because they were confused since mixed messages were received on social media. Protests were held despite the prohibitory orders in many places on December 19 as a result," the JD(S) leader said.

"The incidents are not related to communal violence but of clashes between the police and protesters. All those involved in the firing must be suspended immediately. We will not leave this issue. We will fight it out."

Congress leader and former chief minister Siddaramaiah said the BJP government's suppression of protests against NRC and CAA was the cause for disruption of law and order.

"If democracy has to survive, people have to be allowed to protest against policies that are unconstitutional and illegal. Even courts in the country have through many orders acknowledged the role of protests in the country," Siddaramaiah said.

He was barred from entering Mangalore last week while curfew prevailed after police firing on protesters.

"People from all communities and groups are participating in the protests and it is not restricted to any one community. There was no need to impose section 144 in Karnataka. The Supreme Court says that there should be a situation that warrants section 144 but here the government has on suspicion imposed it with the intention of curbing freedom of speech. This is also unconstitutional," he said in a press briefing.

Don't allow NRC: Owaisi appeals to Telangana CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD, DECEMBER 22

AJITH CHIEF Asaduddin Owaisi on Sunday appealed to Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrababekar Rao to not allow National Register of Citizens (NRC) in the state.

"The TRS voted against Citizenship (Amendment) Bill in both houses of Parliament. Now the state must oppose implementation of CAA (Citizenship Amendment Act) and NRC here. Kerala and West Bengal have stayed the NRC work and Telangana should follow suit," he said. "I am also appealing to Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy not to support the CAA. Jagan must reconsider his decision to support the BJP," he said.

The United Muslims Action Committee also appealed to the Telangana Chief Minister to stay work on NRC. Telangana Home Minister M Mahmud Ali said the state has not received any instruction from the Centre yet.

On Saturday night, Owaisi addressed a big gathering at the AIMIM's headquarters, appealing to the people to protest peacefully. Owaisi also administered the

Preamble oath to the crowd, many of whom carried the Tricolour and placards with anti-CAA and anti-NRC slogans.

Owaisi appealed to the people not to throw away the national flag after the meeting and instead take it home and hoist it as a sign of protest against the CAA and NRC. "Fly the Tricolour outside your house. This will be a message for the BJP that they have made a wrong law," Owaisi told the gathering. He asked them not to chant any religious slogans and only shout "Hindustan Zindabad".

Talking about the CAA, Owaisi appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi that the word religious should be removed from the law. "Minorities are being oppressed in Myanmar and Sri Lanka also but they are not included in this," he said. He said it was fine if the Indian Government wants to give citizenship to people of Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. "My question is why give it on the basis of religion?"

Owaisi said he would soon organise a Save Constitution day. He said those against CAA should be prepared for the long haul without resorting to violence. "This protest should go on for at least six or seven months..." he said.

SALUTE THE SOLDIER

04 JUN 1963 - 23 DEC 1993



MAJ HPS SANDHU, SC

We pay homage to our noble martyr, who made the supreme sacrifice while fighting the enemy in 'OP RAKSHAK', J&K in the year 1993. His dauntless courage & sacrifice will forever inspire the organisation.

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Fax No. 0565-2763246

F. No. 2-3(9)/R&P/2016/Part-V Dated: 20th December, 2019
VACANCY NOTIFICATION

One (01) contractual position of Senior Research Fellow (SRF) under NASF Project entitled "Genetic Variability of Milk" is Proposed to be filled through walk-in interview on 04.01.2020 from 11:00 AM onwards. Interested candidates may visit our website www.cirg.res.in for details. (Sumit Kumar Jindal) Sr. Admn. Officer



Mizoram University
(NAAC Accredited Grade 'A' University)

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No.3/8-6/2018-Estt.(NT)/192 Dated Aizawl, the 20th Dec.2019
EMPLOYMENT NOTICE

Applications are invited in the prescribed format for filling up of various Non-Teaching posts latest by 20th January, 2020. Details may be seen from Mizoram University website www.mzu.edu.in. Subsequent addendum/ corrigendum issued, if any, shall be posted in the University website only.

(Prof. LALNUNDEANGA) Registrar



भारत सरकार
Government
of India

DO NOT GET MISLED BY MISINFORMATION ON THE CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT ACT.

A LOT OF RUMOURS AND MISINFORMATION ARE BEING CIRCULATED, WHICH ARE IN NO WAY TRUE. HERE ARE THE FACTS OF THE CAA.

MYTHS



FACTS

CAA IS TARGETED AT TAKING AWAY CITIZENSHIP FROM INDIAN MUSLIMS

CAA DOES NOT AFFECT ANY EXISTING INDIAN CITIZEN OF ANY RELIGION.

It is about giving citizenship to persecuted minorities settled in India till 2014 and not taking away citizenship from anyone.

CAA IS AGAINST INDIAN MUSLIMS

WRONG. CAA APPLIES ONLY TO MINORITIES FROM THREE COUNTRIES - PAKISTAN, BANGLADESH AND AFGHANISTAN.

It does not concern any Indian of any religion, including Muslims. So, there is no question of it being against Indian Muslims.

DOCUMENTS TO PROVE CITIZENSHIP NEED TO BE COLLECTED RIGHT NOW OR ELSE PEOPLE WILL BE DEPORTED

WRONG. No nationwide NRC has been announced. If and when it is announced, rules and guidelines would be framed such that no Indian citizen would face any harassment whatsoever.

NO INDIAN CITIZEN OF ANY RELIGION OR ANY REGION WILL BE ADVERSELY IMPACTED BY THE CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT ACT.

8 GOVT & POLITICS



DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



SURPRISE VISIT

PRIYANKA GANDHI Vadra's decision to visit Bijnor in Uttar Pradesh to meet the families of two people killed during the anti-citizenship law protests took the party by surprise and caught it unawares. AICC functionaries were told about her plan at the last minute. Even the district Congress president was informed about her visit while she was on way to Bijnor. The district Congress chief was asked to wait at a certain place and join her cavalcade.

HITTING BACK

SHASHI THAROOR appears to be the most vocal among the Congress MPs over the new citizenship law. This is perhaps the reason why a pamphlet that advertised his Bharat Bachao protest has come under severe criticism for a map of India it had on its background. RSS weekly *Organiser* has done a report on the pamphlet Tharoor posted on Twitter. The article said the post had a "disfigured map of India which omitted parts of Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir". Tharoor replaced his Twitter post with a new one, but on Sunday, a few hours after the weekly report, Tharoor posted a picture used by pro-CAB and NRC supporters with a wrong map of India. "The Hindutva elements who made such a huge fuss about a designer's illustration for the Kozhikode #bharatbachaorally seem anxious to give away even more Indian territory to our enemies! Will this shame them into stopping their ridiculous campaign of calumny?," the MP tweeted.

STAYING PUT

AN AICC functionary camping in a state which he is in charge of for over a month is unheard of in the Congress. RPN Singh — the AICC in charge of Jharkhand — spent close to 35 days in Ranchi ever since the Congress announced its candidates. The Congress is playing second fiddle to the JMM in Jharkhand, contesting in 31 seats of the total 81 but Singh did not want to take chances and spent over a month in Ranchi tying up loose ends in the campaign. He will be in Ranchi on Monday as well when counting of votes will take place. Unlike the JMM, the Congress is contesting mostly in urban or semi-urban seats where the BJP has a strong presence. The Congress has its fingers crossed now as it hopes to better its 2014 tally of six seats and cross the two-digit mark for the second time ever since the state came into existence.

STALLED

THE NITI Aayog's meeting to draft the roadmap for population stabilisation in the country, scheduled to be held on Friday, was postponed at the last minute. Though no specific reason was cited for the postponement, it is learnt that the decision to hold the meeting on another date was taken as some of the participants were unable to reach on time due to ongoing protests against CAA-NRC in Delhi. It is not clear when the meeting will be held. Meanwhile, a programme organised by the MSME Ministry to distribute Electric Potter Wheel by Khadi & Village Industries Commission was also cancelled.

Maya warns cadre against 'selfish' Bhim Army chief

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

AS BHIM Army chief Chandrashekhar Azad hit the national headlines with his protest at Delhi's Jama Masjid against the new citizenship law and proposed NRC, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) president Mayawati on Sunday hit out against the Dalit youth leader and cautioned her party cadre and supporters to be "vigilant of all such selfish elements".

In a series of tweets, the former UP chief minister accused the Bhim Army chief of "conspiring" with the Opposition parties and affecting her party's votes by getting "forcibly arrested ahead of elections in BSP stronghold states".

"There is a general perception among Dalits that Chandrashekhar of the Bhim Army, as part of the conspiracy with Opposition parties, stages protests on the issues influencing party (BSP) votes and forcibly get arrested ahead of elections in the BSP stronghold states. For instance, he is a resident of UP but he took part in the protests against CAA/NRC at Jama Masjid in Delhi because Assembly elections are going to be held there soon," she tweeted.

"Therefore, there is an appeal to our party people to remain always vigilant of all such selfish



Mayawati

elements, organisations and parties. However, the party never accept such elements, no matter how much efforts they make," she added.

Azad, who has been sent to 14-day judicial custody after he was taken into custody at Jama Masjid, had recently announced to contest in 22 states.

Later in the day, the BSP also released a statement and alleged that Azad gets arrested to get publicity to damage the BSP. The party also attacked other organisations, including BAMCEF, for "misguiding the people of Dalit community".

The BSP chief's comment comes four days after a party's parliamentary delegation had met President Ram Nath Kovind and demanded repeal of the Citizenship Amendment Act, calling it "unlawful, unconstitutional and against Article 14 and 21 of the Constitution". The party had also opposed the Citizenship Amendment Bill in the both Houses of Parliament.

Those behind arson, violence sitting in govt, says Akhilesh

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, DECEMBER 22

WITH THE protests against the new citizenship law claiming 16 lives in Uttar Pradesh, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Sunday alleged that those behind the arson and violence were "sitting in the government (*sarkar mein baithe hain*)."

Addressing a press conference here, the former chief minister said: "*Jahaan tak baat rahi dangon ki, dangaa karane wale toh sarkaar mein baithe hain. Kya pichle varsh logon ko yaad nahi hai, kaun log karate thay danga. Aur dange se laabh toh usi ko milega jo sarkaar mein rehte hain. Isiliye jaan boochkar, BJP nafrat phaila rahi hai, logon ko dara rahi hai. Aur kaise nafrat ki deewar aur badi paida ho jaye samaaj ke andar, uski tayyari BJP kar rahi hai, kyunki asli mud-don BJP asafal hui hai.*"

("As far as the riots are concerned, the riot-mongers are sitting in the government. Don't people remember who was behind the riots last year? Riots only benefit those in government. Hence, the BJP is intentionally spreading hatred and fear. It is trying to further strengthen the wall of hatred within society, because it has failed on the real issues.")

Pointing to the countrywide protests, he said: "With one arrow, they have made so many



SP chief Akhilesh Yadav at a press meet in Lucknow. Express

people sad. The issue in Bengal and Assam is different. In Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and other parts of the country, the people who are protesting don't want any tinkering with the Constitution. The rights given to us by the Constitution must remain. Our Chief Minister is threatening people... He said in the Assembly 'thoko'... The result is that innocent people have died. The CM is saying take revenge. All the deaths in Uttar Pradesh have happened due to the language of the CM and his government... in places where people went out to protest peacefully. This is our right, and the BJP and its government are denying people their right," he said.

"The Samajwadi Party will never be in favour of an exercise like NRC. All this is being done intentionally because the BJP gov-

ernment has failed... Today, protests are happening not just in India... After Jamia and AMU, there is no university where protests were not held," he said.

Alleging that police personnel were indulging in vandalism, he said: "If the government is identifying protesters based on videos, then it must also watch the videos which show injustice by the administration to those protesting peacefully. There are several such videos which are being circulated, where police personnel are seen indulging in vandalism and provoking people... If they are saying buses have been burnt, I would like to ask how the buses reached there. You would have the video of that too," said the SP leader.

"The protests by SP workers were peaceful... If there was vio-

lence, it was done at the government's behest," he said.

Asked about the government's stand that the new citizenship law would not affect Indian nationals, he said: "I will give one example, in villages, no poor person has papers for his house... ask people there how many of them have papers. The poor don't have papers."

On the government's announcement that those indulging in violence would be identified and their properties confiscated to pay for the damage to public property, he said: "*Toh 2007 ka bhi jurmana de de mukhyamantri ji. Jo Gorakhpur mein dange hue thay, uska jurmana kaun dega.* (The CM should also give compensation for 2007. Who will pay for the riots that happened in Gorakhpur in 2007.)"

("Public property") is being set on fire, on the government's directions, so that people can be intimidated and the movement can be suppressed," he said.

"Have mediapersons not faced injustice... Has a journalist sitting among us today not faced insults? Was it not said that his beard would be pulled out? Have you forgotten the talk of Diwali and Ramzan... of *shamshaan* and *kabristan*... Whose language could this be at a time when internet is suspended... when it is said that they will recognise protesters based on their clothes," he said.

Oppn encouraging miscreants, PFI-foreign nexus behind violence: UP Deputy CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, DECEMBER 22

MAINTAINING THAT India is a country of Muslims as much as it is of Hindus, Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma on Sunday alleged that Opposition parties were indirectly "encouraging" miscreants by questioning the government on the new citizenship law "instead of telling people the truth".

He also alleged the possible involvement of Popular Front of India (PFI) and foreign countries and said that Opposition was "using the same kind of propaganda on the new law as in the Pakistani parliament".



Dinesh Sharma

"It is sad that even when NRC (National Register of Citizens) has not come into force, Samajwadi Party president (Akhilesh Yadav) is saying things like people have to stand in queues for NRC. Words that can incite people should not be used. Senior political leaders should have control over what they speak, especially when there is an environment of anarchy and people are getting involved in violence. In such times, the

Opposition is equally responsible for peace. They should be telling the truth on CAA and not about something which is yet to come. One thing hasn't ended and you are talking about another," Sharma told mediapersons.

"Instead of inciting anyone, they should tell the reality about CAA, which is not against any Indian... Both the government and the BJP is reaching out to the minority community to say this. We will be reaching around 3 crore people. This country is of Hindus as well as of Muslims, and we all have contributed to the progress of this country. Those who are creating differences in our unity and brotherhood are those who have been rejected by the voters.

People are with the BJP and those demotivated by it are adding fuel to such incidents from behind the curtains," the Deputy CM added.

Alleging the involvement of Popular Front of India (PFI) and foreign countries in the violent protests, he said, "The PFI would call a smaller version of (banned terror outfit) SIML... Their connection with foreign countries cannot be denied. It is sad that the language of Pakistan is being used... What is the reason that their (Pakistani) prime minister and foreign minister are giving speeches about CAA in Pakistan assembly, the same kind of propaganda is being spread by senior leaders of the Opposition?" he said.

TMC delegation stages sit-in after being detained at Lucknow airport

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, KOLKATA, DEC 22

A FOUR-MEMBER TMC delegation on Sunday was "detained" at the Lucknow airport in Uttar Pradesh after it reached there to visit violence-hit areas in the city and meet the family of a 25-year-old man who died of gunshot injuries sustained during a protest against the new citizenship law.

The delegation — comprising senior party leaders Dinesh Trivedi (former railway minister), Pratima Mondal, Nadimul Haque and Abir Biswas — sat on a dharna inside the airport against "detention". According to a statement by the party, the delegation was surrounded by police immediately on their arrival.

A Samajwadi Party delegation of four MLAs was also not allowed to meet the TMC leaders.

"As soon as we got down from the plane at 2 pm, around 50 police personnel surrounded the plane as if we were terrorists. They did not let us board a regular bus. They physically stopped us and detained us. I even asked under what law we were being stopped, but they did not answer. They behaved like this is the British Raj. But I know they have instructions from above... All we wanted was to go to Old Lucknow, visit the house of the deceased and then come back. We had no political programme," Trivedi told *The Indian Express*.

Reacting to the development, West Bengal BJP unit mocked the ruling TMC and said the state government "failed to tackle" the law and order situation during the recent protests in the state.



Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot at a peace march in Jaipur on Sunday. Rohit Jain Parass

RSS, BJP playing dangerous game in name of Hinduism, says Gehlot

HAMZA KHAN
JAIPUR, DECEMBER 22

RAJASTHAN CHIEF Minister Ashok Gehlot led a massive rally in Jaipur on Sunday against the citizenship law and the National Register of Citizens saying that that "a dangerous game" is being played by the RSS and BJP in the name of Hinduism.

"You divide people in the name of religion, you want to implement the agenda of Hinduism; hence, one after the other, you send a message to the people talking of nationalism. Are we not nationalists? You talk of religion, you do politics hiding behind the Army; you talk of Article 370, Ram Temple. What do you want in the end?" Gehlot asked, addressing a rally after a three kilometre silent 'Samvidhan Bachao Peace March' here. A statue of Mahatma Gandhi stood behind the stage at Gandhi Circle.

Citing Pakistan, the CM said that a nation created in the name of religion doesn't stay united. "Pakistan was created in the name of religion. I want to ask Modi ji: entire Pakistan was one. People of just one religion lived there: Muslims. Then how come Pakistan was divided in two? Why was another nation, Bangladesh created? No one has the answer. The agenda of the BJP and the RSS is common civil code, Article 370, Ram Temple and now Hindu Rashtra — how many pieces do you want to break the nation into?"

"Talking of Hindus you want to divide people along the line of religion. A very dangerous game is being played. Our countrymen have understood; that it is not only against Muslims. It is against everyone; Everyone will be made to stand in lines and humiliated," he said, adding that, "Modi ji and Amit Shah ji should understand that a nation doesn't run with tyrant and fas-

list tendencies. In a democracy, it runs with love and brotherhood. You can pass a law through a majority (in the Parliament), but you can't win hearts with the majority. The entire country is on fire — 15 people have died in Uttar Pradesh alone. Bullets are being fired only where there's a BJP government."

"The Constitution was put to test for 70 years and it lived up to the expectations. But look at things now..." he said.

The CM also said that the NRC is inherently flawed and it was conducted in Assam while being monitored by the Supreme Court.

"Different figures are coming in, 19 lakh people were marked as not having the documents; as it turned out, 16 lakh among them were Hindus," he said.

At the silent march, Gehlot was joined by leaders of nearly half a dozen political organisations.

Cong hits back at PM claim: Home Minister spoke of NRC in House

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

SOON AFTER Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted on Sunday that there has been no discussion on NRC in his government since it came to power in 2014 and accused the Opposition of spreading lies, the Congress hit back, pointing out that Home Minister Amit Shah spoke in Parliament about rollout of a nationwide NRC.

It said the Prime Minister should provide a "healing touch" and refrain from labelling those who are opposing the government's policies.

The Congress, which has given the call for a sit-in protest at Raj Ghat on Monday in solidarity with the nationwide protests against the new citizenship law and the proposed NRC, asked the Prime Minister to convene a meeting of the National Integration Council to discuss contentious issues with Chief Ministers and forge a consensus.

Congress leader Anand Sharma told reporters that the Opposition has not brought up the issue of NRC "out of a vacuum".

He said it was Home Minister Shah who spoke about it in both Houses of Parliament and added that this has created an "environment of fear, insecurity and uncertainty" in the country. "And it is primarily the government which is responsible for that," he said.

"Prime Minister should speak responsibly... The Government has created an atmosphere of insecurity and uncertainty by passing the (citizenship) Bill in a hurry. So the blame for this should go to the Government. We had cautioned the government that it should strive to forge a consensus because the Bill has certain shortcomings and it is in conflict with the Constitution... there was no need for such a Bill... the existing laws were enough..." he said.

"This situation was created



'Insecurity, fear... govt responsible'

because Home Minister had said in both Houses of Parliament that the government will now bring a nationwide NRC. It was not the Congress or opposition parties which had said that... Students, citizens and social organisations belong to this country... they are not from any other country. In democracy, everyone has the right to express their views and protest," Sharma added.

"If the students have come out, they feel for the country... it is their future which is at stake..." he said.

Sharma said the Prime Minister's barbs at the Congress are in tune with his "familiar style". "A situation of conflict arises only when they move away from the democratic traditions... their style of functioning is dictatorial. They have the majority but that does not mean that they will not listen to the minority... The basic issue is the country's economy has been destroyed, the responsibility of its lies with the Prime Minister and the government," he said.

"...they brought India, which was a very fast growing economy, which was a very robust economy to almost ruination... is the Prime Minister not supposed to talk about it? This labelling and name calling is not a responsible statement coming from the Prime Minister. In a democracy, the government takes decisions and if those decisions raise bone fide concerns and issues, the Opposition has a right to protest or raise the people's concerns," he said.

"Those who question the government or criticise them, they are being labelled... as if we are not Indians and national interest is not close to our hearts," he said.

Mamata, Gehlot and Pinarayi target PM over citizenship law

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

HOURS AFTER Prime Minister Narendra Modi sought to assuage concerns of Muslims over the new citizenship law and NRC, three Chief Ministers — West Bengal's Mamata Banerjee, Kerala's Pinarayi Vijayan and Rajasthan's Ashok Gehlot — on Sunday hit out at him. Banerjee and Gehlot reminded the Prime Minister that it was Home Minister Amit Shah who had spoken in Parliament about implementation of a nationwide NRC.

Gehlot also accused Modi of misleading the country. Modi, in his speech at Ramlija ground, took Gehlot's name and argued that he in his previous term as Chief Minister had spoken about showing sympathy for refugees. Modi, said Gehlot, as Chief Minister had demanded that the situation of those Hindus or Sikhs who had come to India from Pakistan should be improved.

The Prime Minister attacked Banerjee over her strident opposition to the citizenship law and the proposed nationwide NRC, accusing her of changing her earlier stand on "infiltrators" due to "vote-bank" politics. Banerjee, he said, used to plead in Parliament some years ago that infiltrators coming from Bangladesh should be stopped and seek help for persecuted refugees from the neighbouring country.

"Whatever I said is there in public forum, whatever you said is there for people to judge. With Prime Minister contradicting Home Minister publicly on nationwide NRC, who is dividing fundamental idea of India? People will definitely decide who is right & who is wrong," Banerjee said.

"Prime Minister and Union Home Minister have mentioned me in their speeches. On the one hand they say people need not be scared of CAA and on the other hand they say that NRC will be implemented in the whole country.



Mamata: Whatever you said is there for people to judge

This duplicity won't work," said Gehlot. "I want to tell the PM and HM that in democracy, you cannot force any law that the people do not want. It's not practical. Widespread protests against CAA-NRC are proof that people from all sections of society do not want CAA, NRC," he added.

Accusing Modi and Shah of misleading the country "by taking my name", Gehlot said, "What do they want to say? Was it wrong to write to then home minister P Chidambaram for making facilities available to those who had come to the border areas of Rajasthan from Pakistan after facing persecution... Who is creating obstacles in giving citizenship/facilities to those who are coming here even now after facing persecution? Hindu or a Muslim, who can have a problem with this? The problem is that the home minister is provoking by announcing NRC would be implemented in the entire country notwithstanding the fact that they could not implement it in Assam."

Vijayan said Modi has said in his speech that caste and religion are not criteria for schemes.

"It is now up to the Prime Minister to prove his words with deeds. Emotional outbursts are never enough. The fundamental issue of CAA is that it discriminates on the basis of religion," he said.

CPM general secretary Sitaram Yechury also targeted the Prime Minister. "The PM's election campaign speech in Delhi today is full of untruths, half-truths and misleading statements. Whether it be the NRC, CAA or detention camps, the facts are to the contrary. There is criminal neglect of people's misery..." he said.

9 EXPRESS NETWORK

Uncertainty could affect neighbours: Bangladesh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DHAKA, DECEMBER 22

THE CITIZENSHIP Amendment Act (CAA) and National Register of Citizens (NRC) are India's "internal issues", Bangladesh Foreign Minister A K Abdul Momen has said, but voiced concern that any "uncertainty" in the country is likely to affect its neighbours.

Amid protests over the citizenship law across India, Momen hoped that the situation "cools down" and the neighbouring country "can get out of it".

According to the CAA, members of Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian communities who have come from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan till December 31, 2014 following religious persecution there will get Indian citizenship.

"The CAA and NRC are internal issues of India. Indian government assured us again and again that these are their domestic issues, they are doing it because of legal and other reasons," Momen told PTI when asked about the CAA and the protests against it.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi while talking to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had assured that under no circumstances it will affect Bangladesh, Momen said.

"The minister asserted that his country trusts India. However, he said, "We are the No.1 friend of India. So, if there is uncertainty in India, it is likely to affect its neighbours. When there was an economic downturn in the US, it affected many countries because we live in a global world. So our fear is that if there is some uncertainty in India, it might affect its neighbours".

"That is worrisome. We hope the situation cools down and India can get out of it...It is their internal issue. It is not our issue. They should deal with it," he said.

Momen had recently said Bangladesh has requested New Delhi to provide a list of Bangladeshi nationals living illegally in India, "if any", to be repatriated.



A shop sealed by the Muzaffarnagar administration on Sunday. *Gajendra Yadav*

'Detained in police facility, I heard screams all night... It was horrific'

AMIL BHATNAGAR
MUZAFFARNAGAR, DEC 22

IT WAS ON Friday afternoon when an estimated 50,000 people gathered at Muzaffarnagar's Khalapur area. What was meant to be a protest against the new citizenship law had by 4.30 pm turned into violent clashes between police and protesters, with residents alleging that the hours that followed witnessed a ruthless police crackdown on their homes, their shops as well as a local mosque.

The district, which had in 2013 seen communal clashes that left over 50 dead, now finds itself under lockdown, on the edge, and, in the absence of Internet, virtually cut off. One resident has died in the violence, though police maintain they have not fired a single shot and that they have no link to his death.

When *The Indian Express* visited Muzaffarnagar on Sunday afternoon, Meenakshi Chowk, usually a bustling marketplace with rows of restaurants, was deserted. Police claim Friday's crowd had started stone-pelting at Barkachha Chowk and moved towards Meenakshi Chowk and Mahavir Chowk a kilometre away. Residents, on the other hand, allege the sound of gunfire had prompted panic in the crowd, following which violence began.

"There were more than 50,000 people protesting. Initially it was peaceful but soon more crowds began to gather near Meenakshi Chowk. After a few hours, stone-pelting began and we had to resort to lathicharge and teargas shelling to contain them. Not a single round was fired from the police side. In fact, we have recovered empty shells of various ammunition from the side of the protesters," claimed Satpal Antil, SP City, Muzaffarnagar.

Residents claim what followed barely six hours later was a police crackdown in the locality, with personnel entering the lanes of Khalapur and destroying private property with hammers and lathis. Residents, most of whom wished to remain anonymous, claimed more than 80 policemen, both in uniform and civil clothes, barged into homes, broke windows and destroyed items.

Haji Anwarilahi, 74, claimed that on Friday night, he was detained by policemen after they smashed his vehicle and entered his home. "I can barely even walk. I could hear sticks banging and breaking things. They even broke a fridge which was supposed to be gifted during a wedding. I was detained in a 'police facility', and I heard screams from different rooms all night. It was horrific," Haji, who claims he was released

Sunday morning, told *The Indian Express*. Many residents from Khalapur claimed they hid in corners of their own homes as policemen roamed around for almost two hours on Friday night. Some claimed they hid on terraces when they saw policemen breaking streetlights and CCTV cameras placed outside their homes.

Two kilometres away, the steps leading to Abdul Karim mosque are still littered with broken glass. Eyewitnesses claimed police had stormed the mosque premises Friday night and broken several items inside.

"There was a group of madrasa students who had come from Gujarat and were sleeping inside the prayer hall. They were woken up by the sound of glass windows being broken. They rushed to hide upstairs when police barged in," said the imam.

Local residents claimed at least 70 families "have left till the situation cools down".

The family of local resident Noor Muhammad (26) claimed he was "shot by police" on Friday and referred to Meerut Hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival. An official from the Meerut Medical College confirmed the man had been brought in with a bullet wound to the head. The family claims they were not allowed to bury the body in Muzaffarnagar citing law and or-

der problems, and buried him in Meerut instead. "Noor had gone to eat something and was coming home when the clashes erupted. He was shot by a security official for no fault. He has a one-year-old daughter and a pregnant wife. He was born here, he was killed here, but he could not be buried here," said his brother Umardaraz.

However, SP Antil said police had nothing to do with Noor's death. "There is no chance he was shot by the police since we didn't fire a single bullet. Vandalism was carried out by protesters who wanted to create a law and order situation," said Antil.

The administration on Sunday sealed 67 shops close to Meenakshi Chowk as "part of its investigation". "It is possible some protesters gathered at shops before the violence. We will also study CCTV footage for the sequence of events. If there is no role of a shopkeeper in the incident, he will be handed over the keys," said an administration official.

When contacted, BJP's Muzaffarnagar MP Sanjeev Balyan said: "I came to Muzaffarnagar from Delhi on Friday afternoon. I had been hearing from locals that outsiders from different districts, like Azamgarh, were pouring in and I suspect those anti-social elements made the protest violent... The situation is now under control."

UP: 1 more dies of bullet wound, toll rises to 16

879 held, 5,312 in preventive detention

MANISH SAHU
LUCKNOW, DECEMBER 22

WITH THE death of a 28-year-old HIV patient in Kanpur on Sunday, the death toll in the last four days of state-wide protest against the new citizenship law has reached 16. The patient had suffered a firearm injury at a protest on Friday.

Three people have died in the violence in Kanpur since Friday. Two others were Aftab Alam (22) and Mohammad Saif (25).

Senior Superintendent of Police (Kanpur) Anant Deo confirmed that the patient had suffered a bullet injury on Friday. His family did not take him to the hospital until Saturday. "He died during treatment. We need to verify why his family did not admit him to the hospital. He, who was an HIV patient, suffered a pellet injury. The cause of death will be ascertained after the autopsy report is out," said Deo.

As many as 879 people have been arrested across the state during protests related to the new law and the proposed National Register of Citizens (NRC), and 164 criminal cases registered. Another 108 people have been arrested for uploading objectionable posts and videos on social media. A total of 76 cases have been filed under the Information Technology Act.

Police have made 5,312 preventive arrests. Internet services remained suspended in several districts on Saturday.

No incident of violence was reported Sunday, while a silent protest was taken out by a group of women in Sambhal. Sambhal SP Yamuna Prasad said around 500 women handed over a memorandum to the police.

Heavy police force was deployed in areas where violence was reported over the last few days. "Today, the state remained peaceful. Police are arresting those involved in violence after collecting evidence against them," UP

DGP Om Prakash Singh said. Senior police officers have been sent to districts where major incidents of violence took place. Intelligence agencies are keeping a watch on developments. Police are regularly patrolling the area and collecting details about people who are missing.

Those injured over the last four days include 288 policemen. Of them, 61 have suffered bullet injuries. The condition of two policemen, who suffered bullet injuries in Kanpur on Saturday, is critical. The police claimed to have recovered 647 cartridges and 35 country-made pistols from protest sites across the state.

Police have begun arresting "miscreants" after identifying them through video clips from media houses and local residents, and footage of CCTV near protest sites. Raids are being conducted to arrest the accused, police said.

In several districts, including Gorakhpur and Sambhal, police have circulated photographs of suspects who are absconding. Police are also studying phone records of those who were leading protests.

District officials have also started evaluating loss to public property. The administration will initially issue notices to the accused to pay the fine. If the accused fail to pay the penalty, police will move the court to confiscate their property.

In Rampur, the district administration has issued notices to 26 people for the damages incurred during Saturday's violence in which one person was killed and five others injured.

"Police have sent a report of 25 people after collecting evidence against them. Police have found video clips of them throwing stones on the police. We are now waiting for another report on the total value of damaged properties. Once the report is obtained, notices would be sent to all of them," said District Magistrate, Rampur, Anjaneya Kumar Singh.

Cong leader 'beaten up in jail', police reject charge

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, DECEMBER 22

A DELEGATION of Congress leaders on Sunday met social activist and party leader Sadaf Jafar, who was arrested on Thursday during a protest against the new citizenship law, and alleged that she, before being sent to jail, was beaten up at Hazratganj police station.

However, the police denied the allegation and claimed that Jafar was involved in rioting.

Jafar was among 200 people arrested while protesting against the new law and the NRC.

AICC general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra claimed Jafar was peacefully protesting and was beaten up by the police. "Our female worker Sadaf Jafar told the police to arrest rioters, but they beat her up and arrested her. She is a mother of two... this is cruelty and such suppression would not work..." she tweeted on Sunday.

A member of the Congress delegation that met Jafar in jail, Akhilesh Pratap Singh told *The Indian Express*, "We met her today in the jail. She has injuries and she claimed she was beaten up. In videos shot by her and other news channels, she can be seen asking police to take action against protesters who were indulging in arson, but instead she was arrested."

Congress state president Ajay Kumar Lallu said, "Our former spokesperson Sadaf Jafar was arrested in an unlawful manner, and her arrest was not shown for the next 24 hours. She was beaten up brutally by police..."

SP (east) Suresh Chandra Rawat said an FIR was lodged against her and others on Thursday. "A woman named Sadaf Jafar was arrested in connection with the incident of Parivartan Chowk on Thursday, in which an FIR has been registered. She was arrested from the spot for rioting... She was arrested as per legal process, and before sending her to jail, she underwent a medical test. We have sufficient evidence... The allegations made by her (that she was beaten up and was protesting peacefully) against the police are wrong," Rawat said in a tweet by UP Police.

Priyanka meets kin of those killed in Bijnor violence

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

CONGRESS GENERAL secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Sunday visited Bijnor in Uttar Pradesh and met the families of two persons killed during the protests against new citizenship law. She demanded an inquiry into their deaths and argued that the proposed nationwide NRC is against the interests of the poor. She said such issues are being raked up to divert attention from the economic slowdown.



Priyanka in Bijnor Sunday. *PTI*

Rahul Gandhi too hit out at the government, accusing Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah of de-

stroying the future of the country's youth.

"They can't face your anger over the lack of jobs and damage they've done to the economy. That's why they are dividing our beloved India & hiding behind hate," he tweeted.

After meeting family members of those killed, Priyanka said their death came under "strange circumstances".

"There should be an inquiry... how it had happened and what had happened. Their family members have told me that they wanted to file an FIR but were told that cases will be filed against

them if they do so," she said.

"You tell me... you will ask a farmer who does not have land... the documents and proof that he is a citizen of India... Somebody who is a daily wage labourer, who working in a city, has settled in a city, has taken a jhuggi, you will ask for documents of that person's land... What identification will you demand. You will fix some cut-off year...1971 or some year... and ask that person for documents before that year to prove his citizenship or otherwise you will not accept his citizenship..." she said.

Priyanka said those who lost their lives in Bijnor belonged to

poor families. "They were breadwinners. They have small children... there is nobody to take care of them... There should be an inquiry to find out how they lost their lives..." she said.

"The economy has collapsed. The BJP government, instead of providing a solution, is asking Indians to prove their citizenship... The PM should focus on improving the economy..." she said.

Addressing youth in another tweet on Sunday, Rahul said, "No Indian student should allow Modi-Shah to divide India... Let's stand together and fight their hate."

Police accused of excesses in Aurangabad

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
PATNA, DECEMBER 22

SEVERAL FAMILIES in Bihar's Aurangabad have alleged police excesses after a march against the new citizenship law on Saturday. Police have so far arrested 40-odd people for allegedly throwing stones at policemen during the march.

Sajid Nawab alleged that his brother Shahbaz was beaten up without cause while he was parking his car. "When all the protesters had dispersed, Shahbaz was parking his car. A

police team came and started beating him up without giving him any chance to explain. Just because we are living near the area where a protest took place does not mean we are culprits... Let police see video footage that has gone viral to differentiate between the culprit and the innocent," Sajid said, adding that his brother had to be hospitalised.

Farhin Fatmi, who lives in Delhi, has taken to the social media to express dismay at instances of police excesses. "One of my aunts said the police had asked the location of male mem-

bers of her family at gunpoint. This is not the way the police should function," said Fatmi.

Aurangabad SP Dipak Kumar Barnwal told *The Indian Express*, "We have seized over a dozen sacks of stone pieces from Quereshi and Shahganj in Town police station area on Saturday. All arrests were made from the spot. Over a dozen policemen were injured. We had to use force in some cases but police have to do it at times. But if there are specific complaints of police excess with supporting evidence, we will surely look into them."

In Kerala, Congress divided over protesting with ruling CPM

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
DECEMBER 22

THE CONGRESS in Kerala is divided over how to take forward the protest against the new citizenship law.

While a section in the Congress favours a joint protest with the CPM, state Congress president Mullappally Ramachandran has warned against sharing the platform with the Left, the party's main rival in Kerala.

Last week, at a protest at the martyrs' column in Thiruvananthapuram, the CPM managed to bring Congress and its UDF allies for a joint sit-in against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan sat for the satyagraha along with Leader of the Opposition in Assembly Ramesh Chennithala and other UDF leaders. Hundreds of Muslims cutting across lines pledged solidarity with the CPM-led joint protest.

EXPLAINED The divide within state Congress

THE JOINT protest against the amended citizenship Act by the ruling CPM and the Opposition Congress was the first such protest organised by the rivals in the recent past. But, a section of the Congress does not want to lose the gains of the protest against the new citizenship law as the Muslims form the party's traditional vote bank. This section wants the party to chart its own course of protest. The other section thinks sending a strong message that the party stands for secular values without thinking about short-term gains will favour it eventually.

is of the view that any joint protest with CPM is likely to benefit the ruling party, especially when the local body elections in the state are less than a year away.

Expressing his displeasure over the joint protest, state party chief Ramachandran said, "CPM had sabotaged Rahul Gandhi's bid to form a coalition of secular parties at the national level. Let the CPM tender an apology for spoiling that secular coalition and then we can think about

joint protest against the citizenship Act," he said, adding that the Congress would take out marches across Kerala.

On Sunday, senior legislator and vice-president of the Congress state unit V D Sathesan made a veiled attack on Ramachandran, saying that "in the fight against fascist forces, short-term political gains should not be the deciding factor". "In Delhi, Congress president Sonia Gandhi and CPM general secretary Sitaram Yechury went to-

gether to meet the President. Mainstream parties should stand together to send a message that we are all united in this fight. Congress is ready for a joint fight with CPM if the national leadership is willing," he said.

Congress ally Indian Union Muslim League general secretary K P A Majeed said there is confusion within the Congress. "The UDF is trying to sort out the confusion. For the IUML, who gets political advantage out of the protest is not a major concern. We want to put up a strong fight against the BJP and its new citizenship Act. Hence, we had welcomed the joint protest," he said.

On Sunday, the CPM invited UDF constituents to join the human chain from the southern end of the state to the northern end this Republic Day.

"Although there are differences of opinion on various issues, all should join hands at this juncture to protect the nation and the Constitution. The Congress state president's stand reflects his narrow anti-CPI(M) approach," said the state committee of the CPM.

Organising people on religious lines will weaken secular unity, says CPM

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
DECEMBER 22

AFTER ISLAMIC outfits fielded burka-clad women as the face of the state's protest against the amended citizenship law, the CPI (M) on Sunday warned that "using religious symbols and organising people on a religious basis would only serve to further the agenda of the Sangh Parivar."

An unfamiliar presence during the hartal called by fringe Muslim outfits in Kerala last Tuesday was conservative women putting up a strong resistance against the police. They were fielded by the Welfare Party of India (WPI), the political arm of right-wing Jamaat-e-Islami.

In Kannur and Kozhikode districts, women activists of WPI trooped onto streets to stop vehicles from plying on the day. At local-level protest meetings and events across the state, women are participating in large numbers.

On Friday night, scores of women took part in a "protest night," against the amended law



Muslim women during the protest against the amended citizenship act in Kannur on Tuesday. *S.K Mohan*

at Meppayur village in Kozhikode. They were holding placards which said "Wasalamu Inqilab."

The CPI (M) state committee, which met on Sunday, said organising protests using religious symbols and groups would only weaken the unity of secular forces. Such attempts would only help further the interest of the Sangh Parivar and hence everyone should become part of a people's protest with secular perspective, said the committee.

On their hartal, WPI state pres-

ident Hameed Vaniyambalam said it was the first agitation sponsored by the party and for the first time, Muslim women have stepped up. "New-generation Muslim women are politically very conscious and they are ready to come out for such an action. Over the years, the WPI has given due representation for women in the organisation and have been encouraging women to come out to occupy public avenues," he said.

Several girls from the state who are students in Delhi's Jamia

Millia Islamia hail from Jamaat-e-Islami families.

Loktantrik Yuva Janata Dal national president Saleem Madavoor said the protest should be led by a secular society. "There is nothing in the amended law that gives worries to Muslims only. The Jamaat-e-Islami and Popular Front of India wanted to give Muslim identity for the protest. The easy way to give that Islamic face for the protest was to parade burka-clad women during agitations. Such attempts would only lead to polarisation in civil society and giving a mainstream acceptance for orthodoxy. These outfits have reduced the issue to a Muslim one," said Saleem.

WPI Kannur district secretary Sajida Saheer said Muslim women were eager to demonstrate against the contentious law. "We cannot sit at home when girls belonging to our WPI cadres have taken leadership in the protest in Jamia Millia University, Delhi. We stepped out to make the hartal a success," she said.

Indian Union Muslim League legislator K M Shaji said WPI and SDPI are cadre parties engaged in marketing women in politics.

'FAKE' ENCOUNTER
Three-member AIIMS team to conduct 2nd autopsy today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

THE AIIMS has formed a team of three forensic doctors to conduct the second autopsy on the bodies of four men accused of gangrape and murder of a woman veterinarian near Hyderabad, who were killed in an alleged fake encounter on December 6. The committee was formed after Telangana government requested AIIMS to conduct a second autopsy.

The team will be led by Dr Sudhir Gupta, head of forensics at AIIMS, and will have Dr Adarsh Kumar and Dr Abhishek Yadav as members. Dr Varun Chandra will assist the team.

The team will conduct the second autopsy in the mortuary of the state-run Gandhi Hospital in Hyderabad on Monday at 9 am, an AIIMS communique to Telangana special chief secretary stated.

"The medical board will depart for Telangana on Sunday and return on Monday," said Dr Gupta.

The Telangana High Court had directed authorities to get a second postmortem conducted. The bodies have been kept at Gandhi Hospital as per an earlier order of the court after some petitions accused the police of killing the accused in a fake encounter. A division bench had directed that the autopsy be conducted before December 23 and the report be submitted to Registrar General of the high court.

Detention centre for illegal immigrants near Bengaluru gets finishing touches

JOHNSON TA
BENGALURU, DECEMBER 22

THE SECURITY towers at two corners and the barbed wires on the walls suggest that the green compound and building at Sondakoppa village, around 30 km from Bengaluru, is a secure facility.

Inside is an L-shaped building with seven rooms, a kitchen and bathrooms. There are 15 beds in the facility, where finishing touches are being applied.

A policeman stands guard at the gate and a few workers from Karnataka social welfare department walk around the main building and an under-construction staff quarters.

The facility is a detention centre for illegal immigrants readied by the Karnataka government on the basis of an MHA manual issued to state governments in January 2019. It is set to open on January 1. The state government last month issued orders for Bengaluru police to take custody of the building, which was earlier a hostel run by the social welfare department for students from backward classes, to convert it into a "foreigners' movement restriction centre". The state issued orders on December 9 to make the facility fully operational by 2020.

"We are expecting the centre to be ready to take people in from January 1. We need to install CCTV cameras and complete the staff



The detention centre at Sondakoppa village, around 30 km from Bengaluru

quarters. The kitchen and rooms are ready, power and water supply are in place and staff have been allocated," an official of social welfare department said.

The police have allocated staff for security at the centre and the social welfare department has appointed warden and assistant warden, a cook, a clerk and other staff for operating the centre.

The push for early operation comes as a result of a case involving 15 illegal Bangladeshi immigrants who were arrested in August 2018 — a judge of Karnataka High Court has nudged the state government to open the facility soon.

The setting up of the centre was expedited by the state's new BJP government espousing an exercise to prepare a National Register for Citizens. "A large number of people have come from other countries, especially Bangladesh, and settled in Bengaluru and other cities of Karnataka. Karnataka is one of the states where people from across the border are settling. We are collecting information and will discuss with the Union Home Minister on the road ahead," state Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai said in September.

The MHA's manual for 'Model detention centre/holding centre/camp', on the basis of which the centre has been set up, was prepared after an order by the Supreme Court in 2018 in connection

with a writ petition by a Guwahati-based NGO. The NGO had raised the poor conditions in detention centres during implementation of the NRC in Assam.

According to the manual, illegal foreigners who can be detained in the centres after the conclusion of cases pending against them include people awaiting deportation due to non confirmation of nationality; those not issued travel documents by the foreign government; illegal immigrants detected by state law agencies; those declared foreigners by tribunals; those who travelled with fake documents; foreigners ordered to be deported by the central government; those violating visa norms and those detained for suspicious behaviour.

As per the manual, detention centres must be outside premises of prisons and should have a cell where detainees can contact embassies or their family.

The facilities that the manual recommend include "electricity with generator, drinking water (including water coolers), facilities for hygiene, accommodation with beds, sufficient toilets/baths with provision of running water, communication facilities, kitchen" as well as food, drainage and sewage facilities, security and separate quarters for men and women. "It should be ensured that members of the same family are not separated and all family members are housed in the same detention centre," says the manual, adding, "strict prison regimes applicable to undertrial and convicted prisoners should not be made applicable" at the centres.

The manual recommends creche facilities for young children of detainees and access to education for older children. Recreational facilities are also prescribed.

"The centre has been created in adherence with the MHA manual. Most facilities have been incorporated. Nobody who is detained is going to be at the centre for more than three months prior to deportation," a source said.

Two PILs have been filed in Karnataka high court, seeking the state government's action against illegal immigrants and the matter is expected to come up again this month. In one of the petitions, a BHP activist has accused Karnataka government of failing to operationalise the detention centre on Bengaluru outskirts.

WAS BOOKED UNDER PSA

Back home, Kashmir cancer patient recalls four months in Bareilly prison

NAVEED IQBAL
KULGAM, DECEMBER 22

AFTER FOUR months inside a cell at a Bareilly prison, Parvaiz Ahmad Palla has returned home to his family at Mutiberg in south Kashmir's Kulgam district. Sitting in his home, the 34-year-old who is suffering from papillary thyroid cancer said he wasn't sure if he would come back home ever.

"The entire time I was in jail, I was only given painkillers and the limited amount of thyroid medicine I had with me. Whether I had chest pain or any of my organs were hurting, I received the same painkillers," he told *The Indian Express*. He added that a fungal infection he had developed before his arrest worsened in jail. A doctor had then visited him to look at the infection, he said.

"Last week, I was about to ask for a doctor again when my chest started hurting but the guards came in and told me that I can go home," he said.

Palla was arrested from his home after midnight on August 6 and booked under the Public Safety Act (PSA). The dossier prepared ahead of his arrest accused Palla of being a "threat to safety and security of general public and sovereignty of the nation". After a day at Central Jail in Srinagar, he was flown to Bareilly along with 19 others.

His father Mohammad Ayoub Palla thanked the courts and added that the family had ex-

hausted all the resources at its disposal to bring Parvaiz back and are now struggling to fund his treatment. "All the money we had was spent on this. I begged and borrowed, I could not have let my son stay in prison in this condition. We have been set back financially and doctors say his treatment has suffered," he said.

Parvaiz said he was allowed to walk for half-an-hour in the morning and evening daily outside his cell. "I was not sure my family even knew where I was. My treatment was not on my mind at all," he said.

Narrating the ordeal of finding his son, Ayoub said that a couple of days after Parvaiz's arrest, he went to Central Jail in Srinagar and asked about him. "An official posted there directed me to a list outside the jail premises. I had never been outside Kashmir and it was daunting to see that he had been transported outside," he said.

Ayoub said that the first time he travelled to Bareilly with medicines, jail authorities did not allow him to meet Parvaiz. He was able to meet him on October 25, he said. "When I held him in my arms, he told me, 'Why did you come all the way?' And I broke down."

Sitting beside his two sons, aged 9 years and 11 years, Parvaiz said, "I just want to be able to live now. *Hamein zinda rehne ka haq de dijiye*. Our family has suffered and I know there are more suffering. Please let us live in peace."

ENGINEERING COLLEGE BARMER
(AN AUTONOMOUS INSTITUTION OF GOVT. OF RAJASTHAN)
ई-खुली बोली आमंत्रण सूचना निविदा संख्या-02/2019-20

अधोस्तावरकान्ता द्वारा अधिवास्तिकी महाविद्यालय बाहमण्डर की निम्नलिखित विभिन्न लेवों के लिए द्विचरणीय ई-खुली निविदा निम्नलिखित शर्तों के अन्तर्गत आमंत्रित की जाती है।

क्र.सं.	कार्य का नाम	अनु. लागत	युनिफ़ॉर्म कोड
1	CONCRETE LAB	1300000	GBE1920GJRC00002
2	Geology Lab	1200000	GBE1920GJRC00004
3	Fluid Mech & Hydr Engg Lab	3000000	GBE1920GJRC00005
4	Electronics Devices Lab	1100000	GBE1920GJRC00006
5	Analogue & Digital Comm Lab	1500000	GBE1920GJRC00009
6	Microprocessor & Microcontrollers Lab	1200000	GBE1920GJRC00010
7	Electrical Machine Lab	1800000	GBE1920GJRC00014
8	Materials Testing Lab	3500000	GBE1920GJRC00015
9	Mechanical Workshop	4500000	GBE1920GJRC00016
10	Reservoir Engineering Lab	2500000	GBE1920GJRC00021
11	Surveying and AD Survey Lab	1000000	GBE1920GJRC00003
12	Electronics Devices Lab (CAD Software)	900000	GBE1920GJRC00007
13	Digital Electronics Lab	300000	GBE1920GJRC00008
14	Electro Measure & Instrument Lab	800000	GBE1920GJRC00011
15	Electrical workshop & electric circuit Lab	1000000	GBE1920GJRC00012
16	Power electronics Lab	1000000	GBE1920GJRC00013
17	Tom and Vibration Lab	500000	GBE1920GJRC00017
18	Maths (Software)	1000000	GBE1920GJRC00018
19	CAD Lab (Software)	800000	GBE1920GJRC00019
20	Drilling fluids and Cementing Lab	800000	GBE1920GJRC00020
Total		29700000	

शर्तों से संबंधित संपूर्ण विवरण <http://www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in>, <http://eproc@rajasthan.gov.in> तथा <http://www.gecbarmer.ac.in> पर देखा जा सकता है। डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है। <http://eproc@rajasthan.gov.in> के माध्यम से बिड केवल अनिवार्य हो स्वीकार की जायेगी।

SN	Subject	Date	Time Upto
1	Publishing Date	13.12.2019	06:00 PM
2	Documents Download start date	4.12.2019	09:30 AM
3	Pre Bid Conference	17.12.2019	03:30 PM
4	Documents Download End Date	02.01.2020	05:00 PM
5	Bid Submission Last Date	03.01.2020	05:00 PM
6	Technical Bid Opening Date	04.01.2020	03:00 PM
7	Submission of Demand Draft/Banker Cheque/Stamp	04.01.2020	10:00 AM

प्राचार्य

GUJARAT MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of Gujarat Undertaking)
Regd. Office: Block No. 14/1, Dr. Jivraj Mehta Bhavan, Sector-10, Gandhinagar, Ph. 079-23250767, 23250766, 23257696

TENDER NOTICE: D-10/2019-20

Tenders are invited online from reputed Manufacturers/formulators/direct importers for Purchase of **Cyphenorthing 5% EC** on rate contract basis and details of specification, quantity is available on <https://gmscl.gujarat.gov.in>. All tender documents can be downloaded free on the website: <https://gmscl.nprocure.com> & Tender Notice. Interested bidders are requested to submit the tender through e-tender process.

Duration of downloading of tender document (Online):- 21/12/2019 to 13/01/2020 upto 15.55 Hrs.

Last date for submission (online): 13/01/2020 upto 16.00 Hrs.
Last date for submission of physical document: 16/01/2020 upto 16.00 Hrs.
Opening of Technical Bid Date (online) 17/01/2020 at 15.00 Hrs.

INF/1860/19-20 **MANAGING DIRECTOR**

Himachal: Five killed as car falls into ravine

Panchkula: Five persons from Panchkula were killed after their car fell into a ravine near Kandaghat in Himachal Pradesh Saturday night.

Police officers said the five were going to Shimla from Solan when the driver lost control near Padautha and the car fell into a ravine. Nobody came to know about the accident at night. It was discovered only around 10 the next morning when a local resident alerted the police. While two of the bodies were found in the car, three were found nearby. SP Shiv Kumar said the bodies were handed over to families after autopsy. **ENS**

India, Iran agree to speed up work on Chabahar

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

INDIA AND Iran on Sunday agreed to accelerate work on the strategic Chabahar project as External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar held wide-ranging talks with his Iranian counterpart Javad Zarif on regional and global issues of mutual interest.

The Chabahar port — jointly being developed by India, Iran and Afghanistan — is considered a gateway to golden opportunities for trade with central Asian nations by the three countries. It is located on the Indian Ocean in the Sistan and Baluchestan province of Iran.

Jaishankar, who is on a two-day visit to Iran, co-chaired the 19th Joint Commission Meeting with Zarif. He is also expected to call upon Iranian President Hassan Rouhani. "Just concluded a very productive India-Iran Joint Commission Meeting with my co-chair FM Zarif," S Jaishankar tweeted after the meeting. "Reviewed the entire gamut of our cooperation. Agreed on accelerating our Chabahar project."

The meeting comes after the US pro-

vided a rare exemption to India from sanctions on the Chabahar port in Iran as Washington said it recognised that the strategic project was a lifeline for war-torn Afghanistan to get humanitarian supplies from India.

Jaishankar thanked Zarif for "his cordial welcome and hospitality". "Had a very good conversation on the regional and global picture with the Iranian foreign minister. India and Iran will work together closely on their shared interests," he tweeted.

Earlier, Zarif tweeted that the two countries held "excellent discussions on closer bilateral relations & regional & global issues affecting our respective countries".

"Our ties are ancient, historic & unbreakable," he added.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had met President Rouhani earlier this month on the sidelines of the high-level 74th Session of the General Assembly.

Modi reaffirmed India's support for giving priority to diplomacy, dialogue and confidence building for maintaining peace and security in the Persian Gulf amidst tensions in the region, as he held wide-ranging talks with Iranian President on regional and global developments of mutual interest.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER CONSTRUCTION DIVISION-2, PWD BULANDSHAHR Short Term Notice Inviting Tenders

No. 3969/7A/ Dated 13.12.19
1. On behalf of Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Executive Engineer, Bulandshahr, Construction Division-2, P.W.D. Bulandshahr invites following percentage rate bid online through <http://etender.up.nic.in> from the eligible and approved Contractors registered with UP PVVD, from Date 01.01.2020 to 11.01.2020 upto 12:00 Noon as per the prescribed T-1 of Govt. of U.P. The technical bids will be opened online on dated 12.01.2020 at 12:30 P.M. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened online on the next working day, at the same time and validity of bid will be considered from the original date. The date and time of opening of the financial bid shall be notified on the website.

Sl. No	Name of Work	Estimated cost (Rs. in Lac)	Bid Security (Rs. in Lacs)	Tender Cost	Time of Completion	Contractors Category
1	New Construction of Ghusrana Gail Road to Nagla Narayanpur Link Road	6.80	0.68	225+ 500 + 18% GST	03 Month	A, B, C, D (Roads)
2	New Construction of Debai Ganeshpur Dharampur to Galimpur Sakurganj Link Road	31.20	3.12	300+ 500 + 18% GST	06 Month	A, B, C, D (Roads)

3. The Bid Security and Tender Document Fee must be deposited through Internet Banking only.
4. All registered contractors have to upload Turnover certified by C.A. of last 5 year and details of maximum cost work satisfactorily completed in last 5 years on Chanakya Software before submission of tender. Details of e-tender uploaded on <https://etender.up.nic.in> shall also be uploaded on upwd Chanakya software, before last date & time of submission of bid.
5. Terms & Other Conditions related to bid are available on <https://etender.up.nic.in>

Sd/- (Murliidhar) Assistant Engineer Construction Division-2, PWD Bulandshahr
Sd/- (Radhey Shyam Sharma) Executive Engineer Construction Division-2, PWD Bulandshahr

UPID-146753
DATE-19.12.2019
WWW.UPGOV.NIC.IN

HAFFKINE BIO PHARMACEUTICAL CORPORATION LIMITED (Procurement Cell) Tel. No. 022-24100478 E-mail- procurementcell@vaccinehaffkine.com Acharya Donde Marg, Parel, Mumbai 400012 (INDIA)

TENDER NOTICE
Date: 20.12.19.
MANAGING Director, (Procurement Cell), Haffkine Bio Pharmaceutical Corporation Ltd., Mumbai invites tenders in two envelope systems from eligible bidders for following items for various Health Institutions in Maharashtra.

Sr. No.	Tender No.	Name of Description	Pre Bid Meeting	Period of Sale and Preparation of bid & bid submission	Bid Opening
1	E-2198	Purchase of Surgical Items (Total 215 items)	30.12.2019 At 2.00 p. m.	From 23.12.2019 10.00 am To 12.01.2020 upto 1700 hrs.	16.01.2020 at 1400 hrs.

For detailed information, the interested bidders may visit the website <https://mahatenders.gov.in>
For e-tendering help/ information, please contact.
Contact No. 1800-233-7315, 91-7878107985, +91-7878107986, +91-7878007972 and +91-7878007973
Email- eproc.support@maharashtra.gov.in

Sd/- (Dr. R. M. Kumbhar) General Manager-1 Haffkine Bio Pharmaceutical Corporation Ltd., (Procurement Cell), Mumbai.
DGIPR 2019/2020/4190

राष्ट्रीय उर्दू भाषा विकास परिषद्
قومی کونسل برائے فروغ اردو زبان

National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language
Ministry of Human Resource Development
Government of India
Farogh-e-Urdu Bhawan, FC-33/9, Institutional Area, Jasola, New Delhi-110025. Ph.:49539000

Notice for Inviting proposal of 3rd Party Evaluation

The proposal is invited to engage for 3rd party evaluation of schemes of this Council from agencies/institutions/Universities having relevant experience to carry out a comprehensive review of the schemes of any Govt. Institution. The scope of work/terms of reference proposed for the Evaluation of each of the Schemes will be as under:

- Whether the aims and objectives of the Schemes have been fulfilled?
- If yes, whether the content or the method of implementation needs further improvement to enable the scheme to achieve the intended aims and objectives?
- If not, whether the content of the Scheme is responsible for this or the method of implementation or both?
- Whether the existing mechanism to monitor the schemes is effective?
- Suggestions for further improving the schemes in terms of the content, method of implementation and monitoring.

The evaluation, report needs to be submitted within 3 months. The interested organization may study the Draft Annual Report 2018-19 along with state-wise summary of NGO study centres/beneficiaries of scheme available on website of the Council i.e. <http://urducouncil.nic.in/council/pdf/Annual Report.pdf> to assess the work for evaluation of schemes based on physical & financial achievement of one year in annual report enabling to offer the Bid for Price/Financial expenditure involving to prepare the report. The proposal /Bid price may be submitted by 20.01.2020 at 05.00 P.M in this office during working hours in sealed cover quoting the lump sum value of contract for preparing report along with the time schedule of completion and terms & conditions of payment with full Biodata, giving address, telephone No. on institution letter head with photocopy of PAN, TAN. Director, NCPUL reserves the right of accept or reject any proposal without assigning any reason.

Director, NCPUL

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, P.H. DIVISION, BALASORE
Phone: 9437086137, e-mail-eepphbs@gmail.com
NAIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement (Online Mode)
Invitation for Bids (IFB) dt. 20.12.2019

The Executive Engineer, P.H. Division, Balasore on behalf of Governor of Odisha, invites Item Rate bids in Double cover system in ONLINE mode only.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Bid-Identification No.	Value of Work (Rs. Lakh)	Period of Completion	Availability of bid documents for online bidding	Last date and time of seeking clarification	Date & Time of opening of technical bid
1	Supply of Ductile Iron (DI-K7) pipes for the work of shifting of existing water supply pipe line due to widening of P.W.D. road in side Basudepur Municipality	EPPHBS-19	122.33	45 (Forty Five) Days	From 11.00 Hrs. to 17.00 Hrs. to dt. 27.12.19	17.00 Hrs. to dt. 10.01.20	17.00 Hrs. to dt. 07.01.2020

The bidders shall have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: <http://tendersodisha.gov.in>. Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website. The authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids without assigning any reason therefor.
Name and Address of the officer inviting bid :- The Executive Engineer, P.H. Division, Balasore-756056, Odisha, Phone : 9437086137

Sd/- Executive Engineer, P.H. Division, Balasore.

13053/11/0008/1920

Pragya Thakur was on wheelchair, refused to move to non-emergency row: SpiceJet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22



BJP MP Pragya Thakur

SPICEJET ON Sunday clarified that BJP MP Pragya Thakur was asked by the crew on Delhi-Bhopal flight to move to a non-emergency row seat as she was on a wheelchair but she refused, causing the flight to delay.

While some restless passengers requested Thakur to change her seat from the emergency row, which is not allocated to passengers on wheelchairs, to a non-emergency row, others requested the crew to off-load her as she was refusing to change the seat, according to the airline's spokesperson. Ultimately, the BJP MP from Bhopal moved to the seat on a non-emergency row. A source said the flight got delayed by approximately 45 minutes due to this matter.

The SpiceJet clarification came a day after Thakur complained that the private airline denied her the seat she had booked on

the flight. Thakur, an accused in the Malegaon blasts case, had pre-booked seat 1A on SC2489 flight and had come to the Delhi airport in her own wheelchair on Saturday.

When reporters approached her outside the Bhopal airport Saturday night, she alleged the airline staff "did not behave properly with passengers": "I called the director and lodged a complaint with him," she said. The airport director, Anil Vikram, confirmed he received a complaint.

The SpiceJet spokesperson said, "The Delhi-Bhopal flight is operated by Bombardier Q400 aircraft. On this aircraft, the first row is the emergency row seat and is not allocated to passengers on wheelchairs."

2 held for setting woman afire

Raipur: A 20-year-old woman was set on fire by relatives of the man she was in a relationship with in a village on the outskirts of Raipur on December 18. Senior police officials said the condition of the woman, who suffered 80 per cent burns, is critical. She is being treated at the DKS super speciality hospital in Raipur.

Two people, Naini Bai and Dulkahan Bai, were arrested on Sunday while another person is absconding.

Police officials said the family of Lallu Satnami had been objecting to his relationship with the woman. On December 18, Satnami's mother, sister-in-law and father Jalal asked the woman to come to their house. When she arrived, an argument ensued and they set her ablaze. SSP Arif Sheikh said, "Two of the accused have been arrested. A case of attempt to murder has been registered." **ENS**



@ieExplained

#ExpressExplained

If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to explained@indianexpress.com

A demonstration against the CAA and NRC near the Red Fort on December 19.
Amit Mehra

SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

What NRC + CAA means to you

In the widespread protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act, many outside the Northeast are looking at it in combination with a proposed nationwide NRC. Why does that worry so many people, particularly Muslims? How will Indians prove citizenship?

APURVA VISHWANATH & KAUNAIN SHERIFF M
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

FOR OVER a week, the country has witnessed widespread protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), especially in combination with the proposed all-India National Register of Citizens (NRC). Indians are debating what the combination means for various sections, and discussing why Muslims in particular are worried.

What does NRC mean to you?

It depends on whether you are a resident of Assam, which has already had an NRC exercise, or whether you belong to another state. While Assam is the only state to have an NRC, first prepared in 1951 and finally updated in 2019, the proposed nationwide exercise would be a first for the rest of India. Legally, there is no paradigm yet for a nationwide NRC.

On December 9, when Home Minister Amit Shah told Parliament that a nationwide NRC is on the cards, he distinguished it from the new citizenship law and said the NRC will have no religious filter. It is unclear if the government will bring in a fresh law to mandate a nationwide NRC. A list of FAQs put out by the Press Information Bureau of the government clarifies "it is important to know that, at the national level, no announcement has been made to begin NRC". The NRC exercise, as Shah has repeatedly said, is to identify illegal immigrants from Indian citizens.

After protests spread, the government has sought to downplay its narrative on NRC. Minister of State (Home) Kishan Reddy said the government has not decided when the exercise would begin or what its modalities would be. "The draft is also not yet prepared. Neither the cabinet nor the legal department has approved it. NRC is not going to happen immediately. Some people in the name of NRC are trying to spread fear," he said.

Why is Assam different?

In Assam, the NRC update was mandated by the Supreme Court in 2013. Assam has a history that is shaped by migration, and the protests there are against only CAA, not against NRC. The Assam Accord, signed by the governments of Assam and India, and the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) and the All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad in 1985, after a six-year mass movement, essentially declared that a resident of Assam is an Indian citizen if she could prove her presence, or an ancestor's presence, in Assam before March 25, 1971. That is the cutoff date for NRC, which CAA extends to December 31, 2014 to non-Muslim migrants from three countries. To prove their or their ancestors' presence before 1971, applicants in Assam had to produce any one of 14 possible documents:

- 1951 NRC; or
 - Electoral roll(s) up to March 24, 1971; or
 - Any one of 12 other kinds of papers, such as land & tenancy records; citizenship papers; passport; Board/University certificate.
- Additionally, if the document submitted is in the name of an ancestor, then another document proving relationship was required to be submitted — such as a ration card, LIC/bank document or an educational cer-

tificate that contains the names of the applicant as well as the parent/ancestor.

So, what documents will be required for NRC outside Assam?

In its FAQs, the PIB said: "If it is implemented, it does not mean that anyone will be asked for proof of being Indian... 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," it said.

The PIB said there is no compulsion to submit any document by/of the parents. Noting that a decision is yet to be taken on acceptable documents, it said: "This is likely to include voter cards, passports, Aadhaar, licenses, insurance papers, birth certificates, school leaving certificates, documents relating to land or home or other similar documents issued by government officials. The list is likely to include more documents so that no Indian citizen has to suffer unnecessarily." The PIB said that in case of an illiterate person who does not have any documents, "authorities will allow that person to bring a witness". "Also, other evidence and community verification etc will be allowed."

It added that no Indian citizen will be put to undue trouble. Since the NRC process is to identify citizens, the references to "Indian citizens" in the FAQs remains unexplained.

What could be a cutoff date for a nationwide NRC?

While this has not been defined, citizenship laws are in place. According to the Citizenship Act, 1955, amended in 1986, anyone born in India up to July 1, 1987 is an Indian citizen by birth. For those born on or after July 1, 1987, the law set out a fresh condition: one of the parents must be an Indian citizen. By a 2003 amendment, for any individual born on or after December 3, 2004 to be considered an Indian citizen, one parent must be an Indian citizen while the other must not be an illegal immigrant.

This does not apply to Assam, due to the cutoff of 1971. For the rest of the country, those born outside the country after January 26, 1950, and residing in India without proper documents is an illegal immigrant.

Why is it being said that it plays out differently for Hindus?

While Shah has assured that the NRC process would not differentiate based on religion, the CAA+NRC process is likely to play out differently for some Hindus. In the run-up to the passage of the legislation, Shah repeatedly focused on the chronology of passing it first and then implementing NRC. This is crucial at least for a section of Hindus, who can trace their ancestry to Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Pakistan. If the NRC exercise is carried out across India, the excluded group could consist of Hindus in Assam, for example, out of over 3.29 crore applicants for NRC, roughly 3.1 crore made it to the final list with at least 19 lakh exclusions, many of whom are Hindus.

Even if the final exclusions from a nationwide NRC are, say, only 5% of the population, that would mean at least 6.5 crore individuals across India. Now there are many Hindus, predominantly in the Northeast, West Bengal and to an extent in Gujarat, Delhi,

Rajasthan and Punjab, who can trace their ancestry to the three countries included in the citizenship law. Shah said in Parliament that no documents will be asked of those who apply for citizenship under the new law, giving a possible exit route to some of the Hindus potentially excluded from the NRC.

This may not be same for Hindus throughout the country, say a Hindu in Andhra Pradesh or Kerala who cannot trace ancestry to "persecuted minorities" in Afghanistan, Pakistan or Bangladesh.

Opposition leaders have accused the ruling BJP of trying to appease the Bengali Hindu vote-bank by passing CAA and raising the pitch on a nationwide NRC. West Bengal is headed for polls in mid-2021.

Can any Hindu, if out of NRC, hold the Citizenship Amendment Act as a shield?

In Parliament, Home Minister Shah did present it as a shield for Hindus left out of the Assam NRC. He said all other legal proceedings will stand abated when an individual applies for citizenship under CAA. Without CAA, everyone left out of the NRC would have eventually faced, or is already facing, proceedings in Assam's Foreigners Tribunals.

However, it is not clear whether the same shield will be available to Hindus left out of NRC in other states. Even in Assam, it brings up a contradiction. This was raised by Congress MP Kapil Sibal who, in Rajya Sabha, brought up how a Hindu in Assam who is left out of NRC can use the citizenship law as a shield.

"You know what they've said in their legacy papers? That they are residents of India. You are forcing them by law to lie that they were persecuted and came from Bangladesh," Sibal said.

Can the shield not be made available to a Hindu resident of Chikmagalur in Karnataka, or Chandernagore in Madhya Pradesh, or Kozhikode in Kerala?

This remains unclear. Apart from the fact that a Hindu resident of these areas may have to contradict themselves in their NRC and CAA applications, it raises an additional area of uncertainty. In Assam or West Bengal, a Bengali Hindu can claim to be from Bangladesh. In central and south India, the question is whether an applicant under CAA can claim to be from any of the three countries — Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan — mentioned in CAA.

Since rules for CAA have not been framed yet, the process to be followed to apply for fast-track citizenship for non-Muslims from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan remains unclear.

Is all this the reason why Muslims are particularly worried about CAA

INDIANS WITH DOCUMENTATION	
INDIA POPULATION	134 crore
That is the World Bank figure for 2017. In Census 2011, the Indian government had counted 121 crore.	
AADHAAR NUMBERS	125 crore
As of December 2019. Even accounting for population growth, it is still a large proportion.	
REGISTERED VOTERS	90 crore
In 2019 Lok Sabha polls. Just for reference, in 2001, 59% (over 60 crore) of the population was of voting age.	
RATION CARDS	23 crore
As of November 2019, under National Food Security Act	
PASSPORTS	6.60 crore
As of December 21, 2019	
INCOME TAX	42 crore
Number of PANs until February 2019 (according to CBDT chairman Sushil Chandra)	
MOBILE PHONE USERS	102 crore
Active mobile phone users in 2018, according to telecom regulator TRAI	

combined with nationwide NRC?

Yes, the worries arise out of the fact that the CAA shield is not available to them. If a Muslim cannot meet the eligibility criteria for NRC, once those are finalised, she will lose citizenship when the NRC is published without her name. A second concern is about the NRC process itself — if exclusion is going to take place due to absence of documents, or deficiencies in documents submitted. There

is apprehension that the Muslim community, many of whom are backward, will get excluded due to deficiencies in the documents like spelling errors. This happened with many applicants (both Hindu and Muslim) during the NRC process in Assam — a state where Muslims of migrant ancestry are generally very careful about preserving their documents for generations.

Also feeding into Muslim worries is the prospect of detention centres, existing and upcoming, to house those who will be left out of the NRC. Assam already has six detention centres attached to jails and is setting up an exclusive one in Goalpara. Mumbai and Bengaluru set up centres this year.

In several statements, Shah has left out Muslims while talking about a nationwide NRC. "We (BJP) will remove every single infiltrator from the country except Buddha, Hindus and Sikhs," Shah said on April 11 at a rally in West Bengal. A BJP handle tweeted this statement but subsequently deleted it.

Have Muslim political leaders expressed these worries?

AIMIM's Asaduddin Owaisi, during the debate in Lok Sabha, had alleged that the intent of the legislation was to make Muslims stateless. "If this Bill is allowed, the Foreigners Tribunals will only deal with cases related to Muslims," he said.

SP member ST Hasan had called the citizenship law a precursor to NRC. "Muslims do not have a proof of residence even for five years... Muslims are afraid that their name will not appear in the NRC and they will be declared as infiltrators," he had said.

The Indian Union Muslim League, with four MPs, has challenged the law before the Supreme Court, on the ground that with CAA and the nationwide NRC, the direct and inevitable consequence of it was those belonging to Islam would be "disproportionately targeted" on failing to prove citizenship, in violation of Article 14 of the Constitution.

What has the government said to address such fears of Muslims?

In an interview to *India Today*, Home Minister Shah said CAA is not linked to NRC. "No Indian citizen needs to worry at all, no one will be thrown out. We will make special provisions to ensure that no Indian citizen from minority communities is victimised in the NRC process. But we can't leave the borders open as well. Countries are not run like that," he said.

"It is important for everyone to understand that intruders or illegal migrants do not only eat away resources and opportunities meant for Hindus but also Muslims. Not even a single person of a minority who is an Indian citizen will be harmed in the NRC, but not even one intruder will be spared."

The FAQs released by the PIB, too, sought to address such fears:

- "Do Indian Muslims need to worry about CAA+NRC? There is no need for an Indian citizen of any religion to worry about CAA or NRC."
- "Will people be excluded in NRC on religious grounds? No, NRC is not about any religion at all. Whenever NRC will be implemented, it will neither be applied on the basis of religion nor can it be implemented on the basis of religion. No one can be excluded just on the basis that he/she follows a particular religion."

Does CAA lose its lethality if the proposal of a nationwide NRC is put aside?

Owaisi had moved an amendment in Lok Sabha saying the law should be applicable for all persecuted religious minorities. This was aimed at making a point that if there is an nationwide NRC, the CAA will not be discriminatory towards one specific community. And the corollary is also seen as true: If there is no nationwide NRC, the CAA will lose its lethality, vis-à-vis Indian Muslims.

Trinamool Congress MP Prof Saugata Roy, while opposing the previous version of the Citizenship Amendment Bill in January, had said the law would be welcomed if it excludes Bangladesh, and it would be acceptable to Assam too.

Challenges to the CAA before the Supreme Court, however, are likely to be decided taking into account the constitutionality of the law. It is unclear whether the court will consider what CAA means alongside the prospect of a nationwide NRC.

Are there many undocumented Indians?

According to the UIDAI website, 124.95 crore persons have been issued Aadhaar cards until December 21 this year. According to the telecom regulator TRAI, India had 102.6 crore active mobile users in 2018. Given India's population (over 121 crore according to the 2011 Census, and 133.9 crore in 2017 according to the World Bank), the inference is that most people in the country are documented under Aadhaar or by virtue of a mobile connection. However, neither of these is proof of citizenship. While Union Minister Prakash Javadekar has said an Aadhaar card would be enough to prove citizenship, Section 9 of the Aadhaar Act states that the Aadhaar number or the authentication thereof shall not, by itself, confer any right of, or be proof of citizenship or domicile.

Ahead of the Lok Sabha elections this year, the Election Commission said 90 crore voters were registered. In the 2001 Census, over 60 crore individuals (59% of the then population) were aged over 18 (voting age), but given the different reference years, it is difficult to draw any inference from there.

Several states have ruled out implementation of a nationwide NRC. What does their defiance mean?

Opposition-ruled West Bengal, Kerala and Punjab are making a political point by declaring NRC will not be implemented in their states. Citizenship, aliens and naturalisation are subject matters listed in List 1 of the Seventh Schedule that fall exclusively under the domain of Parliament.

Additionally, Kerala joined West Bengal as the second state to put on hold the update of the National Population Register (NPR) — a lead-up to the 2021 Census — amid fears that it was the "first step" to the NRC.

The NPR, a list of "usual residents of the country" is being prepared under provisions of the Citizenship Act 1955 and the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003. It is mandatory for every "usual resident of India" to register in NPR. Unlike NRC, the NPR is not a citizenship enumeration drive, as it would record even foreigners staying in a locality for more than six months.

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The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY
RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

The worst is over

Economic growth in 2020 will be higher than in 2019 because structural reform will start paying off



MANISH SABHARWAL

DELHI CAN'T DUCK

Diplomatic kerfuffle in Washington is a warning: Modi government underestimates external fallout of internal policies

THE CONTROVERSY OVER External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's cancelled meeting with a US Congressional Committee last week points to something more than an avoidable diplomatic incident. Jaishankar, who ran the Americas desk in the foreign office, served as ambassador there earlier in this decade, and led many Indian initiatives towards the US as foreign secretary, knows Washington better than most in the government. Jaishankar's decision reflects India's emerging troubles with the US Congress and more broadly with the liberal public opinion in the US and beyond. Even assuming that some members of the Congress are targeting India on Kashmir, avoiding an engagement is only bound to make matters worse.

The 435 members of the House of Representatives and the 100 members of the Senate tend to pronounce on all world matters. The US legislature is an integral part of the government with substantive fiscal power and diplomatic influence. The US Congress is, of course, open to persuasion on the conduct of American foreign policy. South Block is well aware of this. After all, Delhi has turned a hostile US Congress into a formidable ally over the last quarter of a century. Until the early 1990s, the Congress routinely passed resolutions against India with substantive majorities on Kashmir, Punjab, human rights and nuclear proliferation. Within a decade, the Indian diaspora organised the largest country-caucus in the Congress; since then, there had been no anti-India resolutions on Kashmir or in support of Sikh separatism. The Congress also revised three and a half decades of non-proliferation law to facilitate international civil nuclear cooperation with India. It became a champion of more intensive defence and security cooperation with Delhi.

Now, the Narendra Modi government's politics of majoritarianism appears to be alienating critical sections in the US — including those who champion human rights and religious freedoms. Modi's policies are identified as Islamophobic by the American Muslim groups as well as liberal media. A new generation of Indian Americans is not willing to turn a blind eye to what are seen to be Delhi's egregious policies. Murmurs of concern across the American political spectrum during the first term of the Modi government have turned into vocal objections in the second, thanks to the rapid moves by the government on Kashmir, CAA and the NRC in the last seven months. Political engagement alone may not be enough for changing the new negative dynamic in Washington. For, it is rooted in the belief that the Modi government is abandoning the political values that endeared India to the democratic world. The diplomatic kerfuffle in Washington last week is a reminder that the Modi government may be seriously underestimating the international consequences of its internal policies. In his speech at the capital's Ramlila Maidan on Sunday, PM Modi mentioned the toll the anti-CAA agitation could take on India's image abroad, and also spoke about recently improved ties with countries in the Muslim world. But his tone was accusatory — he sought to lay blame on the political opposition instead of acknowledging his government's responsibility to calm passions and lower the temperature. As it keeps India on the boil, Delhi might soon find the external costs of its majoritarian politics escalating rather quickly.

OPERATION TWIST

India's version of it will not take off until larger economic management issues are addressed

ON THURSDAY, THE Reserve Bank of India announced its decision to conduct simultaneous purchase and sale of government securities for Rs 10,000 crore each under its Open Market Operations (OMO) after a review of the current liquidity, market situation and evolving financial conditions. Financial markets perceive this as an Indian variant of Operation Twist, as the asset purchase programme kicked off by the Kennedy administration in the US in 1961 and later in 2011 by the US Federal Reserve to help lower long-term interest rates, was called.

The OMO as an instrument of monetary policy is aimed at either withdrawing liquidity or boosting it, including during periods of robust capital flows. The essential aim of such a programme would be not just to influence long-term interest rates but also to provide a boost to the economy by making the cost of capital or funds cheaper for business and industry and other borrowers. These asset purchase or bond buying and selling programmes were launched in the US first during a recession and later during a prolonged slowdown — which India is now undergoing. The RBI has a far more compelling reason than just the slowdown to launch the latest programme. Even after aggressively cutting its policy rate by 135 basis points this year, monetary policy transmission has been weak with banks loath to lower rates significantly given the state of their balance sheets. That leaves the central bank with hardly any policy tools to influence rates. Moreover, for such a programme to have an impact, there should be a well functioning market for government securities with depth. The link between India's bond market and the real economy has been relatively weak and making it worse is a half functional financial sector now. Coupled with this is the large fiscal slippage — the fiscal deficit at the end of April-October this year at well over 100 per cent of the budgeted target — the spike in inflation and toned down projections of GDP growth. A programme aimed at reducing long-term bond yields may only have limited impact as long as the government runs a large deficit, as the US experience also shows.

Globally, there is a growing recognition that central banks are running out of ammunition. The underlying message is clear. The government should get to work on a credible fiscal deficit reduction plan, fix the broken financial system along with unveiling a roadmap for state-owned banks, get its divestment programme going and ensure that packages for sectoral issues, specially real estate, are operationalised swiftly. Else, efforts at twisting interest rates will flounder.

TWENTY YEARS AGO, a court denied the Reserve Bank of India's request for swift justice for banks against a large loan defaulter saying, "don't twist arms so hard that they break". But, last week's Rs 42,000 crore recovery from loan defaulter Essar Steel demonstrates the power of policy when the executive, legislature and courts together take on vested interests, precedence, and history. The 1,658 days that have elapsed since the IBC work began, the delay of 1,297 days since the IBC became law, and the 863 days since Essar was admitted into bankruptcy, symbolise the fixed costs for bold change in our democracy. But, it also symbolises the upsides of policy boldness and persistence; Arcelor's takeover of Essar clears the judicial, legislative and commercial path for speedy bank recovery from the next 200 large defaulters. I believe that the current challenges faced by the Indian economy represent short-term pain for the long-term gain imposed by multiple structural changes. And, that economic growth in 2020 will be higher than in 2019 because structural reform will start paying off.

Economies are more like human bodies than machines. Doctors know that post-mortems have a certainty that prescriptions don't, they obsess about iatrogenic risks or unintended consequences of their treatment, and recognise that acute patients need an ICU. But chronic patients need rehabilitation. Poverty is not like cancer where every malignant cell must be eliminated or it will come back. Instead, poverty is like being obese. The fight is hard and slow, victories are partial. Sometimes you regress. But, keeping up the fight by all necessary means can mitigate obesity. Eventually, diet and exercise will become a way of life, and a healthier body will yield tangible benefits.

India's economy in 2020 is not heading into the ICU, but is heading out of a broad and deep rehab. Independent monetary policy and fiscal discipline have halved inflation. The GST has cut indirect tax categories from 100 to 5, and nearly doubled payers to 12 million. An awake RBI, the IBC and mergers of nationalised banks make bank accounting cleaner, bank balance sheets stronger and blunt crony capitalism. The Real Estate

(Regulation and Development) Act makes business difficult for non-compliant real estate developers. But a more organised and end-user driven market is reducing inventory, returning growth to stamp duty collections of states, and raising middle class affordability ratios. Demonetisation contributed to UPI digital transactions rising from one lakh to 110 crore a month. The rise in India's ease-of-doing business ranking to 63 from 139 is raising FDI, starting to attract China's factory refugees and is taking foreign exchange reserves to record highs. Aadhaar adoption has raised subsidy efficiency. The gross capital formation as a percentage of GDP is rising after bottoming in 2017. Food production growth is now substantially higher than population growth, making inflation decline structural (and yes, even onions; we produce 23 million tonnes and consume only 15 million). And, stock markets now largely offer valuation premiums to growth and governance.

The economic slowdown explanations must be mindful of what writer Chimamanda Adichie called "the dangers of a single story". A thoughtful paper by Arvind Subramanian and Josh Felman lists multiple stories — land and labour market constraints, income inequality, impact of agriculture on aggregate demand, demonetisation and GST, monetary tightness and policy uncertainty. I disagree with their ICU conclusion; a sustained rehab of structural reforms, and monetary and fiscal intervention will work. The monetary policy's 135 basis point cut in 2019 brings the RBI's benchmark repo rate to its lowest since 2010. The fiscal response for 2019 delivered a corporate tax cut, accelerated capex, created a fund for stalled housing projects and for buying-out NBFC assets.

Arcelor's investment — an outcome of multiple court cases, multiple IBC amendments, and multiple RBI directives — will accelerate resolution of the 1,497 pending IBC cases, particularly of the 535 that have crossed the 270-day deadline. The best expression of gratitude and due to the remarkable public servants in the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, the Courts and the RBI for this accomplishment

will be replicating their boldness and teamwork in five areas — labour law reform, re-booting civil service, redesigning the central government, public sector governance, and investment in data collection. Labour law reform will prevent our labour from being handicapped without capital and our capital from being handicapped without labour. Civil Service reform will improve the ease-of-doing business. Central government restructuring — reducing Delhi's 51 ministries, and over 100 departments with 250 secretary rank officials — will enable us to do more by doing less. Raising public sector governance will generate resources without damaging fiscal discipline; nationalised banks, embarrassingly, have lower risk weighted assets than two years ago, despite receiving over Rs 2 lakh crore. Raising our investment in data collection — the budget of the Central Statistical Organisation is only Rs 51 crore — will amplify trust, enable action and demonstrate confidence.

Why is the GDP of 1.3 billion Indians less than 126 million Japanese, 83 million Germans and 40 million people in California? Why is India's GDP today 20 per cent of China's when they were equal in 1991? Why did the world's largest democracy — created on the infertile soil of the world's most hierarchical society — not create the world's largest economy? Only because of the low productivity of our government, cities, sectors, firms and people. My recent overseas investor roadshow suggests that structural reforms, the developments in China and negative interest rates make India attractive; the world wants us to succeed if we want to. The great new book *Bridgital Nation* by N Chandrasekaran and Roopa Purushothaman suggests that India is an antarlaapika, Sanskrit for a puzzle, in which the answer is hidden in the puzzle itself. Their observation that great entrepreneurship advice is only a traffic jam away in Bengaluru recognises that our horrible traffic represents growth. May the rest of India have Bengaluru problems in 2020. A year that will be better for the economy, tough for loan defaulters, disruptive for incumbents and exciting for insurgents.

The writer is with Teamlease Services

WHY I AM ANXIOUS

Will my 70-year-old father, will I, find the documents to prove citizenship?



MOHAMED THAVER

WELL-MEANING FRIENDS AND colleagues from other communities often ask me why Muslims are anxious over the NRC-CAA. Their query evokes a mixture of feelings: Hurt — at the lack of empathy — relief at the thought that perhaps the anxiety is only in my head and then, impatience on realising that people view the issue through such different prisms.

The Union home minister has said that the "NRC will be conducted all over the country". The CAA will exclude only Muslims and the justifications for this exclusion are not reassuring. The home minister has said that the CAA will not impact India's Muslims. But the apprehensions among Muslims arise from a major trust deficit between the community and a certain kind of politics that neither the prime minister nor home minister have cared to address.

When the PM first assumed office in 2014, people hoped that things would change for the better. But his evocation of Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas was followed by lynchings by gau rakshaks. Leader after leader from the BJP has made communal remarks. Most of them were not reined in, giving the impression that their actions had the approval of the party's top leadership.

It is such an atmosphere that emboldens, for example, the driver of a cab I was travelling in recently to make anti-Muslim



But given the current atmosphere, can we avoid being anxious? What if we do not find the necessary documents to prove our citizenship? Will my 70-year-old father have his birth certificate? What if we lose citizenship? Will we be kept in detention centres? Will I be separated from my parents?

remarks without even bothering to know the religion of the passengers. It does not surprise me when a friend sheepishly says that his family is "narrow-minded". And, Twitter, of course, is a minefield of anti-Muslim hashtags. How can Muslims believe the leaders of a party that makes Sadhvi Pragma a parliamentarian? How can the community trust the home minister when he says Muslims will not be targeted?

An acquaintance told me the other day, "The CAB is for outsiders and as an Indian Muslim, you have no reason to worry". I wondered if I was being too paranoid and actually felt relieved thinking that he could be right. But then he then asked me if I ever felt targeted as a Muslim. I told him that on the crime beat, I have heard cops making communal remarks. He responded: "Arrey you know how these cops are". I did not react. But the memories of incidents like being denied a house in certain areas of the city kept coming back to me.

When I read about the Muslim professor who was forced to resign from the BHU's Sanskrit department, I sent this acquaintance the link to the report. Only to be told that the media had a penchant for harping on stories with a communal angle. I realised, then, that there was little point in having this conversation. Our perspectives, it was clear, were far too different.

A few years ago, a dear friend told me

that I was stupid to worry about the communal remarks of BJP leaders. "They are just election gimmicks. Look at development". But my friend, who is from South India, understood my point when I asked him: Would you have voted for the Shiv Sena in the 1970s even if the party had been development oriented? He said no.

It is true that the exact links between and consequences of the CAB and NRC are not clear. Indian Muslims may not be affected at all. But given the current atmosphere, can we avoid being anxious? What if we do not find the necessary documents to prove our citizenship? Will my 70-year-old father have his birth certificate? What if we lose citizenship? Will we be kept in detention centres? Will I be separated from my parents?

I know I am not the only one worrying about this. The Muslim in your office/class/building also fears that he could suddenly be made an illegal immigrant, be separated from his family. I cannot even begin to think of the plight of those not as privileged as me. We would really appreciate a "don't worry we'll see this through" — not a "don't worry, you're being paranoid". So, the next time you see an anxious Muslim, by all means tell him/her they do not need to feel anxious. But please do so as an assurance, not a retort. Empathy is the need of the hour.

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FREEZE FRAME

E P UNNY



DECEMBER 23, 1979, FORTY YEARS AGO

SHILLONG TENSE
CURFEW-BOUND SHILLONG was handed over to the army when police firing in two localities failed to control mobs indulging in arson and assault. Four persons were stabbed and stoned to death and at least 100 sustained serious injuries in clashes between tribals and non-tribals. Twenty-five persons were admitted to hospital with stab injuries. The condition of four personnel was stated to be critical. The police, who were given shoot-at-sight orders on Thursday, first resorted to repeated lathi charges and then opened fire in Wiengdoh and Lower Mawprem areas to disperse several thousand armed tribals who were dragging out non-tribals from their

houses and setting them on fire.
SANCTIONS ON IRAN
PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER announced that he had decided to ask for an early meeting of the UN Security Council to impose international economic sanctions against Iran. In a nationally-televised statement, Carter said that the US could never yield to "kidnappers and terrorists supported by Iranian officials who continue to hold our people under inhuman conditions". He said the Security Council must act to enforce its demand that Iran release the hostages. The foundation of diplomacy, the integrity of international law and the credibility of the UN were at stake.

JAGJIVAN'S RHETORIC
WHICH IS MORE effective — the rapier or the bludgeon? It depends on who your opponent is. And that is what Jagjivan Ram seemed to show in his broadcast, the fourth in the series of election broadcasts by the national parties. He bludgeoned Charan Singh as "a Prime Minister whose main concern appears to be to stick to the chair by making wild promises and distributing favours to one class or caste or another in the hope of gaining votes." For Mrs Gandhi and her party there was this rapier thrust: "Beware, that the hand (Congress-I symbol) that comes to you open for votes today should not become a fist to strike at you tomorrow."

13 THE IDEAS PAGE

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"The US is the only superpower. We have no other choice but to cope with challenges from the US."

— GLOBAL TIMES CHINA

A rare reprimand

Pakistan court's conviction of Musharraf for treason is unprecedented and significant. Most of all, it sends a sobering message to army chiefs



TILAK DEVASHER

THERE ARE AT least four firsts in the December 17 judgment, and in the detailed judgment on December 19, of the special court in Pakistan that held Pervez Musharraf guilty of high treason and sentenced him to death: This is the first case in Pakistan being tried under Article 6 of the constitution that deals with treason and abrogation of the constitution; it is the first time that an army chief is being tried for treason and it is the first time that an army chief has actually been convicted. These three firsts are historic in themselves and will have important consequences for Pakistan's democratic evolution.

the prosecution's case was closed in September 2014.

Second, in a bizarre move, on November 25, the government petitioned the Islamabad High Court (IHC) that the special court be restrained from passing final judgment and to suspend its proceedings until the formation of a new prosecution team. On November 27, a day before the special court was to announce its judgment, the IHC stopped it from issuing the verdict. The IHC directed the federal government to notify a new prosecution team by December 5 and ordered the special court to fix a date "for affording a reasonable opportunity of hearing" to the notified prosecution team as well as the counsel appointed for Musharraf.

The question being asked was: How could a government that lost no opportunity to portray itself as a champion of *in-saf or justice*, and was determined to punish the privileged few, try and delay if not to subvert the decision in Musharraf's case? This was a shocking U-turn even for Imran Khan who has many such U-turns under his belt.

Musharraf can appeal against the decision but will have to return to Pakistan to do so. It is unlikely that he will. It is also unlikely that he will be extradited from the UAE. Hence, implementation of the decision is problematic.

Government ministers have indicated that they will file a reference against the judge of the special court who had advocated the peculiar nature of carrying out the punishment besides challenging the verdict in the supreme court. The latter would be unprecedented since it would mean that one party (the government-prosecution) after having won its case, will appeal against its own victory.

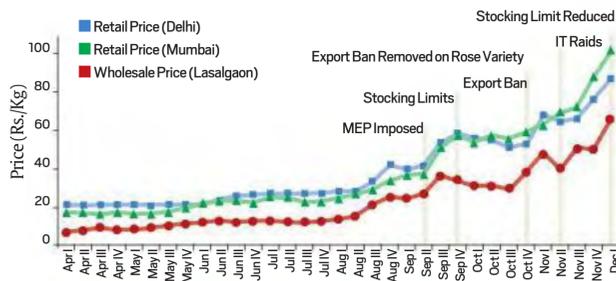
While legal challenges and judicial reviews are possible and the final outcome may well differ from the special court judgment, the fact remains that a verdict holding an army chief guilty of treason has been delivered. It will go into the law books. The real import of the judgment is the strong message it sends to army chiefs. This will make them hesitate before abrogating the constitution. The chiefs will thus have to rest content with pulling the strings from behind the scene.

Musharraf's case, seen in conjunction with the case pertaining to the extension of army chief General Qamar Bajwa, has definitely sullied the institutional image and charisma of the army in Pakistan. Both cases give the impression of judicial independence and assertion. Yet, the army is bound to find a way to rescue its image and clout in the system. The unusual Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) press release on December 17 expressing "pain and anguish" at the judgment and asking that justice be dispensed as also the December 19 press conference where the army spokesman said that the Pakistan Army knew how to defend its honour, are clear indicators of this.

Devasher is Member, National Security Advisory Board. Views are personal



FIGURE 1: WEEKLY ONION PRICES AND POLICY INTERVENTIONS



Source: Department of Consumer Affairs and Agmarknet

FIGURE 2: ONION NET EXPORTS FROM INDIA



Source: Directorate General of Foreign Trade

CR Sasikumar

Some onion lessons

Storage facilities for rabi onions must be created on a massive scale. Direct buying by organised retailers should be encouraged through contract farming



FROM PLATE TO PLOUGH
ASHOK GULATI AND HARSH WARDHAN

alternating year, but we have refused to learn. As finance minister, the late Arun Jaitley had announced and allocated Rs 500 crore for "Operation Green" in the 2018 Union Budget precisely to stabilise the prices of tomatoes, onions and potatoes (TOP). The scheme was to be implemented by the Ministry of Food Processing, but their website shows that the money has still not been released.

The current spike in onion prices could have been anticipated. The Horticulture Statistics Division had reported 7 per cent lower kharif acreage compared to the previous year (2.73 lakh ha) in major onion growing states (Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Rajasthan). Due to heavy rains in September/October, almost 58 per cent of the kharif onions in MP, 18 per cent in Karnataka and 2 per cent in AP were damaged. Besides, continuous rains led to a delay in harvesting in Maharashtra. The government woke up to the problem late and directed MMTC to import 1 lakh million tonnes (mt) of onions. With relaxed fumigation norms, onions are being imported from Afghanistan, Turkey, and Egypt. The question is at what price MMTC will import the onions and dump it on the Indian market.

India is already the largest exporter of onions in the world with average exports of 2 mmt a year (figure 2). Instead of banning exports, it is better to keep imports open so that when domestic prices rise, private trade can start importing rather than waiting for the government to take a delayed decision. This way, India can remain a reliable exporter, which will help farmers get better prices on a sustainable basis. Abrupt export bans are not only anti-farmer but actually reflect the failure of government policy. To take care of consumers' interests, India needs to build proper value chains as envisaged under "Operation Green".

So, what needs to be done to safeguard the interests of farmers as well as consumers? First, storage facilities for rabi onions must be created on massive scale, both at the farmers' end as well as with traders. When prices were hovering around Rs 4-5/kg in April-May, the government could have purchased onions at, say, Rs 10/kg and stored the stock in modern, private-sector godowns. However, repeated stocking limits and raids discourage private

investment in modern cold storages. For encouraging private storages, the Essential Commodities Act has to go, and if traders collude, let the Competition Commission of India (CCI), and not income tax officials, look into this.

Second, the government needs to promote the use of dehydrated onions (flakes, powder, granules) among urban households and bulk consumers (armed forces, hospitals, hotels and restaurants, etc). As onions are sensitive commodities, the government should also keep a buffer stock of dehydrated onions, which have a much longer shelf life. Also, 1 kg of dehydrated onion equals 10 kg of fresh onions. This is the right time to promote their use. With more than 100 units, Mahuva in Gujarat is already a hub for the dehydrated onion industry. But with low international demand and negligible domestic demand, these units have high pile up of the previous year's stocks. On the contrary, Jain Irrigation emerged as the largest dehydrated onion company in India engaging small and marginal farmers on contract. The price to be paid to growers is assured by the company even before planting. And if the market price after harvest is higher than the assured price, then farmers get a price that is 60 paise/kg less than the market price. Such models of contract farming reduce market risk and need to be scaled up.

Third, small and marginal farmers should be organised in Farmer-Producer Organisations and direct buying by organised retailers should be encouraged through contract farming, bypassing the mandi system. Additionally, market reforms along with overhauling the infrastructure of existing APMC mandis are required. After over five years in office, the Modi government has missed the golden opportunity of carrying out APMC reforms in the large number of states it ruled, and this opportunity is slipping further by the day. Without that, the prospects of unified national markets, stabilising prices or ensuring a fair price to farmers and consumers are bleak.

It is time to wake up from the onion nightmare and work towards more sustainable solutions, rather than knee-jerk measures.

Gulati is Infosys Chair Professor for Agriculture and Wardhan is consultant at ICRIER

When retail prices touched Rs 50-60/kg in September-October, the government imposed minimum export price (MEP), put stocking limits on retailers and wholesalers and then banned onion exports. However, when these measures failed to tame onion prices, even income tax raids were conducted on traders (Figure 1). This shows the bankruptcy of ideas in policy-making. Such a situation has arisen almost every alternate year, but we have refused to learn.

VIEW FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD



A weekly look at the public conversations shaping ideas beyond borders — in the Subcontinent. Curated by Aakash Joshi

UNSECLAR INDIA?

"IF ZEALOTS," WRITES *Dawn* on December 21, "guided by imagined histories are put in charge of such sensitive matters, and worse, given the legal powers to decide who is and who is not a citizen, disaster is sure to ensue." While the editorial is arguably the most critical of the writings on the CAA, proposed NRC and the perceived majoritarian slide underway in India, its content and tone are hardly unique. Tasneem Tayeb's lament in *The Daily Star* while more wistful, is no less severe an indictment. He invokes Amartya Sen's *Argumentative Indian* - the eponymous concept, and the way it was reflected in the values and discourse in India, from Ashoka to Akbar and Nehru and beyond. But that tradition of heterodoxy and dialogue has been eroded. And the article hints at the apprehension that it may be beyond repair: "But India today looks very different from the India of Ashoka or Akbar. The India today is being ruled by Hindu nationalist forces, who the people have mandated to powerfully aware of their agenda. The India today is on

the brink of losing its secular character, its pluralistic practices. The CAA is just another sad artefact of the erosion. The divisive nature of the act has put the country into a dangerous path towards disenfranchisement of its 200 million Muslim population, and that too at a time when Islamophobia is on the rise across the world."

Umran Chowdhury writing in *The Dhaka Tribune* asserts that despite the assurance that the CAA and NRC will not affect bilateral relations, there is a growing apprehension in Bangladesh about the rhetoric against the country. Amit Shah's statement in Parliament about the persecution of minorities in that country is "particularly ironic", given the departures from secular ideals in India in recent times.

He writes: "The situation in Jammu and Kashmir after the abolition of Article 370 of the Indian constitution has been a cause of grave concern for the international community. Political prisoners now include former chief ministers Farooq Abdullah, Omar Abdullah, and Mehbooba Mufti, along with leaders of civil society and ordinary Indian

citizens. After decades of neglect and draconian militarisation, the pent up grievances of Northeast India were on display during protests against the citizenship amendment law. Indian citizens are aggrieved at the intense divisive agenda pursued by Indian premier Narendra Modi. This stands in sharp contrast to previous Indian governments since independence. It is a sharp departure from the ideals of pluralism and tolerance espoused by the first Indian premier Jawaharlal Nehru. The BJP also came to power before. But its agenda was not as divisive as it is today."

MUSHARRAF VERDICT

While convicting former army chief and dictator Pervez Musharraf of treason and sentencing him to death, the three-judge bench in Pakistan did so, remarking that "however high you may be, the law is above you". While both *The Express Tribune* (December 18) and *Dawn* (December 20) broadly welcome the core of the verdict — that a military dictator is being held to account by the judi-

ciary — both do have reservations about some aspects of the judgment.

The editorial in *The Express Tribune* makes two points. First, that the verdict did not go far enough: "While the judgment is generally welcome as a transformational moment in the country's history, for quite too many — including renowned judicial experts — the court has only delivered selective justice by limiting the scope of the trial to just one person and letting his aiders and abettors go scot-free." Second, that the judgment will be difficult to implement, and given that the army and government have spoken out against it.

Dawn takes strong exception to "the descent into medievalism": The judgment has stated that if Musharraf dies overseas, his body should be brought back and strung up in a public square in Islamabad. While it welcomes, cautiously, the fact that the verdict will lead to a discussion on where the state is heading in terms of its judiciary, government and their relationship with the army, it also calls on society to consider the descent into primordial ideas of justice.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MODEL BOARDROOM

THIS REFERS to the editorial, 'Reset the boardroom' (IE, December 20). Corporate governance standards in the country are in the dire need of reforms so as to instill investors confidence in the ailing economy. The GDP numbers have been falling gradually every quarter. The apex court must come up with a comprehensive set of guidelines which will not only clear ambiguities in the Tata Sons case but also act as a model law for future.

Deepak Sharma, Panchkula

THE DOCTOR

THIS REFERS to the editorial, 'Nata Samrat' (IE, December 19). The country has lost a veteran actor with the demise of Shriram Lagoo. An ENT surgeon turned actor, his roles in Marathi plays such as Natsamrat and Himalayachi Saoli, and films like Pinjra made him popular. In Bollywood, Lagoo essayed memorable roles in films like Ek Din Achanak, Gharonda, Muqaddar Ka Sikandar and Laawaris. He played Gopal Krishna Gokhale in Richard Attenborough's Gandhi. Affectionately known in theatre circles as 'Doctor', Lagoo was known for his progressive and rationalist views.

Vandana, Chandigarh

BURDEN OF FOOD

THIS REFERS to the editorial, 'The cost of food' (IE, December 18). The rise in cost of food items, mostly vegetables, have

LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD

To encourage quality reader intervention, The Indian Express offers the Letter of the Week award. The letter adjudged the best for the week is published every Saturday. Letters may be e-mailed to editpage@expressindia.com or sent to The Indian Express, B-1/B, Sector 10, Noida-UP 201301.

placed an enormous burden on the poor and middle class people. The prices have not come down even after onions were exported from Turkey. The crisis might get over soon, but the government will need to ascertain its root cause.

Vihaan Gupta, Ujjain

MISUSING LAWS

THIS REFERS to the editorial, 'Unfree speech' (IE, December 18). The government is misusing laws like the IT Act, Public Safety Act, sedition law for stifling voices of dissent. This is the right time for the civil society, pressure groups and NGOs to push the government into changing these arbitrary and draconian laws.

Deepak Sharma, Panchkula

14 THE GOVERNANCE PAGE

IMPROVING POLICING IN ANDHRA PRADESH

An Andhra district uses tech to make police accessible, especially for women

Prakasam Superintendent of Police has won the seventh G-Files governance award for Spandana project

SREENIVAS JANAYALA
HYDERABAD, DECEMBER 22

SPANDANA, AN Andhra Pradesh Government initiative to make police stations more approachable for the public, especially women, is winning accolades and awards. Although it is being implemented state-wide, Prakasam district's Superintendent of Police (SP), Siddharth Kaushal has initiated several reforms and the district has topped in resolving complaints, especially for women. For his efforts, Kaushal was awarded the 7th G-Files Governance Award on December 13.

The annual G Files award is given to civil servants for innovative reforms in governance.

Spandana was launched in July, and 52 per cent of the complainants were women. The district police also introduced Spandana Beyond Borders—people of the district living outside the district, state or abroad can interact with the SP through video conferencing and register their complaints. Spandana, which means response, is also being held at District Collectors' offices too but it is in the police department where it is creating an impact.

"We have basically made it very easy for anyone to approach us and lodge a complaint or register a grievance," says Kaushal. "Women, in particular, do not like to go to police stations but after Spandana centres were established, more women are approaching with their complaints. A woman does not have to go to a police station at all. If she visits a Spandana centre and submits her complaint or connects with me through video-conferencing and if her complaint is criminal in nature, an FIR would be immediately lodged or we will conduct an inquiry and initiate action. All complaints have to be closed within 15 days," he said.

Prakasam district has led the Spandana initiative (see box) with 84 Spandana centres within the premises of all police stations, offices of Inspectors, Deputy SPs and the SP office. These centres mostly have a female receptionist and other staff members who are trained, briefed and sensitised in handling women victims and complainants.

"Through Spandana we have become available and accessible. Available because the police is eager to meet and serve the people and address their complaints. Accessible because we have established proper communication facilities and are now connected via video conferencing. When a complainant walks into my office during the Spandana programme, I and



Prakasam Police officials resolving cases through video conferencing *Express*

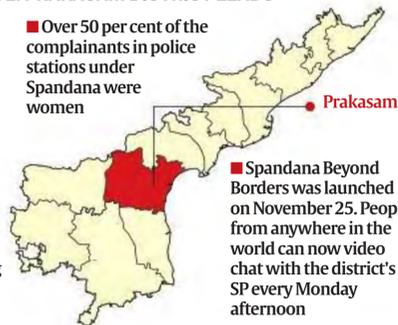
SPANDANA INITIATIVE: PRAKASAM DISTRICT LEADS

■ Prakasam district has 84 Spandana centres, the highest in Andhra Pradesh

■ Prakasam district is spread over 18,000 sq km with approximately 40 lakh population

■ Since July, Prakasam Police has received over 3,500 petitions resulting in 845 cases being registered

■ Over 50 per cent of the complainants in police stations under Spandana were women



■ Spandana Beyond Borders was launched on November 25. People from anywhere in the world can now video chat with the district's SP every Monday afternoon

the complainant often connect to the field officer concerned to discuss the issue and how it can be resolved. It becomes a three-way communication and this is giving confidence to people to approach police," he said.

All 84 Spandana centres of the district have the facilities for a three-way video conference.

Prakasam district is spread over 18,000 sq km with approximately 40 lakh population. "It is strenuous as well as expensive to those who live in faraway places to go and meet the SP in the district headquarter in Ongole... For such people, Spandana is a boon. They have

to spend just one hour at the nearest centre and talk to the SP through video-conferencing," an official said.

For instance, recently 18 Adivasi masons from Kondagaon district of Chhattisgarh narrated their ordeal through video-conferencing from a Spandana centre stating that they were not paid by their contractor in Korisapadu Mandal in Prakasam. The contractor, Bathula Ravi, was summoned to the office of Addanki Police Inspector where he gave an undertaking that he would pay within 24 hours. The next day he paid the Rs 2 lakhs that he owed to

the masons and also assured that he would make arrangements for the mason to go back to their state safely.

Since July, the Prakasam Police has received over 3,500 petitions resulting in 845 cases being registered. "In the rest of the cases, they have been settled amicably mostly," he said. To create awareness about the Spandana centres, cops have put up banners and flex boards all over the district.

"As word spread about the procedure and friendliness, more and more people are coming forward with their grievances. At the Spandana facility the average time given to each complainant by the officer is 8.5 minutes," DGP D Goutam Sawang said.

Spandana Beyond Borders was launched on November 25. People from anywhere in the world can now video chat with the SP on Monday afternoon.

Officials said that many people from within the country — from places such as Bengaluru, Delhi, Lucknow, Jammu and Hyderabad — as well as from outside India — from places such as the US, Germany, Canada, United Kingdom, Dubai, UAE, and Singapore — have utilised the services so far and solved their issues using the facility.

Besides the G Files Awards, Spandana Online was nominated by the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D), which operates under the National Police Mission in Delhi, for its award.

EXPLAINED E

Why Spandana is a success

There are two broad reasons why Spandana initiative has succeeded. One is the use of technology. With Spandana centres spread across the district, each having video conferencing facility, it is easier and cheaper for people to lodge complaints. They no longer have to travel to the district headquarters to follow up. The second reason is the special attention to women complainants.

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'Instead of focussing only on formalisation, raise the informal sector's productivity'

INSTEAD OF solely focussing on the formalisation of the Indian economy, which is not inadvisable per se, policymakers should focus on increasing the productivity in the informal sector, says MICHAL RUTKOWSKI, Global Director, Social Protection and Jobs, World Bank as he speaks to UDDIT MISRA.

When you look at India, what are the two or three key challenges that pop up in your mind? What are the areas of concern?

To me, the fact that India is predominantly an informal economy is a very important starting point when talking about jobs. That's because many of us are used to thinking in terms of a long-term stable employment contract in a formal economy as the gold standard. India is not only 90 per cent informal economy, but also this is the same number as 50 years ago. So we see that there is no progress in formalisation. That is why we need to change our mindset.

The 10 per cent in the formal sector, they are relatively well protected. Where the rubber hits the road is the informal sector. That's where we need to start thinking about how to improve productivity by bringing those informal sector workers, subsistence agricultural workers closer to markets.

From the demand side, we need to look at the development of secondary cities because not all agricultural workers will be in a position to move to a major city. A developed secondary city could be a stepping stone towards further migration. From the supply side, we need to offer informal sector workers a package of cash transfers.

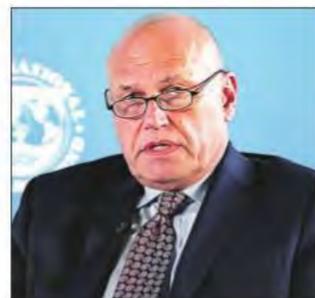
In this regard, the development of the pension systems for the informal sector in India — because of our ability to use mobile money — opens up new possibilities with respect to protecting workers.

Is there a demand-supply disconnect in the Indian job market?

Indeed, you have a situation in the Indian job market where despite a huge pool of labour there is high unemployment and yet, at the same time, surveys show that for employers the lack of proper skills is a big constraint in recruitment. So, there is clearly a mismatch here.

I think the key issue is to involve the private sector to understand what kind of skills and training is required because at present it seems like employers' views are not taken on board. The other aspect is the north-south distinction in the Indian labour market. You have southern states such as Tamil Nadu and Kerala with ageing population whereas you have surplus labour in the north.

Usually every type of migration — internal or international — is a politically sensitive issue, but migration is a powerful force for development.



THE POLICY INTERVIEW
MICHAL RUTKOWSKI
Global Director (Jobs), World Bank

But increasingly in India, state governments are feeling compelled to say that they will reserve jobs for the locals.

My point is that if states open the door to migrants, they would gain and so would the states of origin of the migrants. Everybody's a winner when such migration happens; incomes often grow 10-12 times compared to the place of origin. And contrary to belief, typically, migrants do not take away jobs from the locals — they take up those jobs that locals don't want to do anyway. And this especially applies to ageing populations.

Over the last few years in India, especially since demonetisation, there has been a massive push towards formalisation. In fact, the informal economy has been demonised — it is almost seen as corrupt and inefficient. How do you see this shift?

I would actually regret it. I regret it in the following sense. One of the recent studies we did — titled "Protecting all" — points to the fact that in developed countries there is an increasing fluidity in the labour market. So in the past lifetime employment in one place was a norm, now increasingly the norm is just 3-4 years. After that people may migrate, take a break, jobs could be contracted out etc. The gig economy, although still a very small part of the world economy, is expanding very fast. So the nature of the formal sector in the west is changing. So we need to rethink the point of aspiration.

Because of this change and because India has such a large informal sector already, I would rather focus on improving productivity in the informal sector instead. I have nothing against formalisation. I would rather look at it as a continuum and focus on improving productivity across the board.

IN NUMBERS

MORE THAN 1 MILLION PEOPLE DIE IN INDIA EVERY YEAR BECAUSE OF OUTDOOR POLLUTION — THE HIGHEST IN ANY G20 COUNTRY

VARIABLE	G 20 AVERAGE	INDIA
GDP per capita (in PPP US\$ constant 2018)	22,694	7,762
Greenhouse gas emissions per capita (in Tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent)	7.5	1.9
Energy intensity of the economy (Terajoule/PPP US\$ 2015 million)	4.86	4.17
Total ambient air pollution attributable deaths (per 1,000 population per year)	Between 0.1 to 1.1	1.1

Source: Brown to green: The G20 transition towards a net-zero emissions economy (2019)

How Section 144 of CrPC was used to curb the branding of children using hot iron rods

MILIND GHATWAI
BHOPAL, DECEMBER 22:

IN A survey carried out by the field staff of Women and Child Development Department as many as 672 children that were registered with 763 anganwadis in Umariya, Manpur and Pali blocks of Umariya district in Madhya Pradesh have been found to have been victims of "daagna" or branding. Daagna, in local parlance, refers to an unscientific practice wherein young children, who are ailing with some undiagnosed sickness or the other, are poked by hot iron rods as a way to cure them. This inhumane practice is quite common in the tribal-dominated blocks of the district.

Swarochish Somvanshi, the District Collector of Umariya, found these results alarming and quickly swung into action. The 2012 batch officer said he has tried to raise awareness about the unscientific practice by engaging with the common people and ex-



Officials of Umariya district raising awareness against branding *Express*

plaining to them how daagna hurts the children instead of curing them.

In May this year, two months after he joined as the Collector, Somvanshi imposed Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPc). Section 144 gives the government the "power to issue order in urgent cases of nuisance of apprehended danger". It bars all

civilians from carrying weapons, including lathis, sharp-edged weapons, or firearms in public places. Somvanshi invoked this section of the CrPc to warn people against branding their children. If they violate it, they would face the legal consequences.

In fact, he launched a project named Sanjeevani to tackle the menace.

This involved regular monitoring of children every Tuesday — celebrated as Mangal Diwas — to ensure they are getting nourishing food and to check they are not being branded. It was also an opportunity to ensure malnourished and underweight children are provided health facilities.

When the first case of branding was reported, a case was registered in Manpur Police Station to spread the message that branding was illegal. "I am not so much for registering FIRs because in most cases parents and grandparents do it and in some cases, midwives and quacks. Enforcement is not the solution, the awareness has to come from within," said Somvanshi.

PUNJAB/AGRICULTURAL MARKETING REFORMS

An app that is reforming govt, transforming agri markets

RAAKHI JAGGA
LUDHIANA, DECEMBER 22

PUNJAB MANDI Board's (PMB) IT cell has introduced a new mobile application or app that is transforming mandis in the state. The objective is to make employees more regular at the job and increase the transparency in the daily functioning of the mandis. The e-PMB app also allows farmers to check for the availability of space of foodgrains in the mandi and book their slots accordingly.

Punjab has a total of 154 market committee offices which have regular mandis while 1,834 seasonal mandis (which operate under Mandi board office) are set up during wheat and paddy seasons.

Ravi Bhagat, Secretary, PMB said "earlier the employees used to mark attendance either through wall-mounted biometric machines or offline attendance process". But at times these machines developed some faults, and then many employees chose to visit the mandi directly instead of coming to the of-



Kamaljit Singh marking his attendance using the app in Ludhiana. *Gurmeet Singh*

rice to mark attendance. But this also meant that there was no way to keep track of who is working and who is not. "So to keep a track of all those field employees and also for their convenience, we introduced the e-PMB app. With its use, field employees can mark their attendance from outside offices as well," said Bhagat.

The app also tracks the location of the employee and an employee's salary has been attached to the online report of this app.

"Punjab Mandi Board has a total of 4,766 employees across the state and out of these 45 per cent mark their attendance using this app as they are the regular field workers," said Bhagat.

The app was introduced in September last year and in just one year, the attendance of employees has improved by over 60 per cent. The app also allows employees to apply for leaves.

But the app is not just about employees. While initially the app was only meant for employee attendance, from February this year, PMB added many features in the app through which farmers could even get an on-

line stall booked for "apni mandi" (weekly fruit and vegetable market).

Details of district-wise registered commission agents in all mandis has been uploaded in the app and a farmer can see whether or not to visit a particular mandi on a particular day based on the business being conducted in the mandi. In the absence of the app, at times, farmers had to wait for 2-3 days to get their grains unloaded. But now since all transaction information is available on the app, they can plan their visits more efficiently.

Even though the app has not yet been launched formally, a total of 890 farmers have got themselves registered for online site booking for apni mandi, according to Nitin Bansal, IT Analyst of Punjab Mandi Board. "A slot can be booked online and later a farmer can pay the fee manually once he actually arrives to set up the stall. Not only this, daily vegetable/ fruits rates are also displayed in the app by noon every day so that consumers cannot be cheated by the vendors," said Bhagat.

15 THE WORLD

TOP OF THE WORLD



FRANCE
Macron to give up presidential pension in reform gesture

Paris: French President Emmanuel Macron, whose plans to reform the pension system have run into fierce public opposition, will forego a special presidential pension payout when he eventually steps down, his office said on Sunday. Under a law dating back to 1955, France's presidents are entitled to draw a pension of about 6,000 euros (\$6,650) per month before tax as soon as they leave office. Macron will waive these pension rights and change the presidential scheme to bring it into line with the wider overhaul of France's retirement system, his office said, confirming an earlier report by French daily *Le Parisien*.

USA
Chicago police: 13 wounded in shooting at memorial party

Chicago: A shooting early Sunday at a house party held in honour of someone who was killed in April left 13 people wounded, four of the critically, Chicago police said. The shooting stemmed from a dispute at the memorial party, Chief of Patrol Fred Waller said at an early morning news conference. He said shots were first fired just after 12.30 am. The victims range in age from 16 to 48 and suffered "different and various gunshot wounds to their bodies". Two people were being questioned, Waller said. One of them was arrested with a weapon, he said.

SYRIA
25,000 fled Idlib for Turkey over two days

Ankara: At least 25,000 civilians have fled Syria's northwestern region of Idlib and headed towards Turkey over the past two days, Turkish state media said on Sunday, as Syrian and Russian forces intensified their bombardment of the region. Turkey currently hosts some 3.7 million Syrian refugees, the largest refugee population in the world, and fears another wave from the Idlib region, where up to 3 million Syrians live in the last significant insurgent-held swathe of territory. Ankara has repeatedly asked its allies to support it in hosting refugees.

STARLINER RETURNS AFTER ABORTED SPACE MISSION



Boeing CST-100 Starliner spacecraft after its landing in White Sands, New Mexico, Sunday. Reuters

Boeing's Starliner spacecraft landed in the New Mexico desert on Sunday, the company said, after faulty software forced officials to cut short an unmanned mission aimed at taking it to the International Space Station.

The landing at dawn in the White Sands desert capped a turbulent 48 hours for Boeing's botched milestone test of a crew capsule that is designed to help NASA regain its human spaceflight capabilities.

The Starliner was successfully launched from Florida Friday, but an automated timer error prevented it from attaining the right orbit to meet and dock with the space station.

AUSTRALIA
PM APOLOGISES FOR VACATION AMID FIRES



Australian PM Scott Morrison apologised for taking a family vacation in Hawaii as deadly bushfires raged across several states, claiming the lives of two firefighters. "If you had your time over again and you had the benefit of hindsight, we would have made different decisions," Morrison said. "I am sure Australians are fair-minded and understand that when you make a promise to your kids you try and keep it."

FATF grills Pakistan on madrasas linked to banned outfits

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ISLAMABAD, DECEMBER 22

THE FINANCIAL Action Task Force (FATF), a global watchdog for terror financing, has sought more clarifications and data from Pakistan on actions taken against madrasas belonging to banned outfits, weeks after Islamabad submitted a report to the Paris-based body detailing steps taken to curb terrorism and money laundering.

The FATF, which kept Pakistan on the 'grey list' for an extended period till February 2020, had warned in October that Islamabad would be put on the 'black list' if it did not comply with the remaining 22 points in a list of 27 questions.

Pakistan submitted a report comprising answers to 22 questions to the FATF on December 6.

In response to the report, the FATF's joint group has sent 150 questions to Pakistan, seeking some clarifications, updates and, most importantly, actions taken against the madrasas belonging to the proscribed outfits.

"We did receive a response from the FATF on our compliance report through an email in which they raised a set of 150 questions. Some of them are seeking more data, some clarifications, and most importantly questions related to madrasas and actions taken against them having affiliation with proscribed outfits," *The News* quoted



The Pakistan government has been told to respond to the questions by January 8. Reuters

The FATF's joint group has sent 150 questions to Pakistan, seeking some clarifications, updates and, most importantly, actions taken against the madrasas belonging to the proscribed outfits

a top official source as saying. Pakistan has been told to respond to the questions by January 8 next year, the official said.

According to officials, Mumbai terror attack mastermind Hafiz Saeed-led Jamat-ud-Dawah's network includes 300 seminaries and schools.

In March 2019, Punjab police

said the government seized control of 160 madrasas, 32 schools, two colleges, four hospitals, 178 ambulances and 153 dispensaries associated with the JuD and its so-called charity wing Falaah-i-Insaniyat Foundation (FIF) in the province.

At least 56 madrasas and facilities being run by the JuD and FIF in southern Sindh province were also taken over by the authorities in the same month.

The JuD is believed to be the front organisation for the Lashkar-e-Taiba, which is responsible for carrying out the 2008 Mumbai attacks. The US declared the LeT as a foreign terrorist organisation in June 2014.

The next FATF meeting is scheduled to be held in Beijing from January 21 to 24, where Pakistan will be given an opportunity to defend the points in the report.

Ghani wins majority as Afghanistan releases September's election results

Results may change after complaints reviewed: poll panel

HAMID SHALIZI & ABDUL QADIR SEDIQI
KABUL, DECEMBER 22

AFGHANISTAN'S INCUMBENT President Ashraf Ghani won a slim majority of votes in a Sept 28 election, delayed preliminary results showed on Sunday, after a poll that plunged the country into political crisis and was marred by allegations of fraud.

The Independent Election Commission (IEC) said the total turnout in the presidential election was over 1.8 million with Ghani securing 50.64%, enough to win the first round of voting, beating his main challenger



The incumbent received 50.64% of the vote

Abdullah Abdullah, who currently shares power with Ghani in a unity government.

However, the head of IEC, Hawa Alam Nuristani, said the outcome could change after final results and was still subject to a review by the election com-

plaints' commission. If a review showed Ghani's vote falling below 50% and no other candidate with a majority, a second round of voting would be held, she said.

According to the tally released by the IEC on Sunday, the total turnout was 1,824,401 with Ghani winning 923,868 votes while Abdullah finished second with 39.5% and 720,099 votes.

In a statement, Abdullah's office said he did not accept the preliminary results and the commission had failed to tackle election fraud. "The result that stands is based on fraud and without considering our legitimate demands, will never be accepted." **REUTERS**

EXPLAINED
More political uncertainty likely

FIVE YEARS ago, during the last election, Ghani and Abdullah were involved in a dispute that caused months of political uncertainty. Similarly, the results of this year's election, already delayed by around 2 months, is set to cause more political wrangling. Abdullah has rejected the results and the election panel has left the door open for a change of results after a review of complaints.

Six killed, 13 injured in Las Vegas apartment fire

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LAS VEGAS, DECEMBER 22

A FIRE in a three-story apartment building in downtown Las Vegas where residents were apparently using their stoves for heat killed six people and forced some residents to jump from upper-floor windows to escape the heavy smoke before dawn Saturday, authorities said.

Investigators reported that the fire started around a first-floor unit's stove and that residents had told them that there was no heat in the building, which sits a few blocks from downtown Las Vegas' touristy Fremont Street District.

Residents reported awakening to pounding on doors around 4 am.

By the time Matthew Sykes got his clothes on to flee, one end of his second-floor hallway was choked with thick black smoke, as was a stairwell, making it impassable for he and his wife.

"The whole place was like one big black cloud of smoke - couldn't get down the stairs," Sykes told *The Associated Press*.

Firefighters arriving at the scene began treating the injured and using ladders to rescue numerous people already jumping or hanging from windows, fire department spokesman Tim Szymanski said.

Clashes as police try to clear Hong Kong protesters after Uighur support rally

MARI SAITO
HONG KONG, DECEMBER 22

HONG KONG riot police pepper sprayed protesters to disperse crowds in the heart of the city's financial district on Sunday after a largely peaceful rally in support of China's ethnic Uighurs turned chaotic.

Dozens of police marched across a public square overlooking Hong Kong's harbour to face off with protesters who hurled glass bottles and rocks at them.

Earlier in the afternoon more than 1,000 people had rallied calmly, waving Uighur flags and posters, as they took part in the latest demonstration in over six



Hong Kong protesters rally in support of Uighurs. Reuters

months of unrest. A mixed crowd of young and elderly people, dressed in black and wearing masks to shield

their identities, held up signs reading "Free Uyghur, Free Hong Kong" and "Fake 'autonomy' in China results in genocide".

Racist remarks: Indian-origin head of major S African channel sacked

FAKIR HASSEN
JOHANNESBURG, DEC 22

AN INDIAN-ORIGIN head of a news channel in South Africa has been sacked by the broadcaster following an uproar over his alleged racist remarks to a resigning employee.

Kanthan Pillay, head of South Africa's largest independent TV news channel eNCA, had called Samkelo Maseko a rat heading for a sinking ship after the latter opted to work for the South

African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). The national public broadcaster SABC is currently facing financial strain.

In response, Maseko made public details of how Pillay had called him a dog when he was unceremoniously asked to leave his desk, without being given a chance to serve his notice period.

Maseko also accused Pillay of interfering in news decisions, which led to biased news coverage, favouring some politicians.

The public spat resulted severe criticism of Pillay. A public apology by Pillay failed to control the damage as the broadcaster dismissed Pillay with immediate effect Friday. **PTI**

175 children abused by Mexican branch of Catholic Church: report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MEXICO CITY, DECEMBER 22

AT LEAST 175 children were sexually assaulted by priests belonging to an ultra-conservative Mexican branch of the Roman Catholic Church, according to an internal report published Saturday.

The founder of the Legionaries of Christ, Marcial Maciel, abused as many as 60 children, with a total of 33 priests or deacons acknowledged to have committed sexual assaults against minors



The founder of Legionaries of Christ, Marcial Maciel, with Pope John Paul II in this 2004 photo. Maciel abused as many as 60 children, the internal report said. Reuters

since 1941, the document says.

The findings of the report - written by a commission created in June by the director general of the group, Eduardo Robles-Gil - spans from the group's founding in 1941 until December 16, 2019.

"The vast majority of the victims were adolescent boys between 11 and 16 years old," the statement said. The report notes that 18 of the 33 individuals who committed abuses are still part of the organisation, but says they have been removed from tasks connected to the public or minors.

FOR YEARS, A SECRET TEAM, UNIT 29155, OPERATED WITHOUT WESTERN SECURITY OFFICIALS HAVING ANY IDEA OF THEIR ACTIVITIES

A poisoning in Bulgaria helped expose Russian assassins in Europe

MICHAEL SCHWITZ
SOFIA, DECEMBER 22

THE RUSSIAN assassin used an alias, Sergei Fedotov, and slipped into Bulgaria unnoticed, checking into a hotel in Sofia near the office of a local arms manufacturer who had been selling ammunition to Ukraine.

He led a team of three men. Within days, one man sneaked into a locked parking garage, smeared poison on the handle of the arms manufacturer's car, then left, undetected, except for blurry images cap-

tured by surveillance video. Shortly after, the arms manufacturer, Emilian Gebrev, was meeting with business partners at a rooftop restaurant when he began to hallucinate and vomit.

The poisoning left Gebrev, now 65, hospitalised for a month. His son was poisoned, and so was another top executive at his company. When Gebrev was discharged, the assassins poisoned him and his son again, at their summer home on the Black Sea. They all survived, though Gebrev's business has yet to recover fully.

Western security and intelligence officials said the Bulgaria

poisonings were a critical clue that helped expose a campaign by the Kremlin and its sprawling web of intelligence operatives to eliminate Russia's enemies abroad and destabilise the West.

Entering his third decade in power, President Vladimir Putin of Russia is pushing hard to reestablish Russia as a world power. Russia cannot compete economically or militarily with the US and China, so Putin is waging an asymmetric shadow war.

In October, *The New York Times* revealed that a specialised group of Russian intelligence operatives - Unit 29155 - had for



In March 2018, former Russian spy Sergei Skripal was poisoned by a nerve agent in Britain

years been assigned to carry out killings and political disruption campaigns in Europe.

Based on interviews with officials in Europe and the United States, it is also now clear that the assassination attempts against Gebrev served as a kind of Rosetta Stone that helped Western intelligence agencies to discover Unit 29155 - and to decipher the kind of threat it presented.

Security and intelligence officials are still working to understand how and why the unit is assigned certain targets. Even now, investigators have not determined the precise motive in the Gebrev case.

By the summer following Gebrev's second poisoning,

Bulgarian authorities had dropped the case. They apparently had no idea that Unit 29155 even existed. Neither did intelligence and security officials in the rest of Europe.

However, members of Unit 29155 were very busy, according to partial travel records reviewed by the *Times*. From 2016 to 2018, operatives made at least two dozen trips from Moscow to different European countries.

Their operation in Bulgaria most likely would never have been detected. Then there was another poisoning.

In March 2018, a former Russian spy named Sergei

Skripal was poisoned by a lethal nerve agent in the English town of Salisbury.

British prosecutors blamed the attack on assassins working for Russia's military intelligence agency, known widely as the GRU. Working with European allies, British authorities analysed travel records of known Russian operatives. One stood out: a man using a Russian passport with the name of Sergei Fedotov.

It turned out that he had been in Bulgaria in 2015, making three visits: in February; in April, when Gebrev was first poisoned; and again in late May, coinciding

with the second poisoning.

Investigators from the Britain-based open-source news outlet Bellingcat have identified the man using the Fedotov alias as Denis Sergeev, a high-ranking GRU officer and a veteran of Russia's wars in the North Caucasus. British authorities confirmed the accuracy of the report.

The revelation that he was connected to the poisonings in both England and Bulgaria was critical in helping Western officials conclude that these were not one-off Russian attacks but rather part of a coordinated campaign run by Unit 29155. **NYT**

16 ECONOMY

MARKET WATCH 2019 NET FPI INFLOW CROSSES ₹1 TN

New Delhi: Ignoring negative sentiments around falling GDP growth rate and some policy roadblocks, foreign portfolio investors (FPI) seem to have flocked to the Indian capital market in a big way in 2019 with a net inflow of over Rs 1.3 lakh crore. **PTI**

SHARE IN TOTAL CREDIT DOWN FROM 61% LAST SEPT TO 57% IN SEPT 2019: RBI Slowdown, high NPAs take toll as PSU banks' market share sees 4% decline

GEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, DECEMBER 22

PUBLIC SECTOR banks have lost further market share to private banks in the lending business as they curtailed their exposure to stress-prone sectors as part of clean-up exercise and the ongoing slowdown depressed demand for credit.

While the share of private banks in total credit rose to 34.7 per cent as of September 2019 compared with 31 per cent in September last year, the share of public sector undertaking (PSU) banks contracted from 61 per cent in September 2018 to 57 per cent by September 2019.

The outstanding credit of PSU banks showed a rise of just 1.84 per cent from Rs 55.5 lakh crore in September 2018 to Rs 56.6 lakh crore in September 2019, according to data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

The outstanding credit of private banks rose 21.65 per cent to Rs 34.2 lakh crore from Rs 28.1 lakh crore a year ago.

Regional rural banks showed a 104 per cent growth in out-

EXPLAINED

PSU banks see better prospects in retail lending

PUBLIC SECTOR banks were very selective in their lending business following the asset quality review that started three years ago and the ongoing economic slowdown.

As they are already saddled with huge non-performing assets, state-owned lenders are now focussing on retail lending, which is showing more demand than corporate.

standing credit at Rs 80,000 crore this September as against Rs 40,000 crore a year ago.

"PSU banks were very selective in their lending business following the asset quality review that started three years ago and the ongoing economic slowdown. They are already saddled with huge NPAs (non-performing assets)," said a senior banker with a nationalised bank.

PSU banks account for the bulk of Rs 9.16 lakh crore NPAs of the banking system, as of September 2019.

The state-owned banks had

made total provisions of Rs 891,000 crore since financial year 2015-16 with provisions touching Rs 2.86 lakh crore in FY18 and Rs 2.30 lakh crore in FY19, according to data compiled by CARE Ratings.

"This (losing market share) is the result of selective lending undertaken by the government-owned banks, with the intent to curtail the exposures to the stress-prone sectors. Furthermore, private banks benefit from their competitive strengths in risk pricing and operational efficiency, in the retail lending

space," said a report by the rating agency.

Furthermore, the announcement of mergers in the public banking space has led to a shift in focus of PSU banks from expanding business to operationalising the mergers.

The ongoing economic downturn and lack of new investments by the corporate sector also led to a deceleration in the growth of credit offtake.

Total non-food credit outstanding posted a small growth of 0.3 per cent to Rs 86.63 lakh crore in the current financial year till October 25, 2019.

Credit offtake by industry declined by 3.4 per cent to Rs 27.86 lakh crore during the same period, according to RBI data.

The central bank had slashed the repo rate by 135 basis points (bps) cumulatively in 2019. However the one-year median lending rate (MCLR) has declined by only 49 bps.

While the rate cut transmission has failed to keep pace with the repo rate cut by RBI, the demand for credit also dipped due to the moderation in the overall

economic growth.

However, lenders have now started to marginally transmit the rate cuts by RBI in their lending rates.

Private banks moved into the retail space much earlier than their public sector counterparts. PSU banks are now focusing on personal, housing, auto loans due to the slow credit offtake by the corporate sector.

"Retail is showing more demand than the corporate. In the retail segment, more demand is coming from housing. In the corporate segment, we have seen demand in very few sectors," said the chief executive officer of a nationalised bank.

As most of the banks have now begun to cut their lending rates in quick succession, creating scope for a spur in domestic demand and thereby incentivising growth in credit, credit growth is likely to be in the range of 8-9.5 per cent year-on-year for March 2020, CARE Ratings said.

The credit growth is, however, contingent on other policy measures that the government would undertake to stimulate demand, it further said.

NCLAT gives nod to demerger of Reliance Jio, dismisses objections by I-T on 'avoidance and evasion'

AASHISH ARYAN
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

THE NATIONAL Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) has dismissed objections on avoidance and evasion of taxes raised by the Income Tax (I-T) department against a scheme of the demerger of Reliance Jio Infocomm. The Mukesh Ambani-led company had sought to hive off its tower and fibre assets into two different companies, namely, Jio Digital Fibre Private and Reliance Jio Infratel Private.

The I-T department had, however, opposed the scheme and alleged that by seeking to hive off these two units into separate entities and by cancelling the preference shares and instead of turning it into a loan, Jio was seeking to "avoid and evade taxes".

The demerger would also bring down substantially the profit of Reliance Jio, which would, in turn, mean reduction in payment of dividend distribution tax and income tax by the company, the tax department had alleged.

"There are two consequences of such conversion of preference shares into loan. Firstly, the shareholders who are now creditors can seek payment of the loan irrespective of whether there are

Reliance Jio had sought to hive off its tower and fibre assets into two firms, Jio Digital Fibre Private and Reliance Jio Infratel Private

accumulated profits or not and secondly, the company would be liable to pay interest on the loans to its creditors, which it otherwise would not have had to do to its shareholder," the I-T department had alleged.

Reliance Jio had, on April 2, said that it had transferred the control of its fibre and mobile tower units to two infrastructure investment trusts set up by Reliance Industrial Investments and Holdings Ltd (RIIHL). Subsequently, Reliance Jio Infratel had allocated shares worth Rs 200 crore to Reliance Jio, while Jio Digital Fibre had allocated shares worth Rs 500 crore to the flagship company Jio, as on March 31, 2019, as per a regulatory filing.

The I-T department had in its submissions said that even if assumed a rate of interest of 10 per cent, the total interest payable on the profits of Reliance Jio would be around Rs 780 crore per year, which would in turn result reduce

the company's tax by Rs.258.16 crore each year, thereby "clearly resulting into tax evasion".

"Payment of interest on such huge amounts of loan would lead to reducing the total income of the company in an artificial manner which is not permissible in law," the I-T department had alleged.

The NCLAT, however, dismissed the petitions with an observation that merely because a "scheme may result in reduction of tax liability, it does not furnish a basis for challenging the validity of the same". Earlier this year, the Ahmedabad bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) had approved the demerger plan of Reliance Jio. The I-T department had in March approached the NCLAT and requested that the matter be taken up sometime in April as March was "very busy period" for the department.

The NCLAT, however, refused the adjournment and had passed the order in absence of the tax department on March 20. In its submissions, Reliance Jio had told the NCLAT, as well as the NCLAT, that it had no objections to "being subjected to tax on the transactions under the scheme as per law and that the sanctioning of the scheme would not adversely impact the rights of the appellant (I-T department) in this regard".

'India's crude steel output sees 2.8% fall in Nov'

India's crude steel output fell for the second straight month in November, declining 2.8 per cent to 8.934 million tonne (MT), according to a report by World Steel Association (worldsteel)

9.192 MT

India's crude steel output in November 2018

3.4% Fall in India's crude steel output during October 2019; from 9.408 MT in October 2018 to 9.089 MT this October

1% Decline in global steel production in November 2019; from 149.356 MT in November 2018 to 147.791 MT last month

4% Rise in steel production last month in China - world's largest steel producer; from 77.213 MT in

November 2018 to 80.287 MT in November 2019

10.6% Fall in crude steel production in Japan; from 8.659 MT in November 2018 to 7.743 MT in November 2019

2.2% Decline in crude steel production in the United States; from 7.399 MT in November 2018 to 7.233 MT in November 2019

0.5% Fall in South Korea's crude steel production; from 5.923 MT in November 2018 to 5.895 MT in November 2019

Source: PTI



PRODUCTION IN EUROPEAN UNION NATIONS IN NOVEMBER

Italy 2.0 MT
France 1.1 MT
Spain 1.1 MT

PRODUCTION IN OTHER MAJOR NATIONS IN NOVEMBER

Brazil 2.6 MT
Turkey 2.9 MT
Ukraine 1.3 MT

BRIEFLY

Flight returned to Mumbai due to glitch: GoAir

Mumbai: A Chandigarh-bound GoAir flight from the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport was diverted back to Mumbai Sunday within minutes of departure due to a technical snag, a source said. The plane, a Pratt & Whitney engine-powered Airbus A320neo landed safely and was grounded for inspection, a GoAir statement said, adding there were 169 passengers on-board. "GoAir flight G8 2506 from Mumbai to Chandigarh did an air turn back to Mumbai due to a technical glitch," it said.

Glenmark recalls ranitidine tablets from US

New Delhi: Glenmark Pharmaceutical Inc, USA said it is recalling unexpired lots of its ranitidine tablets from the US market, after the USFDA flagged them for presence or potential presence of NDMA levels above acceptable daily intake levels.

Avanti Finance to soon raise \$30-40 mn

Mumbai: Microloan-focused NBFC Avanti Finance is looking to raise \$30-40 million in fresh equity from impact investors and domestic financial institutions to fuel growth. **PTI**

Highways sector to see ₹15 lakh crore investments in five years: Gadkari

PRESSTrust OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

THE GOVERNMENT'S endeavour for world-class infrastructure will continue unabated with commitment to pump in another Rs 15 lakh crore in the highways sector in this five-year term, says Nitin Gadkari, the man in charge of India's infrastructure.

Armed with the new Motor Vehicles Act, e-tolling and instruments like InVT, for Road Transport and Highways Minister Gadkari "funds have never been a problem or will be a problem" when it comes to highways or infrastructure building. "We have spent Rs 17 lakh crore in the highways and shipping sectors combined in the last five years ... Coming five years will see infusion

of Rs 15 lakh crore in highways sector alone to provide world-class roads including 22 green expressways," Gadkari told PTI.

The minister said with e-tolling coming into force, the toll income alone will cross Rs 8,000 crore per annum as ever since the FASTag system has been made mandatory at national highways, toll income has seen a jump of Rs 25 crore per day.

IBA to bring framework to address consortium lending issues in April

PRESSTrust OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

THE INDIAN Banks' Association (IBA), headed by SBI Chairman Rajnish Kumar, will come out with a framework around April to address issues related with consortium lending to industry and finding solution for alternate sources of borrowing for them.

Industry faces problem, particularly in consortium and multiple lending and if even a small NOC (no objection certificate) is required, the borrower keeps going around the banks, so it may take six months or one year or even one-and-a-half years to get the funding, Kumar said at an industry event.

"And the NOC may come or may not come and all your (industry borrower) plan goes for a toss. So there has to be a system in the decision making where these decisions can be taken on time," he said while speaking at the FICCI Annual Convention here Saturday.

And to address these issues, there are two things which are happening, one is at the IBA level and another by Reserve Bank of India to develop secondary market for loan to corporates.

"I have decided to set up a working group that will examine all these issues around consortium and multiple banking lending and see to it that standardisation happens and it becomes hassle free as far as the borrowers are concerned," Kumar said.

"We will try to make an arrangement that if there are some dissenting lenders, how we can give them exit (from consortium of lenders), all these issues will be deliberated. So that is a step you will see next three months or at least from April, IBA should be able to come out with a framework," said the SBI Chairman addressing concerns of the industry regarding borrowing.

He said the working will comprise six members with representatives from public, private and foreign banks.

ASMITA DEY
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

THE TOTAL losses for a clutch of India's top e-retailers - Amazon, Flipkart, BigBasket, Grofers, Swiggy, Zomato, Paytm and OYO - crossed Rs 17,000 crore in the year to March 2019, a 70 per cent jump over losses in the previous year. While revenues rose a smart 80 per cent to Rs 26,066 crore, this was not enough to cover the sharp rise in expenses to a staggering Rs 43,431 crore, up 72 per cent.

Backed by their sponsors, e-commerce players continue to make large investments to win over customers and gain share in what are intensely competitive markets. Not everyone's growing at a breakneck pace and some have lost momentum.

Swiggy, for example, grew revenues by 154 per cent in 2018-19, somewhat slower than the 200 per cent plus in the previous financial year. CEO Sriharsha Majety recently said Swiggy was aiming to generate about 30 per cent of its revenues from areas

other than food delivery.

Both Flipkart and Amazon have recorded only a marginal revenue growth in the past two years, but BigBasket fared better in FY19, growing at 69 per cent compared with the pace of 29 per cent in 2017-18, though this was much slower than the 107 per cent rise in revenues seen in FY17.

The large losses don't seem to have deterred investors who believe there's money to be made in India's online market. Internet firms raised \$9.13 billion in funding in the nine months to September, a rise of 28 per cent year-on-year, data from Tracxn show.

The losses aren't going away for at least the next two years, given investments need to be made in marketing and infrastructure. As Satish Meena, senior analyst at Forrester Research, points out, e-retailers may have been able to win the first 100 million customers but the next batch will take a lot more doing.

At Zomato, for instance, expenses on advertising and promotions soared to Rs 1,214 crore a 15-fold increase over the spends in

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

THERE'S JUST about a month left for telecom operators and non-telecom public sector undertakings (PSUs) to pay their adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues totalling more than Rs 3 lakh crore, but the government is yet to take a legal view on the way forward.

According to the October 24 order of the Supreme Court the dues need to be paid by January 24, 2020.

Official sources confirmed the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) is yet to approach either the Attorney General (AG) or the Solicitor General (SG) seeking legal advice so as to be able to offer some relief to telcos which are required to pay Rs 1.47 lakh crore. "No legal opinion has been sought on the issue as of now," the offices of AG and SG said.

While the approach towards telecom operators is understandable, to an extent, what's perplexing is that the DoT has not sought any legal advice on non-telecom PSUs.

These companies together need to pay more than Rs 2 lakh crore either because they hold some form of a telecom licence or spectrum for a part of their operations.

While the telecom operators have filed a limited review petition in the Supreme Court seek-

While the telecom operators have filed a limited review petition in the Supreme Court seeking waiver of interest, penalty and interest on penalty, which comprises 75 per cent of their dues, the non-telecom PSUs have not

ing waiver of interest, penalty and interest on penalty, which comprises 75 per cent of their dues, the non-telecom PSUs have not.

However, companies including GAIL, PowerGrid, among others have categorically told the DoT that they owe the government no money and do not intend to pay anything.

According to some officials, what is strange is that even the administrative ministries of the concerned PSUs have not taken up the issue with DoT, nor has there been a constitution of any kind of inter-ministerial body to tackle the issue.

On their part, the telecom operators have been making appeals to DoT for relief. Bharti Airtel chairman Sunil Bharti Mittal recently said he is hopeful that the government will provide some form of relief.

Vodafone Idea chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla has categorically said since the government won the case, it is in the ideal position to take up the matter with the judiciary. Birla added that if no relief comes its

way, Vodafone Idea would have no option but to shut shop.

"The big elephant in the room is AGR, which is actually I think something which lies in the court of judiciary. I believe the government can have a dialogue. This was a suit filed by the government against telecom service providers. Since the government has won, it gives them headroom to talk to the judiciary and try to find some solution. I don't know which form or shape it takes," Birla had said earlier this month.

Bharti Airtel, besides its limited review petition, has also filed a supplementary petition, urging the apex court to empower DoT to engage with the operators to discuss timelines and quantum of payment etc.

Even as such appeals have been made by the private telecom operators and strict 'no dues hence no-payment' stance has been adopted by the non-telecom PSUs, DoT - apart from sending notices to pay up the amount on time on self-assessment basis - has even followed up with reminder letters. **FE**

TOTAL LOSSES FOR A CLUTCH OF INDIA'S TOP E-RETAILERS CROSS ₹17,000 CRORE IN 2018-19 FY19: Mounting expenses extend losses for e-retailers

'INTERNET FIRMS RAISE \$9.3 BN IN 9 MONTHS'

Large losses don't seem to have deterred investors who believe there's money to be made in India's online market. Internet firms raised \$9.13 billion in funding in the nine months to September, a rise of 28% y-o-y, Tracxn data show

Backed by their sponsors, e-commerce players are making large investments to win over customers and gain share in what are intensely competitive markets. However, not everyone's growing at a breakneck pace

the previous year.

Subhendu Roy, partner at AT Kearney, explains that the customer acquisition cost (CAC) is about 20 per cent of sales - 10-15 per cent of price discount and 5-10 per cent of marketing expenses. While CAC may have stabilised for some categories, they are on the rise for emerging categories like grocery.

Typically, e-commerce firms incur four types of costs - cost of goods sold or COGS, (manufacturing, raw materials and packaging), distribution costs, internal expenses and marketing costs. While COGS forms the bulk of ex-

penses, marketing cost makes up over 10 per cent of the overall sales, and distribution costs account for more than 5 per cent of sales, Roy says.

At Swiggy, which has rolled out services in 450 cities, the expenses rose multi-fold to Rs 7,762 crore. Analysts estimate food delivery firms' monthly operating cash burn to be about Rs 200 crore as they offer new services such as on-demand delivery and home-style meal subscription.

Founder and CEO Deepinder Goyal recently said Zomato has been able to reduce its cash burn by about 70 per cent from what it

was seven months ago.

As e-commerce firms continue to expand into newer cities and diversify their businesses, they will remain in the red, says Ankur Pahwa, partner at EY.

Meena adds that till a new lot of customers gets accustomed to online shopping, companies are investing in other businesses to retain the existing ones. Flipkart Internet's advertising expenses shot up to Rs 1,141.5 crore in FY19 from Rs 731.3 crore in FY18.

Group CEO Kalyan Krishnamurthy said recently that while business from small towns is growing at 90 per cent, generating nearly 70 per cent of transactions, bigger cities are growing at half the rate.

Flipkart and Amazon jointly hold close to 80 per cent share in the e-tail segment and are wooing shoppers from beyond metros - tier II cities and beyond. To turn profitable, the companies are adopting two strategies - moving to private labels that make them less dependent on large suppliers and passing on the burden of discounts to brands. **FE**

TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY

Pessimism v progress

Contemporary worries about the impact of technology are part of a historical pattern

A healthcare robot on display during the IFlyTek conference on Artificial intelligence, held in Beijing in November. *The New York Times*

FASTER, CHEAPER, better-technology is one field many people rely upon to offer a vision of a brighter future. But as the 2020s dawn, optimism is in short supply. The new technologies that dominated the past decade seem to be making things worse. Social media were supposed to bring people together. In the Arab spring of 2011 they were hailed as a liberating force. Today they are better known for invading privacy, spreading propaganda and undermining democracy. E-commerce, ride-hailing and the gig economy may be convenient, but they are charged with underpaying workers, exacerbating inequality and clogging the streets with vehicles. Parents worry that smartphones have turned their children into screen-addicted zombies.

The technologies expected to dominate the new decade also seem to cast a dark shadow. Artificial intelligence (AI) may well entrench bias and prejudice, threaten your job and shore up authoritarian rulers. 5G is at the heart of the Sino-American trade war. Autonomous cars still do not work, but manage to kill people all the same. Polls show that internet firms are now less trusted than the banking industry. At the very moment banks are striving to rebrand themselves as tech

firms, internet giants have become the new banks, morphing from talent magnets to pariahs. Even their employees are in revolt.

The New York Times sums up the encroaching gloom. "A mood of pessimism", it writes, has displaced "the idea of inevitable progress born in the scientific and industrial revolutions." Except those words are from an article published in 1979. Back then the paper fretted that the anxiety was "fed by growing doubts about society's ability to rein in the seemingly runaway forces of technology".

Today's gloomy mood is centred on smartphones and social media, which took off a decade ago. Yet concerns that humanity has taken a technological wrong turn, or that particular technologies might be doing more harm than good, have arisen before. In the 1970s the despondency was prompted by concerns about overpopulation, environmental damage and the prospect of nuclear annihilation. The 1920s witnessed a backlash against cars, which had earlier been seen as a miraculous answer to the affliction of horse-drawn vehicles—which filled the streets with noise and dung, and caused congestion and accidents. And the blight of industrialisation was decried in the 19th century by Luddites,

Romantics and socialists, who worried (with good reason) about the displacement of skilled artisans, the despoiling of the countryside and the suffering of factory hands toiling in smoke-belching mills.

Stand back, and in each of these historical cases disappointment arose from a mix of unrealised hopes and unforeseen consequences. Technology unleashes the forces of creative destruction, so it is only natural that it leads to anxiety; for any given technology its drawbacks sometimes seem to outweigh its benefits. When this happens with several technologies at once, as today, the result is a wider sense of techno-pessimism.

However, that pessimism can be overcome. Too often people focus on the drawbacks of a new technology while taking its benefits for granted. Worries about screen time should be weighed against the much

more substantial benefits of ubiquitous communication and the instant access to information and entertainment that smartphones make possible. A further danger is that Luddite efforts to avoid the short-term costs associated with a new technology will end up denying access to its long-term benefits—something Carl Benedikt Frey, an Oxford academic, calls a "technology trap". Fears that robots will steal people's jobs may prompt politicians to tax them, for example, to discourage their use. Yet in the long run countries that wish to maintain their standard of living as their workforce ages and shrinks will need more robots, not fewer.

That points to another lesson, which is that the remedy to technology-related problems very often involves more technology. Airbags and other improvements in safety features, for example, mean that in America

deaths in car accidents per billion miles travelled have fallen from around 240 in the 1920s to around 12 today. AI is being applied as part of the effort to stem the flow of extremist material on social media. The ultimate example is climate change. It is hard to imagine any solution that does not depend in part on innovations in clean energy, carbon capture and energy storage.

The most important lesson is about technology itself. Any powerful technology can be used for good or ill. The internet spreads understanding, but it is also where videos of people being beheaded go viral. Biotechnology can raise crop yields and cure diseases—but it could equally lead to deadly weapons.

Technology itself has no agency: it is the choices people make about it that shape the world. Thus the techlash is a necessary step in the adoption of important new technologies. At its best, it helps frame how society comes to terms with innovations and imposes rules and policies that limit their destructive potential (seat belts, catalytic converters and traffic regulations), accommodate change (universal schooling as a response to industrialisation) or strike a trade-off (between the convenience of ride-

hailing and the protection of gig-workers). Healthy scepticism means that these questions are settled by a broad debate, not by a coterie of technologists.

Fire up the moral engine

Perhaps the real source of anxiety is not technology itself, but growing doubts about the ability of societies to hold this debate, and come up with good answers. In that sense, techno-pessimism is a symptom of political pessimism. Yet there is something perversely reassuring about this: a gloomy debate is much better than no debate at all. And history still argues, on the whole, for optimism. The technological transformation since the Industrial Revolution has helped curb ancient evils, from child mortality to hunger and ignorance. Yes, the planet is warming and antibiotic resistance is spreading. But the solution to such problems calls for the deployment of more technology, not less. So as the decade turns, put aside the gloom for a moment. To be alive in the tech-obsessed 2020s is to be among the luckiest people who have ever lived.

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Perhaps the real source of anxiety is not technology itself, but growing doubts about the ability of societies to hold this debate, and come up with good answers. In that sense, techno-pessimism is a symptom of political pessimism

MAKING UP IS HARD TO DO

The Gulf states reconsider their feud with Qatar

The threat of Iran is leading to some newfound realism

WALKING ONTO a football pitch hardly seems an act of high diplomacy. But two and a half years into the embargo of Qatar by three Gulf neighbours—Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)—it may count as progress. The three had planned to boycott the annual Gulf Cup because it was being held in Doha, the capital of Qatar. In November, though, they changed their minds, and on December 2nd the Emiratis took the field against the Qataris. The Emiratis lost 4-2. Adding insult to injury, the defeat came on their national day, which marks the unification of several emirates into the UAE. Still, the match ended amicably enough, a far cry from an Asian Cup tilt in January, when the victorious Qatari squad was pelted with shoes and bottles by the crowd in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the UAE.

The embargo, imposed in June 2017, has divided families, diverted planes and caused a deep rift in the six-member Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC). Qatar refuses to comply with a list of demands from the Saudi-led

camp, such as cutting ties with Islamist groups and closing *Al Jazeera*, a satellite news channel. But there are growing signs that some of the blockading states want to end the feud anyway. Apart from the football diplomacy, Saudi Arabia and Qatar have held quiet talks about a resolution. On December 10th Qatar's prime minister flew to Saudi Arabia for a GCC summit, the emirate's highest-level representation in two years. No one expected it to produce a deal, but Qatar's foreign minister said it broke a long "stalemate".

To understand why, look across the Gulf to another intractable conflict, the one between Iran and its Arab neighbours. Their long cold war has escalated into overt hostilities. President Donald Trump's economic sanctions, meant to bludgeon Iran into softening its regional policies, have instead made it more belligerent. The feud with Qatar seems more and more a needless distraction, one that has forced the Qataris to deepen their political and economic ties with Iran. There is no newfound love between Qatar

and its Gulf neighbours, but there is a newfound realism.

A turning-point came on September 14th, when missiles rained down on two oil facilities in Saudi Arabia's eastern desert. Half of the country's oil output — 5% of the world's total — was briefly knocked offline. America and Saudi Arabia saw Iran's hand behind the attack (though a United Nations panel said in December that it found no definitive link). Yet it passed without an overt American response.

In public, Saudi officials insist they still trust their longtime friend. "We don't see this concept of America as receding. Quite the contrary," says Adel al-Jubeir, the minister of state for foreign affairs. America did deploy an additional 3,000 troops to Saudi Arabia after the attack. Whether Mr Trump would use them to defend the kingdom is another matter. Privately, Saudi officials fret that the American security umbrella seems full of holes. Worried that further attacks might spoil the initial public offering of Saudi

US President Donald Trump and Secretary of State Rex W. Tillerson in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in May. *The New York Times*

Aramco, the state oil giant, they began talking to Iran through intermediaries this autumn. They are also trying to wind down a war in Yemen against Iranian-backed Houthis rebels that has cost the kingdom dearly and left Yemen even less stable than before.

If the Gulf states feel vulnerable, they believe Iran feels the same way. A rise in fuel prices triggered a week of fierce nationwide protests in November. Hundreds of people were killed in the ensuing crackdown, the bloodiest unrest since the birth of the Islamic Republic in 1979. Abroad, Iran looks over-

stretched. The protests sweeping across Iraq and Lebanon are not, as hopeful American and Saudi officials insist, simply a revolt against Iranian influence. Citizens of both countries have a long list of grievances. But they have directed some of their anger at Iran's closest regional allies. Iraqi protesters want an end to Iran's meddling in their politics. Many Lebanese are bitterly disappointed in Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Hizbullah, the Iranian-backed militia and political party, who has smeared protesters as foreign-funded agents.

Sometimes it's personal

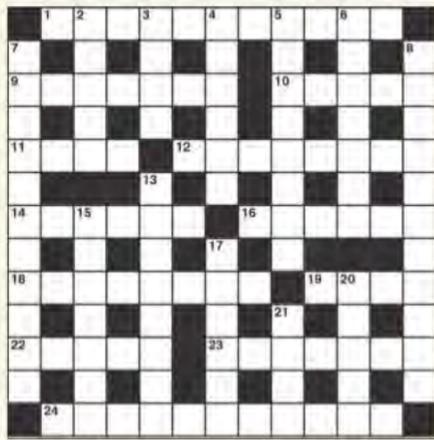
Talking is one thing; making deals is another. For a start, the Gulf states are not a monolith. Saudi Arabia may be willing to forgive Qatar its transgressions. The UAE is less keen to: it views political Islamists (whom Qatar supported for years) as a grave threat. The Emiratis insist there is no daylight between them and the Saudis. Anwar Gargash, the minister of state for foreign affairs, says any talk to the contrary is Qatari disinformation meant to "split the ranks". Again, though, officials take a different tone in private. Diplomats also point to personal animus between the leaders of Qatar and the UAE.

Hopes for a deal with Iran are even more fanciful. Faced with dissent at home, the Iranians are likely to see any concessions abroad as a show of weakness. Qassem Suleimani, the architect of Iran's regional policy, spent weeks in Iraq this autumn helping to co-ordinate a ruthless crackdown on protesters. Nor is Mr Trump likely to ease his "maximum pressure" campaign, despite a prisoner swap between the two countries in December. "See, we can make a deal together," Mr Trump tweeted afterwards. Then his administration imposed sanctions on Iran's largest shipping company and airline.

The next year or so could bring a change of leaders in America and, perhaps, Saudi Arabia. The Iranian president, Hassan Rouhani, will be a lame duck in his final full year in power. Football matches and furtive messages are a start. But it will probably take deeper political changes to break the Gulf's years-old impasses.

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CROSSWORD 3995



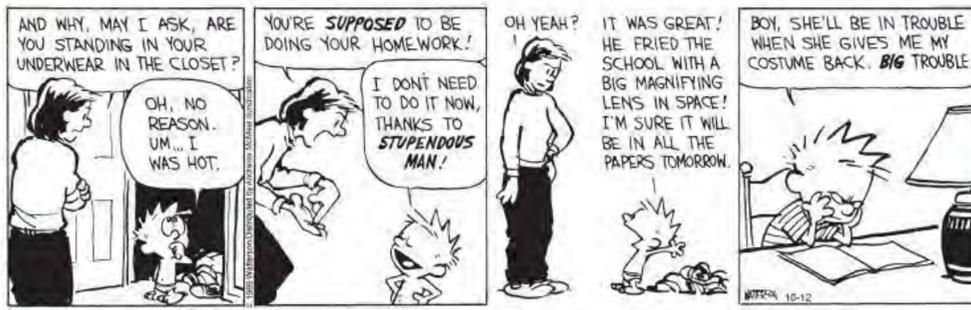
- ACROSS**
- Such a person doesn't look so well at a distance (11)
 - Incorrectly cleaned, gets entangled (7)
 - Unusual Maori girl's name (5)
 - A misshapen nose ages (4)
 - Legislation that went against the grain (4,4)
 - Dislike having to change a hotel (6)
 - Mass of people moving about in the road in the morning (6)
 - Vessels that shoot over the waves (8)
 - The capital in old Czechoslovakia (4)
 - Rapid writer (5)
 - The very best time for feathers (7)
 - Printers may be kind to crossword compilers (11)
- DOWN**
- A somewhat well-endowed lady (5)
 - Paddy or Eric may produce it (4)
 - People enter for this sort of sport (6)
 - The kindness of people (8)
 - Arab territory that makes me turn cross (7)
 - Got lineages from him? Yes! (11)
 - The price of freedom, perhaps (6,5)
 - Choke - or another carburettor control (8)
 - Something to keep aunty in change! (7)
 - Main way to fasten sheets together (6)
 - Most airlines provide this flight (5)
 - An act of duplicity? (4)

Solutions Crossword 3994: Across: 1 Strait, 4 Asperity, 9 On call, 10 Tomorrow, 12 Thug, 13 Gate, 14 Hare, 17 Visibly moved, 20 Colour scheme, 23 Acad, 24 Spies, 25 Babe, 28 Singlets, 29 Ghetto, 30 Flapole, 31 Trades. Down: 1 Sportive, 2 Recourse, 3 Idle, 5 Short journey, 6 Eros, 7 Inroad, 8 Yarned, 11 Army hospital, 15 Abbot, 16 Teach, 18 Departed, 19 Generous, 21 Massif, 22 Vienna, 26 Clap, 27 Char.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given clue.

Better than the strength of men and horses is our ___ - Xenophanes (6)

RVZIO AESSSM

AALDS AESTYW

SOLUTION: RVZIO - VIZOR, SALAD, MASSES, SWEATY. Answer: Better than the strength of men and horses is our sweat.

Difficulty Level 2s
Instructions: To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level
1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

SUDOKU 4068

4	3		5					
9			7	2				
7	9						3	
4	2							
2	6	7	9	8	5			
			8	7				
1			2	9				
	4	1			8			
	8	7		4				

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4067

8	9	2	1	6	3	7	4	5
3	4	5	8	2	7	1	9	6
1	7	6	4	5	9	8	2	3
7	5	3	9	1	2	6	8	4
2	6	4	5	7	8	3	1	9
9	1	8	6	3	4	5	7	2
5	3	9	7	4	1	2	6	8
6	8	1	2	9	5	4	3	7
4	2	7	3	8	6	9	5	1

DAY TODAY BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
Two lively planets, Mercury and Venus, are encouraging your best personal attributes. But a dilemma is sharpened: should you or should you not bare your soul to the world? If you find the answer to this or any other questions, then you're a very unusual person indeed.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)
It's not your professional skills which shine today, but personal gifts. You do have the perfect opportunity to grasp the reins at work, but it's partly due to your underrated considerate and compassionate qualities. Why not let other people know that you really do care?

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)
Venus, your planetary ruler is forming some easy relationships, but also some difficult ones. At the heart of this paradox lie a vital contradiction and a complicated relationship. I think you'll have the last laugh in all personal disputes, no matter how complex they are.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)
After so much irritation and mischief-making by partners and family members, you probably expect less from other people than you ought to. It may be another few days at least before you can say your piece and redress the balance. There's no hurry, so don't rush it unduly.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
A good general never underestimates his, or her, enemy. So please do not make the mistake of imagining that other people are talking nonsense, otherwise you will, sooner or later, fall flat on your face. Besides, questions which have been running round and round in your mind are unlikely to be resolved just yet.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)
It now seems that you are anxious to change your lifestyle, though I should think that any adjustments will be relatively minor. It's almost just a question of shifting the furniture and replacing a few heirlooms. It's amazing how a sufficient number of small improvements add up to a major transformation.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
I have two good forecasts today. First, you will overcome all obstacles. Second, there should be no new obstacles in any case. But there's another dimension, one related to that nebulous planet, Neptune. This suggests that you might not notice what's staring you in the face.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)
You have become aware that you cannot always be the giver. Sometimes you must be the one who takes. Yet today you may have to grin and bear it as other people once again seem to have the advantage. Wait until tomorrow. And ignore those people who tell you that 'tomorrow never comes'.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)
If at all possible, delay the launch of a major venture until you are absolutely ready. This doesn't mean that you shouldn't continue with preparations. Quite the contrary: there is much to be done if you are to ensure your eventual success. Just don't box yourself in.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
It's a busy day in a rather trivial, routine sense, and quite an emotional one as well, but that's not what's really significant. Far more important is the necessity to realise that whether you stand or fall is now entirely due to you. That knowledge should give you the incentive you need to pull through.

VIRO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)
I'd like to look at your long-term cycles for a moment and point out that within nine months you will be free from much that you currently find so restricting or aggravating. Needless to say, patience is required. And then there's the little matter of the fact that people you live with seem to be stuck in the past. Don't worry: it will pass.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
Cruise along in the realisation that you really are rather smart. It's not often that other people take notice of your ideas, perhaps because you're so far ahead of the times. But for the next few weeks they'll be listening, so make the most of it.

MH LANSDOWNE

REGISTRATION OF VENDORS FOR SUPPLY OF DRUGS, CONSUMABLE AND CRITICAL CARE EQUIPMENT TO MILITARY HOSPITAL LANSDOWNE FOR THE YEAR 2020-21

Applications for registration of vendors for supply of drugs, consumable and critical care equipment to Military Hospital Lansdowne for the year 2020-21 are invited from interested firms with valid drug license for the period and other requisite documents as given in the application form. Application forms are available from the office of Administrative Officer in MH Lansdowne between 09 hrs to 1300 hrs on 25 Dec 2019 to 31 Dec 2019. Last date of submission of completed application forms accompanied by requisite documents is 25 Jan 2020 (1200 Hrs).

Commanding Officer MH Lansdowne

GOVT DOON MEDICAL COLLEGE

DEHRAKHAS, PATEL NAGAR, DEHRADUN, UTTARAKHAND
TEL: 0135-2726020, Fax No.: 0135-2726020, 2726021.
Email: doonmedicalcollege@gmail.com, Website: www.doonmedical.com

TENDER INFORMATION

Online Bids, are invited for procurement of equipment for Blood Bank Department of Doon Medical College, Hospital, Dehradun. The detailed information can be seen at <http://uktenders.gov.in>. The tender documents are available for downloading from 23.12.2019 at 2:00 P.M onwards.

Principal, Govt. Doon Medical College Dehradun.

HSSC (INDIA) LIMITED

(A Subsidiary of NBCC (India) Limited)
(A GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ENTERPRISE)
E-6A, Sector-01, Noida-201301

Tender Enquiry No.: HSSC/AIIMS-Raebareilly Hospital/3/2019 Dated: 23.12.2019

Global Notice Inviting e-Tender

Online Bids are invited by HSSC (India) Limited on behalf of AIIMS, Raebareilly, U.P. from eligible bidders who fulfill qualification criteria as stipulated for the supply, installation, testing & commissioning of Medical Equipment for Various Departments for All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Raebareilly.

Medical Equipment for Anaesthesia, Cardiology, Dentistry, Nephrology Departments.

Tender document is available online from 24.12.2019 and the last date submission of bids is 22.01.2020

Detailed NIT will be available on e-tender portal <http://www.tenderwizard.com/HSSC>. HSSC website www.hsscctd.co.in and CPP Portal. Corresponding to this publication, if any, would appear only on said websites and not be published.

CGM (Projects), HSSC (India) Ltd.

The Brihanmumbai Electric Supply & Transport Undertaking

(Of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation)

TENDER NOTICE

HIRING OF 140 SINGLE DECKER AC AND 200 MIDI AC ELECTRIC BUSES UNDER FAME - II.

FOR MORE DETAILS KINDLY REFER WEBSITE <https://mahatenders.gov.in>.

PRO/AAM(M)/125/2019 General Manager

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER NATIONAL HIGHWAYS, BLOCK-D, NIRMAN BHAWAN, NIGAM VIHAR, SHIMLA-171002

Notice Inviting bid

No. PW-CE-NH-CTR-Tender Notice/Consultancy/2019- Dated: 19.12.2019

- Consultancy services for carrying out Feasibility study and detailed project Report of Jalori Pass Tunnel (4.200 Km.) including approaches on Sainj (0.00)-Luhri-Aut (97.00) Road NH-305 from Km. 46/080 to Km. (57.00) in the State of Himachal Pradesh.
- The Consultancy Bid price: Rs 6.05 crore (including GST)
- Proposals are hereby invited from eligible Consultancy services for carrying out Feasibility study and detailed project Report of Jalori Pass Tunnel (4.200 Km.) including approaches on Sainj (0.00)-Luhri-Aut (97.00) Road NH-305 from Km. 46/080 to Km. (57.00) in the State of Himachal Pradesh. The Letter of Invitation (LOI) and Terms of Reference (ToR) including Request for Proposal (RFP) is available online on e-tender portal of MORT&H <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app> Cost of the Document in the form of a Non-refundable document fee of Rs. 5,000/- (Rupees Five Thousand only) in the form of Demand Draft favouring 'Regional Pay and Account Officer, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Chandigarh' must be furnished in a separate envelope while submitting the proposal.
- The RFP have also been uploaded on "INFRACON" (www.infracon.nic.in). As such before submitting the proposal the Consultant shall mandatorily register and enlist themselves (the firm and all key personnel), on the MoRTH portal "INFRACON" and furnish registration details along with its RFP.
- All the bidders registered on Infracon shall form a Team on Infracon and which would be assigned unique Infracon Team ID. Bidders while submitting the proposal shall quote the Infracon Team ID.
- Bid must be submitted online at e-tender portal of MORT&H <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app> or before 28.01.2020. (upto 11.00 hrs IST)
- The following schedule is to be followed for this assignment:
 - Deadline for downloading of bid: 28.01.2020 (11.00 hrs).
 - Last date for submission of queries: 07.01.2020
 - Pre bid meeting in office of the Chief Engineer (NH), HP PWD, Shimla-2 : 08.01.2020 (11.30 hrs).
 - Deadline for Submission of bids: 28.01.2020 (11.00 hrs).
 - Opening of technical bids: 29.01.2020 (11.30 hrs).

Officer In-charge For and on Behalf of Governor of HP Chief Engineer, National Highway, BLOCK-D, NIRMAN BHAWAN, NIGAM VIHAR, HP.PWD., Shimla 171002.
Phone/FAX NO. 0177- 2629416
e-mail: ce-nh-hp@nic.in, romorthshimla@gmail.com
3680/H.P.

FRESH & HEALTHY ENTERPRISES LTD.

(A Wholly owned Subsidiary of Container Corporation of India Ltd., A Government of India Enterprise under Ministry of Railway)
CA store - HSIDCO Industrial Estate, RAIL DIST. SONPAT, Haryana. India-131029
Ph. +919860932800, 8560391720 Fax: +91130-23666987

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

FHEL invites E-Tender in Two packets system of tendering for the following work:-

Tender No.	FHEL/EP/RAI/Chiller & Freezer/Elect & Refrig/2019
Name of Work	Construction of Deep freezer & Chiller facilities (Including Electrical, Refrigeration, Fire Fighting, PUF insulation work but Excluding civil work) at FHEL's Agri Logistic Centre, Rai, Sonapat (Haryana)
Estimated Cost	Rs.2083.89 lakhs
Completion Period	12 (Twelve) Months
Earnest Money Deposit	Rs.11,91,945/- (through e-payment).
Cost of Tender Document (Non-refundable)	Rs. 1000/- (inclusive all taxes & duties) through e-payment.
Tender Processing Fee (Non-refundable)	Rs.5,310/- (inclusive all taxes & duties through e-payment).
Date of sale of Tender (online)	23.12.2019 (11.00hrs) to 16.01.2020 (upto 17.00 hrs)
Date & Time of submission of Tender.	17.01.2020 upto 17.00 hrs
Date & Time of Opening of Tender	20.01.2020 at 11:30 hrs.

For financial eligibility criteria, experience with respect to similar nature of work, etc. please refer to detailed tender notice available on website www.concorindia.com, but the complete tender document can be downloaded from website www.tenderwizard.com/FHEL only. Further, Corresponding/Advertisement to this Tender, if any, will be published on website www.concorindia.com, www.tenderwizard.com/FHEL and Central Procurement Portal (CPP) only. Newspaper press advertisement shall not be issued for the same.

CEO / FHEL
Phone No.: 011-41673093-96

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tender offers are invited for design, supply, installation, hooking up with present system, commissioning, user training and trial run of all equipments and centralized automation system at our Gokul Dairy premises on turn key basis. Details of our requirements, scope of contract, details of equipments and Term-Conditions of this E - Tender are available on our website www.gokulmilk.coop and <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/eprocure/mstc>. Earnest Money Deposit for this Tender is **Rs.15,00,000/-** (Rs. Fifteen lacs only). E - Tender offer is to be submitted on or before **15.00 hrs. of 07/01/2020**. Right to accept or reject any of all Tender without assigning any reason is reserved.

Managing Director
Kolhapur Zilla Sah. Dudh Utp. Sangh Ltd., Kop.
Plot No.B-1, MIDC Gokul Shigaon, Kolhapur - 416 234

ANDHRA PRADESH STATE CIVIL SUPPLIES CORPORATION LIMITED

HEAD OFFICE:10-152/1,SRISAI TOWERS, BANDAR ROAD KANURU, VIJAYAWADA-520007.
Lr.No.PDS.3/32/PU (PPP)/2019 DATED: 22.12.2019

TENDER NOTICE FOR EMPANELMENT OF MANUFACTURERS FOR SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF PACKING MACHINES

APSCSCL desires to empanel the Manufacturers of Packing Machines for supply and Installation of Packing Units at the designated locations to be utilized for packing of Rice for onward distribution under Public Distribution System. Applications are invited from all over India.

For details, please visit www.apscsc.gov.in and www.apcprocurement.gov.in (or) contact on 08645-246370/71/72/73/74, 7702003515. Last date for receiving applications along with EMD would be **13th January 2020, 5.00 pm**. The EMD shall be transferred through Net Banking/NEFT/Direct Debit Facility through Debit or Credit Card/ RTGS through system generated challan.

The date of online reverse auction through <https://konugolu.ap.gov.in> platform will be on **20.01.2020 from 11.00am onwards**.

Sd/- A.SURYA KUMARI, VC & Managing Director

Petronet LNG Limited

NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT) FOR SELECTION OF CONTRACTOR FOR MENTIONED SERVICES AT PETRONET LNG LIMITED, DAHEJ

Petronet LNG Limited (PLL) invites bids from experienced and financially sound contractors for following services at Petronet LNG Ltd., Dahej (Gujarat).

- Design, Fabrication, Supply, Testing & Installation of Davit Arm of 0.5 Ton SWL at port Craft Jetty

Interested parties are requested to visit our website www.petronetng.com for detailed eligibility criteria along with other necessary details for issuance of Tender document.

Note: PLL reserves the right not to issue the tender document and / or accept or reject any or all the bids at any stage of the process and/or modify the process without assigning any reasons on its sole discretion. No separate notification shall be issued in press. Bidders are requested to visit the website regularly to keep themselves updated.

Deputy General Manager (C&P)
PETRONET LNG LIMITED
GIDC Industrial Estate, Plot No. 7/A, Dahej, Taluka: Vagra, Distt. Bharuch 392130, Dahej, Gujarat.
Tel NO. 02641-670235/233/232/231
E-mail id: materials@petronetng.com

H.P. POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED

(A State Government Undertaking)
HIMFED BHAWAN, PANJARI, SHIMLA-5
Ph:-0177-2633784, FAX:-0177-2832384 Web: www.hpptcl.com
CIN: U40101 HP2008SGC030950

Invitation for Bids (International Competitive Bidding)

Loan No. : 3733- IND: Himachal Pradesh Clean Energy Transmission Investment Program - Tranche - 3
Contract No. : 42 - JCC/ADB/HPPTCL/JOINT CONTROL CENTRES.

Deadline for Bids : 11.02.2020

- India has applied for a loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) towards the cost of Himachal Pradesh Clean Energy Transmission Investment Program - Tranche - 3 and it is intended that part of this loan will be used for payments under the contract named above. Bidding is open to Bidders from eligible source countries of ADB.
- The HP Power Transmission Corporation Ltd. (HPPTCL) now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for: "Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Joint Control Centre (Main and Back Up) for remote operation and control of various substations of HPPTCL on Turnkey Basis (Complete Package)".
Completion Period: 540 Days.
- International Competitive Bidding** will be conducted in accordance with ADB's Single - Stage - Two - Envelope Bidding Procedure and is open to all Bidders from eligible source countries of ADB.
- To obtain further information and inspect the Bidding Document, Bidders should contact the Deputy General Manager (Contracts) at the following address during working days starting from **30.12.2019**:
Deputy General Manager (Contracts)
HP Power Transmission Corporation Limited (HPPTCL), Himfed Bhawan, Panjari, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh, India - 171005
Tel. No.: +91-0177-2633784, Fax No.: +91-177-2832384
Email: dgmcontracts@hpptcl.in Website: www.hpptcl.com
- The Bidding Documents can be purchased from the above address on all working days from **30.12.2019 to 10.02.2020**.
- To purchase the Bidding Document, eligible bidders should: Pay a non - refundable fee of INR **11,800** only (INR Eleven Thousand Eight Hundred Only) or US \$ **165** (US Dollar One Hundred sixty five only) through demand draft in favour of Managing Director, HP Power Transmission Corporation Limited payable at Shimla (H. P.).
The Bidding Documents will be sent via courier for an additional fee of INR 1,000 (INR One Thousand Only) for domestic delivery and US\$ 100 (US Dollar One Hundred only) for overseas delivery. **No liability will be accepted for loss or late delivery of the Bidding Document.**
To check Bidder's Qualifying Requirement and Scope of Work visit Website: www.hpptcl.com
- A pre - bid conference will be held on **21-01-2020 at 11.00 Hrs.** at above address.
- Bidders must deliver their bids to the address above on or before **15:00 hours, on 11-02-2020** together with a Bid Security as indicated in the Bidding Documents.
- Bids will be opened at 15:30 hours on **11-02-2020** in the presence of Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address above.
- The HPPTCL will not be responsible for costs or expenses incurred by Bidders in connection with the delivery or preparation of bids.

Deputy General Manager (Contracts)

19 TALK

ART, MUSIC, STYLE, FOOD



WORDS WORTH

American singer-songwriter Lana Del Rey will release a spoken word album on January 4. It will coincide with the release of her book of poetry, *Violet Bent Backwards Over the Grass*, if it is hand bound in time.

WEEK AHEAD



Curtain Call

THE WEEK-LONG Panna Bharat Ram Theatre Festival has begun that will stage works by renowned playwrights and directors. On December 23, Mahesh Dattani's play *Tara* will be staged. Kaushik Bose's psychological thriller *Compunction*, which explores the human psyche of guilt and the lack of it, will be performed on December 25, and December 28 will see Mahmood Farooqui's *Dastan-e-Raag Darbari* (pictured), an adaptation of Shrilal Shukla's novel. At Shri Ram Centre. Tickets on [bookmyshow](http://bookmyshow.com).



Festive Feasting

RING IN the festive season with Jolly Good Fellows, a special menu inspired by dishes made in Anglo-Indian homes. There's Maka Pao De, bread and butter with a Portuguese twist, and Panko Fried Crepes, filled with chicken mince, paired with Panthra's and Mother-In-Law's Chutney. Or order some Bombils Men, Maharashtrian cuisine-inspired, green masala marinated, semolina-coated and pan-seared Bombay duck. Till January 5, at Monkey Bar, Vasant Kunj.



One into Two

AS PART of the 'Year of Culture Qatar-India 2019', Qatar Museums presents the photography exhibition, "Where Cultures Meet: A Photographic Encounter Between Qatar and India", which juxtaposes the work of Qatari photographers with that of Indian photographers. Through themes such as architecture, landscape, portraits and street life, the exhibition discovers similarities and differences between the cultures. At The Centre Atrium, India Habitat Centre.



MAYA KRISHNA RAO

On a daily basis, we are getting proof that artistes are having to tell themselves that, whether they like it or not, they are a part of a larger community that is being affected by very dangerous laws that the government has passed. The recent events at Serendipity Arts Festival in Goa, where artistes were arrested and certain works taken off from an exhibition, proves the same. We artistes have to find very, very inventive ways of expressing the deepest things that lie in people's hearts beautifully through our artforms. I think, sometimes the artiste is not going to have the luxury of panning, scripting or rehearsing, but has to respond. What we consider safe artistic spaces are no longer safe for us and artistes may be picked up and taken to the lock-up. We will still look to people who support. We will continue to make works that we hope arts spaces will welcome because it is about keeping up a larger debate.

2020

LOOKING AHEAD

Never Forget

Theatre practitioners plunge into personal loss and political mayhem to create stories on stage for 2020



(Clockwise from above) Gowri Ramnarayan's *What She Said*; Maya Krishna Rao in *Loose Woman* Golam Ashraf; Neelam Man Singh Chowdhry's *Gumm Hai*; Deepan Sivaraman's *Ubu Roi* S Thyagarajan

DIPANITA NATH



NEELAM MAN SINGH CHOWDHRY

Whatever you do is influenced by the winds that are blowing around you, emotionally and politically. I have recently done a play, *Gumm Hai*, which I am bringing to the Bharat Rang Mahotsav, the annual theatre festival of the National School of Drama in Delhi in February 2020. It emerged from my own loss of my husband 10 months ago, but people who watched it started relating it to Kashmir. I am not an activist but my means of expression is theatre. When I feel that I cannot contain myself, where does it come out? It comes out on stage. *Gumm Hai* is about loss and grief and is adapted from *The Seven Stages of Grieving*, a performance text by Wesley Enoch and Deborah Mailman, which talks about the history of the aboriginals. But people saw their own stories in it.

GOWRI RAMNARAYAN

What She Said, a production that highlights six voices from the Ramayana premiered last week and will be our focus in 2020. Who are the women whose stories we don't hear much of? In case of Urmila, we have one line in the epic. Shanta, Rama's sister, we have not even heard of. She was given away in adoption by Dasaratha. The other women are Manthra, Mandodari and the wife of Bali, Tara. The play is largely monologues, by three actors, but very physical as well, with other women playing cameos in each.

DEEPAN SIVARAMAN

The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui, a play by Bertolt Brecht, was a response to Adolf Hitler's fascist regime taking control of the state machinery. I am looking forward to directing this piece. *The Resistible Rise of*



Arturo Ui is about how crony capitalist and political mafia take over the country and nobody else has a say. They are a huge mafia, a killing gang. In 2011, I did a show of *Ubu Roi*, a revolutionary play by Alfred Jarry, and I feel the need to reproduce it again. I feel it has become an important work again in a new context.

SUNIL SHANBAG

If the events of 2019 are anything to go by, I believe 2020 is going to be a year of great significance in our history. Our immediate future is at stake and I would really like my work to reflect some of the questions that confront us as a society. I have a special interest in history and I hope to be part of a project that looks at the appropriation of people's history, folk culture, and making visible voices that speak of reason and an equal society.

MG JYOTISH

Technology is going to redefine every aspect of our lives. We are on the verge of a revolution, where technology will redefine human history itself, with Artificial Intelligence doing things better than human beings and without any error. But I think the only possibility or skill that humans can do better is fiction-making. Technology, at a conscious level, is zero. I am seriously thinking of a reality show-kind of play that fuses fiction and feature actors with non-actors as participants.

ON THE LOOSE



LEHER KALA

5-Minute Rule

The future of work is bleak

MAHABIR GILL, an inventor of Indian origin has patented StandardToilet, a uniquely designed seat, sloped at a 13 degree angle, that will make it uncomfortable for anyone to sit on it for longer than five minutes. According to a piece that appeared in *HuffPost*, Gill's motivation seems to have been to improve employee productivity by reducing lengthy bathroom breaks. Though, there was an unconvincing quote on how this sliding seat may improve posture. Not surprisingly, within the UK where it was developed, many institutions have already expressed interest in StandardToilet.

We can safely presume companies care less about the health of our spinal cords and more about bottom lines. If that means forcing employees to manically rush through their business with an unscrupulous invention, well, that's not their problem. There are places (few and far between) like an airplane, where StandardToilet will be more than welcome. 15,000 feet up in the air, it's only fair that people be time considerate to their fellow passengers.

But alas, on the ground, StandardToilet feels brutally dehumanising, a warning almost, that there robots are lurking dangerously close, and they don't waste any time in the loo at all. The fear of technology's inexorable march finishing job opportunities will eventually leave people no choice but to agree, humiliatingly, to have their bodily functions monitored at work. Maybe next, somebody will design a super absorbent diaper, the kinds astronauts wear when they go on moonwalks, which will remove the need for an office loo itself. Products like these make one almost long for something akin to a Luddite revolt, and for the world to break out into anti-tech riots.

This brilliant and bizarre toilet invention, somehow, brings to mind the Pink Floyd chant *We Don't Need No Education*. In the video of this deeply cynical track, the child protagonist suffers the rigours of a monotonous schooling system, where kids are punished for creativity. The song shows a choir of children walking rigidly in line — cogs in wheels — before turning into identical sausages. Like no free thinkers, visionaries or entrepreneurs can emerge out a system like this, analysing employee productivity down to a pee break, may be similarly counter productive. Anyone with office experience knows people spend time talking, listening, often about stuff related to work, and sometimes not. There are coffee breaks, samosa breaks, lunch breaks and smoking breaks because we're not robots. Workplace chatter is part of the process. In fact, many forward thinking start-ups have rejected goal-oriented targets and have days set aside, where employees are encouraged only to think. All the research suggests, that's when the big ideas come.

Of course, it's not the people in management positions who need to worry that their bathroom breaks may be scrutinised down to seconds. It's the low paid and precarious factory worker packing cardboard boxes for the likes of Amazon, or the household domestic, who will passively slide off StandardToilet in five minutes, because between automation and off shoring, there are not a whole lot of job options left. It is worth reflecting on if citizen dissent whether in Paris — where French activists just cut electricity to 1,00,000 homes to protest against the raising of the retirement age — or in Hong Kong or New Delhi, where students are rallying against the Citizen (Amendment) Act, is more than just political critiquing.

It's also an irrational cry for help against a bleak future, of a struggling planet and a dystopic work culture, that makes the upcoming new decade feel particularly hard. StandardToilet seems like an appropriate emblem of this like-it-or-not realism, raising more depressing questions on the virtues of apparent progress.

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It's also an irrational cry for help against a bleak future, and a dystopic work culture, that makes the upcoming new decade feel particularly hard

The Universe Within

Designer JJ Valaya unveils the photographer in him yet again with his latest solo 'Lalaari', shaped by his curiosity in people

PALLAVI CHATTOPADHYAY

POPULAR FOR her muscular body, Bani Judge, a fitness model, TV presenter and former *Roadies* contestant, stands proud and tall in noted designer JJ Valaya's photographs. Having once harboured a dream to photograph 100 most charismatic people in the world, Valaya captures her dressed in an attire she has rarely been seen in — a sari — as she holds a weight training bar without any bars. Her arms are filled with a sea of rose tattoos. Then there is a close-up of her with a tiny ball piercing through her lower lip. Holding bestselling author Lang Leav's book *The Universe of Us*, with the image of a little girl on the cover, this frame exudes a captivating energy. Many similar portraits breathe life into Valaya's latest exhibition "Lalaari: Conversations with the Universe", represented by Threshold gallery, at Vis a Vis gallery in Chhattarpur, New Delhi.

"The book is symbolic, especially the girl's image, because Bani had a lot of stories from childhood and I saw this little girl in her. That little girl saw and experienced many things," says Valaya. The show features his master tailor of 27 years and two of his house helps, one lending a warm smile and the other a rather unwelcome sceptical look. Valaya calls his latest offering a study of

people. "This show is an interpretation of certain people, not selected on any parameters but purely by how I felt in terms of their energies. It's about how I see them and how the world sees them."

Guinness World Record holders and twins Tashi and Nungshi Malik from Dehradun, who have touched the tallest mountains of the seven continents (Seven Summits) and were the first twins to scale Mt Everest. They stand with an empty frame devoid of any certificate chronicling their climb in one photograph. Valaya leaves the viewer with an interesting question: "Do they need more certificates? Maybe not. They already have had their thrill of fun."

Noelle Kadar, who has served as the International Director for the India Art Fair, when asked by Valaya about that one superpower she wish she had, answered, "I would love to be able to heal". Her hand, therefore, rests as if she were showering her blessings in one of the frames.

An Iranian lady, who Valaya met through his nephew, stands as the perfect representation of a vagabond and a nomad. She poses confidently, in her semi-naked body replete with tattoos and piercings that run through her gums and lips. Valaya, founder member of Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI), says, "I have never imagined a Muslim woman from Iran being so rebellious."

There's the always fashionably dressed London-based art historian Amin Jaffer, who has chaired prestigious collections at museums across the world, including a stint as a curator for Victoria and Albert Museum. In this show, he sits on a bed of cushions, looking resplendent in Mughal-style jewellery on his head. It's an instant reminder of Aladdin happily galloping around the city's blue skies in his flying carpet. Valaya dresses his subjects as royals for a reason: "All my subjects are dressed as royals so that everybody feels exotic. It is very important that one feels good about themselves, as it reflects in our relationships and equation with others. Self-doubt and insecurity are the basis of anything negative that comes about in our life."

Valaya chose the show's title as 'Lalaari', a Punjabi word for dyer. He says, "A dyer gets a mere white cloth, and he dyes it into yellow, green, blue, or even jet black. The colours you add to life, is what your life will become." The striking image of Delhi-born Aviva Baig, a football enthusiast, who has travelled the country while playing at national level, holds a football under her feet as she poses in the six-yard traditional Indian attire. "This girl is tiny and she plays football. When trying to portray her, I imagined her lifting her sari to play the ball. It is a very contradictory sort of image." Valaya shows his love for textiles by surrounding Baig's portrait with antique jamawar textile, interspersed with unicorns drawn on embroidered linen. "All of us have this parallel existence. We live in our dreams to a large



(Far left) JJ Valaya; his portraits that meld dreams and reality



extent," Valaya says.

Son of an army brigadier, Valaya calls himself a 'fauji kid', who had a penchant for painting and drawing as a child. After finishing BCom (Hons) from Panjab University, and doing a year-and-half of chartered accountancy, the creative spirit in him revolted. In 1988, his uncle introduced him to the country's first fashion institute, National Institute of Fashion Technology, in Delhi. "It was love at first sight and that's how it all began," he says.

The exhibition is at Vis a Vis gallery, 2, North Dr, Block C, Westend DLF Chhattarpur Farms, till December 24

SELECTION MEETING TODAY

The focus will be spearhead Jasprit Bumrah's fitness status as the incumbent selection committee meet on Monday for the final time to pick teams for three T20Is against Sri Lanka and as many ODIs against Australia next month.

Finishing touch

Ravindra Jadeja, Shardul Thakur keep composure after Kohli's departure to help India secure series victory, end 2019 on a high

SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY
CUTTACK, DECEMBER 22

IN THE end, it had come down to Virat Kohli versus West Indies. After 42 overs, India were 253/5, chasing 316 for victory in the series decider here at Barabati. West Indies had to bring on the weakest link in their bowling attack, left-arm spinner Khary Pierre. The India captain was waiting for the moment. Two fours in that over brought the asking-rate down.

Kohli didn't have the liberty to go for high-risk shots. He was the last specialist batsman standing. He was taking the game deep. Usually in such situations Kohli scores a century and sees off the chase. But on Sunday when he got out for 85 in the first ball of the 47th over, the game was still evenly poised. Ravindra Jadeja was playing a lovely little cameo at the other end all right, but West Indies had run into India's tail. Shardul Thakur rose to the occasion, hit two fours and a six to calm the nerves. A capacity crowd at Barabati started to serenade him with 'Shardul, Shardul' chants. Eventually, India won by four wickets with eight balls to spare. Their 10th ODI series win against the Caribbean on the spin.

Heavy dew was an impediment to the bowlers in the evening. But West Indies had 315 on the board. A spectacular onslaught from Nicholas Pooran and Kieron Pollard had given the visitors an imposing total to defend. And when for once Shreyas Iyer got out cheaply after five consecutive ODI half-centuries and Rishabh Pant dragged a Keemo Paul delivery on to the stumps on the heels of his four dropped catches, India were suddenly down to 201/4 after 35 overs. Kedar Jadhav - his selection over the likes of Manish Pandey (in the squad) and Shubman Gill (not in the squad) at times defies logic - departed soon. So yet again, India needed Kohli's genius to rescue themselves. Even after so many middle-order experiments, India are still heavily dependent on Rohit Sharma at the top followed by Kohli. Iyer is bedding in as a No. 4 but the rest of the middle-order pack are basically fair-weather players.

On Sunday, Rohit and KL Rahul scored half-centuries and added 121 runs for the first wicket. But once Rohit got out - he was looking set for another daddy hundred but Jason Holder made one move late - it was down to Kohli to ensure India didn't suffer a home series defeat.

A Pollard-Pooran show

West Indies deserve credit. There's no shame in losing to India. Throughout the series they gave a good account of themselves. Sunday was no different. Caribbean teams of the recent past vintage would have wilted from 144/4 in the 32nd over. Pollard's West Indies showed steel followed by swag and made things wonderfully entertaining for the fans. After 40 overs, the visitors were 197/4, going under five runs per over. Then the carnage began.

Kuldeep Yadav, fresh from his hat-trick in the last match, was taken to task. Pollard hit him over the straight boundary and Pooran cleared the long-off. Debutant Navdeep Saini, in for the injured Deepak Chahar, was sent for runs in final spell. Saini impressed with his searing pace and toe-crushers. His second spell read, 3-0-10-2 during which one of his yorkers landed on Pollard's big toe. The West Indies skipper looked to be in considerable pain.

Pooran, however, laid into the youngster at the death, taking three fours in an over. Given life twice by Pant, the middle-order batsman was displaying his hitting range. As for Pant, he had earlier given reprieves to Shimron Hetmyer and Roston Chase as well.

On flat pitches in Vizag and also here, the Indian fast bowlers, especially Mohammed Shami, used bouncers to good effect. But in the first ball of the 47th over, when Shami made one rear, Pollard just stood and swatted it over the deep mid-wicket boundary.

After accounting for two fours and a six in a Thakur over, Pooran eventually got out for 89 off 64 balls. Pollard remained un-



Ravindra Jadeja and Shardul Thakur walk back after seeing their team home in the third and final ODI against Windies in Cuttack on Sunday. PTI



Virat Kohli top-scored for India with an 81-ball 85.

beaten on 74 off 51 deliveries, with seven sixes. His partnership with Pooran yielded 135 runs for the fifth wicket in 98 balls. West Indies scored 118 in the last 10 overs.

Such an onslaught could have had a demoralising effect. But Rohit quickly wrested the psychological initiative. He flipped his wrists and hit a low full-toss from Sheldon Cottrell from outside the off stump to the mid-on boundary. One ball later, he walked into a good length delivery and placed it past cover for another four. Cottrell, West Indies' bowler of the series, was taken care of very

early into India's run chase.

A six against Jason Holder was contemptuous. Rohit moved to the leg side and pulled a back-of-a-length delivery over the mid-wicket boundary. Around 38,000 fans who braved the Odisha Cricket Association's mismanagement - some match tickets were issued without holograms for example and police naturally were denying entry - were subdued during the Pooran-Pollard partnership. Rohit helped them find their voice. The mobile phone flashlights were turned on.

With Rohit at the other end, Rahul's grew into the game steadily. After his century in Vizag, he scored 77 today off 83 balls. He has utilised the opportunity to bat at the top but maybe, he hasn't yet acquired Shikhar Dhawan's ability to take the game away from the opponents after getting into the groove.

As for Rohit, adjudged the Man of the Series, his run-a-ball 63 took his series total to 258 at an average of 86. He and his captain were the reasons why at the end mobile flashlights in the stands shone bright in celebration.

22 Rohit Sharma broke Sanath Jayasuriya's 22-year-old record for most runs in a calendar year by an opener across formats. Rohit, who made 63 in his final game of the year, aggregated 2442, eclipsing Jayasuriya's 2387 in 1997. Among Indians openers, Virender Sehwag (2355 runs in 2008) held the record before Rohit overtook him.

After another victory, Kohli reflects on 'a beautiful 2019'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CUTTACK, DECEMBER 22

INDIA CAPTAIN Virat Kohli has one eye on the T20 World Cup but he is also looking beyond that. He said on Sunday that his team's "younger people" will need to step up and finish matches in the near future. Kohli anchored a tricky chase before Shardul Thakur showed nerves of steel to guide India to a series-clinching four-wicket victory over the West Indies in the third ODI here.

"Having done (chasing successfully) it so many times, you obviously have a bit more calmness and you understand how the dew is playing and all you need is a short partnership. From there the opposition usually crumbles," Kohli said at the post-match press conference. "It was outstanding to see others finishing the game. Honestly, when I got out I had a nervous phase, but I looked back at Jaddu and he looked confident. They just changed the game in three overs. Watching from outside is way more difficult.

Kohli looked back and called 2019 a beautiful year barring that World Cup semifinal loss to New Zealand.

"2019 has been one of the best years for

'Honestly, when I got out I had a nervous phase, but I looked back at Jaddu and he looked confident. They just changed the game in three overs. Watching from outside is way more difficult.'

Indian cricket. Apart from the 30 minutes in the World Cup, it's been a great year. We'll keep chasing that ICC trophy. But apart from that, the way we've played has been satisfying."

He also had a word of praise for his fast bowlers who have troubled the best of batsmen through the year.

"Having a bunch of fast bowlers who can bowl out any opposition anywhere -- them taking the attention away from the spinners in India is a huge achievement. We feel we have it in us to win series overseas, not just the odd game. We are in the process of trying out people, see how they react under pressure. Whether people want to accept it or not, the younger people will have to step up in a few years," the India skipper said.

SCORECARD >>

Ind vs WI

3rd ODI | Cuttack | Toss: India

WINDIES 315/5 IN 50 OVS

E Lewis c Saini b Jadeja 21 (50b, 3x4)

S Hope b Shami 42 (50b, 5x4)

R Chase b Saini 38 (48b, 3x4)

S Hetmyer c Kuldeep b Saini 37

(33b, 2x4, 2x6)

N Pooran c Jadeja b Thakur 89

(64b, 10x4, 3x6)

K Pollard not out 74 (51b, 3x4, 7x6)

J Holder not out 7 (4b, 1x4)

■ Extras: (lb 4, w 3) 7

■ Fall of wickets: 1-57 (Evin Lewis, 14.6 ov), 2-70 (Shai Hope, 19.2 ov), 3-132 (Shimron Hetmyer, 29.2 ov), 4-144 (Roston Chase, 31.3 ov), 5-279 (Nicholas Pooran, 47.5 ov)

■ Bowling:

S Thakur 10-0-66-1

Mohammed Shami 10-2-66-1

N Saini 10-0-58-2

Kuldeep Yadav 10-0-67-0

R Jadeja 10-0-54-1

INDIA 316/6 (48.4 Ovs)

R Sharma c Hope b Holder 63

(63b, 8x4, 1x6)

K Rahul c Hope b Joseph 77 (89b, 8x4, 1x6)

V Kohli b Paul 85 (81b, 9x4)

S Iyer c Joseph b Paul 7 (7b, 1x4)

R Pant b Paul 7 (6b, 1x4)

K Jadhav b Cottrell 9 (10b, 1x4)

R Jadeja not out 39 (31b, 4x4)

S Thakur not out 17 (6b, 2x4, 1x6)

■ Extras: (lb 2, nb 1, w 9) 12

■ Fall of wickets: 1-122 (Rohit Sharma, 21.2 ov), 2-167 (KL Rahul, 29.5 ov), 3-188 (Shreyas Iyer, 32.3 ov), 4-201 (Rishabh Pant, 34.6 ov), 5-228 (Kedar Jadhav, 38.5 ov), 6-286 (Virat Kohli, 46.1 ov)

■ Bowling:

S Cottrell 10-1-74-1

J Holder 10-0-63-1

K Paul 9-4-0-59-3

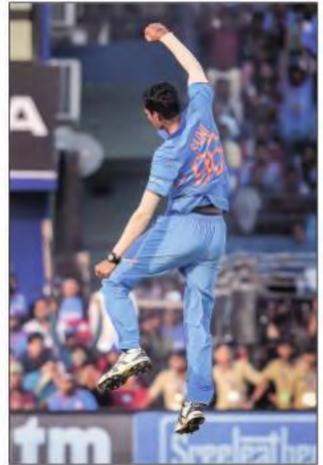
R Chase 4-0-19-0

K Pierre 7-0-46-0

A Joseph 8-0-53-1

■ Result: India won the match by four wickets.

India won the ODI series 2-1.



Navdeep Saini took two wickets on his ODI debut. PTI

Pakistan close in after Oshada's century

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
KARACHI, DECEMBER 22

SRI LANKA opener Oshada Fernando struck a maiden century to delay Pakistan's victory quest after the home team's top four all scored hundreds in the second Test in Karachi on Sunday. Set a daunting 476 runs to win, Sri Lanka were tottering at 97 for five before Oshada and Niroshan Dickwella halted the slide with a resolute 104-run stand for the sixth wicket.

But the last three overs of the day saw Dickwella fall for 65 -- bowled while attempting a reverse sweep off spinner Haris Sohail -- and Dilruwan Perera caught behind off Naseem Shah for five. The 16-year-old Naseem had the best figures of 3-31.

At the close, Sri Lanka were 212 for seven with Oshada (102 not out) at the crease and with the visitors needing an unlikely 264 runs for victory. Pakistan need just three wickets on Monday to win the series -- their first at home since the 2009 attack on the Sri Lanka side resulted in international cricket being suspended in the country.

Pakistan earlier declared their second



Babar Azam (100*) struck his third century in four Tests. AP

innings at lunch on 555 for three after Azhar returned to form with 118 and Babar Azam struck 100 not out. It was a dismal batting show by the Sri Lankans on a

National Stadium pitch where the home batsmen flourished.

Skipper Dimuth Karunaratne went for 16, Kusal Mendis for a duck and Angelo

Mathews for 19 before tea. Pace spearhead Mohammad Abbas had Karunaratne caught behind in the tenth over of the innings before Naseem had Mendis snapped up in the slips.

It became 70 for three when Mathews, Sri Lanka's most experienced batsman, edged a short delivery from Shaheen Shah Afridi to wicketkeeper Mohammad Rizwan. After tea, young Naseem accounted for Dinesh Chandimal (two) and leg-spinner Yasir Shah dismissed Dhananjaya de Silva (nought) to leave Sri Lanka struggling at 97 for five.

In the morning Pakistan batsmen flayed the Sri Lankan bowling. It was only the second time in a Test innings that the top four all scored centuries after openers Abid Ali (174) and Shan Masood (135) grabbed theirs on Saturday.

India against Bangladesh at Dhaka in 2007 was the other occasion.

BRIEF SCORES: Pakistan 191 & 555/3 dec (Abid Ali 174, Shaan Masood 135, Azhar Ali 118, Babar Azam 100 not out, Lahiru Kumara 2-139) lead Sri Lanka 271 & 212 for 7 (Oshada Fernando 102 not out, Niroshan Dickwella 65, Naseem Shah 3-31) by 264 runs.

Ahead of Boxing Day Test, Root concerned over sick bowlers

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
BENONI (SOUTH AFRICA), DECEMBER 22

England captain Joe Root admitted on Sunday that the illness of three front-line bowlers was a concern with the start of a Test series against South Africa only four days away. England's final warm-up match, a non-first-class three-day fixture against South Africa A, petered out in a draw at Willowmoore Park on Sunday with the sick trio -- Stuart Broad, Jofra Archer and Jack Leach -- yet to bowl a ball in a match situation in South Africa.

James Anderson was easily England's outstanding bowler, taking three for 41 in 19 overs, as South Africa A made 325 for five in reply to England's 456 for seven declared before play was called off in mid-afternoon.

Root said the England management would have to make some "very shrewd decisions" in finalising their bowling line-up ahead of Thursday's first Test at Centurion. "It's going to have to be managed really well but we're on it, trying to

make sure we give them the best chance possible," said Root.

After missing England's first match and staying at the team hotel on the first day of the South Africa A game, Broad, Archer and Leach travelled to Benoni on Saturday and Sunday and spent some time practising.

"Those guys have been very frustrated," said Root. "They've trained as well as they can and over the next few days I'm sure they'll give a very good account of themselves and make sure they do everything they can to be ready. That's all you can ask."

But the England captain suggested they would only be picked for the Test if they were fully recovered.

"It's very rare for guys to go into a game carrying an illness. A big part of it is you don't want to let the rest of the guys down. It'll be a fine balance."

Root said England's batting, which included hundreds from Joe Denly and Ollie Pope, was a highlight of the drawn match and an example of how England wanted to approach batting, "in the first innings in particular".

League of their own: Fuchs, Ozil bank on Indian FIFA gamers

GAURAV BHATT
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 22

"DO YOU guys even have internet in India?" was a question posed to professional FIFA gamer Kartikeya Behl, in 2017, during a tournament overseas. "I am not going to name the country, but yes, they were serious when they asked me this. It wasn't mean or offensive, they were genuinely fascinated."

Behl put on a lesson, both in-game and real life. "I defeated a member of that team and introduced them to the Indian scene."

Friend Siddh Chandarana's casual introduction to FIFA was six years ago, but three national titles proved his competitive prowess.

Last year, both Behl and Chandarana got word of professional footballers gunning for a slice of the sweet — \$1.4 billion-worth — esports pie, and their need for South-Asian representation. Both tweeted out their CVs to respective suitors and both were signed. Chandarana was picked up by Mesut Ozil's M10Esports (the Arsenal player tweeted out a greeting: "Team mein apka hardik swagat hai"). Behl joined Leicester City footballer Christian Fuchs' esports outfit: NoFuchsGiven.

"I got a follow request from Christian Fuchs on Twitter," says the 22-year-old from Delhi. "That was the moment, I went 'this is happening for real.'"

"Kartikeya is one of best FIFA players in India so it made sense to bring him in. He has grown with us and is a core part of the team, he works alongside us on social media too," the Premier League-winning player told *The Indian Express*. "He is a great gamer and a good personality. I spent time with him at the Champions League game between Liverpool vs Salzburg, he is very enthusiastic and determined."

An oddity of FIFA players is the way they recall timelines, which has made counting years pass.

"I started playing around FIFA 08 on a PSP (Playstation Portable). Competitively, I started around FIFA 16. I was winning a lot of tournaments. And because I was playing games and winning money, my parents were worried that I was gambling," Behl laughs. "Now they push me to practice and play 7-8 hours a day."

Not just fun and games

FIFA, the video game series, has been around since 1993 and has sold close to 280 million copies. The latest edition, September's FIFA 20, has a player base of 10 million worldwide. The esports side isn't young either, the first official tournament was in 2004, but it blew up with the success of the eWorld Cup. Professional clubs took notice. This March, all 20 Premier League clubs hosted four weeks of esports trials to shortlist gamers to sign.

Players' involvement though remained limited to dressing room breaks and game nights. Now, along with Ozil, players such as Javier Mascherano, Ruud Gullit and Ilkay Gundogan have jumped on the owners' bandwagon. Christian Fuchs was ahead of the curve. And for the 33-year-old, it's no cash grab either. Fuchs grew up on FIFA (and Konami's rival game Pro Evolution Soccer), and realised the potential of the esports/streaming side thanks to his son.

"My son, when he is not playing football, loves to watch FIFA clips on YouTube. I noticed he was getting more and more into streamers too. The area started to fascinate me, and I did some research. I was amazed at the growth in the industry. That, coupled with meeting the right people to support me running a team, convinced me to move into this space," says Fuchs, who remains peerless in the Leicester dressing room too. "Wilfried Ndidi and Kelechi Ihaenacho play FIFA nonstop, but nobody can compete with me."

Six months after the foundation, NFG eSports reached the group stages of the FIFA eClub World Cup. And earlier this year, Fuchs announced plans to build a 1,000-seater eSports arena over 36 acres in New York. An exciting retirement plan, if there ever was one.



Professional FIFA gamer Kartikeya Behl signed with Leicester City left-back Christian Fuchs' esports outfit: 'NoFuchsGiven'.

My son, when he is not playing football, loves to watch FIFA clips on YouTube. I noticed he was getting more and more into streamers too... It is a perfect mix of entertainment and sport. When you work with the players, you see that their concentration level is very high, the hand movements, reflexes are very fast. The pressure situations are very real, just like any top-level sport."

CHRISTIAN FUCHS, PREMIER LEAGUE WINNER, ON RISE OF ESPORTS

Behl, who played Under-15 football for Delhi before academics became the sole priority, believes his experience helps him on the virtual pitch.

"Actual knowledge of the game helps, and about 60 per cent of the time it comes into play. When and how a pass should be made, when should you tackle. It's not just pressing buttons. It's pressing buttons at the right time."

Like every proud esports player, Behl believes that he is an athlete. Fuchs agrees, but believes "esports doesn't need the classification."

"It is a perfect mix of entertainment and sport. When you work with the players, you see that their concentration level is very high, the hand movements, reflexes are very fast. The pressure situations are very real, just like any top-level sport," says Fuchs, adding that he is not in a position to comment whether esports is an Olympic sport or not. "In my experience, the growth and audience is large and the demographic is right, so maybe the Olympics will need esports in the future to engage younger audiences."

There's a theory that football will need esports to engage younger audiences. UEFA Champions League has launched an e-version too. And expensive TV subscriptions means this could become the way youngsters consume football.

"It's why La Liga is on Facebook now. It's about social media, but FIFA clips already rule that space," says Behl. "This is football, and it's entertaining. With clubs officially coming in, signing people and promoting it like actual derbies, this could become somewhat of an alternative. Already many people I meet watch it like an actual football game."

And some are rediscovering legends. "It is very amazing to use legendary players in virtual FIFA. Ronaldo Nazario used to play in early 90s, 2000s," says Chandarana, 18. "He is always in my team when I play now, and he is simply terrific."

BCCI and ECB pad up against ICC

Boards join hands to take on the apex body on a raft of issues such as financial model & FTP

SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY
CUTTACK, DECEMBER 22

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) will jointly take their fight to the International Cricket Council (ICC), opposing the global body's revised governance structure, financial model and the Future Tours Programme (FTP) that have been proposed for the 2023-2031 cycle.

It is learnt that the two boards are confident about getting the Cricket Australia (CA) on their side. The 'Big Three' revival appears to be on the anvil.

The BCCI and the ECB discussed the ICC matters during their meeting at Lord's earlier this month. "The BCCI and the ECB had a very good meeting and both are on the same page. The ECB also feels the same way like us about things that are happening at the ICC. "They (ECB) are also not happy and we (BCCI) are also not happy," a top BCCI official told *The Indian Express*, adding: "Most likely Cricket Australia (CA) will be with us as well soon."

The meeting between the BCCI office-bearers — president Sourav Ganguly, secretary Jay Shah and treasurer Arun Dhumal — and their ECB counterparts — chairman Colin Graves and his team — agreed on rejecting the changes proposed by the ICC.

"All these three important cricket boards have been undermined (by the ICC). Nobody is ready to take it lying down," the official said. He, however, refused to call it the 'Big Three' revival. "The BCCI knows its position in world cricket and will restore it. And the three important boards will work for the benefit of world cricket."

The BCCI will have a meeting with the CA chairman Earl Eddings and his delegation on the sidelines of Australia's three-match ODI series here commencing January 14.

According to sources, apart from the ICC matters, the two boards will also discuss the possibility of playing day-night Tests during India's tour of Australia — from November to January 2020-21 — and the BCCI might agree to playing one pink-ball Test under lights, preferably in Adelaide, during the four or five-match series.

ICC hijacking BCCI's broadcast potential

The ICC issues will be a significant part of the discussion as well. During its Board meeting in Dubai in October, the global body had proposed eight flagship events in eight years — from 2023 onwards — as part of their next broadcast rights package. This was done ostensibly to highjack the BCCI's share of revenue from potential broadcasters for the next rights cycle.

The ICC has also kept the BCCI out of its



BCCI chief Sourav Ganguly will meet Cricket Australia chairman Earl Eddings and his delegation on the sidelines of Australia's three-match ODI series early next year. *Ganesh Shirshakar*

newly-formed working group that will look into the future governance structure of the world body. Both the ECB and the CA, along with the BCCI, have already raised objection to the proposed FTP, as they feel it would "marginalise" bilateral cricket.

India's grudge against the Shashank Manohar-helmed ICC runs even deeper. Under Manohar, who was also the board president, the ICC disbanded the 'Big Three' model (designed by his predecessor N Srinivasan) that saw the BCCI's projected revenue come down from a staggering \$570 million to a little over \$400 million. There was widespread resentment on the measure.

This is despite the fact that India contributes to over 70 per cent of the ICC's revenue. Also, according to a cricket board insider, an amount in excess of \$27 million from the ICC — participation fee etc. — is overdue. As this paper reported, the BCCI would oppose Manohar's re-election as the ICC chairman for a third term, if he decides to contest.

The global body had proposed eight flagship events in eight years, as part of their next broadcast rights package. This was done ostensibly to highjack the BCCI's share of revenue from potential broadcasters for the next rights cycle.

Under the changed financial model, the ECB is getting \$139 million, while the CA is expected to take home \$128 million, on a par with Pakistan, West Indies, New Zealand, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. The BCCI, the ECB and the CA will put up a united front, but as the official informed, no extra tournament involving the three giants hasn't been planned yet.

Won't play B'desh on neutral venue: PCB

Karachi: The PCB has made it clear to their Bangladesh counterparts that it will not host them on a neutral venue during the upcoming home series in January-February. In an e-mail sent to the BCB this week, the PCB Chairman, Ehsan Mani has also asked the Bangladesh board to give acceptable reasons for refusing to send their team for the two Tests of the ICC World Test Championship in Pakistan from January 18th "Mani sahib has made it clear to them that just saying Pakistan is not safe for Test cricket that is why they are not sending their team is not going to be enough now," a PCB official said. **ASSOCIATED PRESS**

TRAU hold Real Kashmir; earn first I-League point



Emeka Princewill scored TRAU's first goal against Real Kashmir.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
IMPHAL, DECEMBER 22

DEBUTANTS TIDDIM Road Athletic Union FC on Sunday earned their maiden I-League point after playing out a 2-2 draw against Real Kashmir FC at the Khuman Lampak Stadium. Real Kashmir led 1-0 at half time but the home side fought back admirably well in the second half to split points with the Srinagar-based side. Mason Robertson struck a brace for the visitors while Nigerians Emeka Princewill and Patrick Uche scored a goal apiece for the home side.

TRAU dominated possession in the first half and the combination and movement of Premjit Singh on the right flank and Falguni in the middle was impressive. However, Real Kashmir coach David Robertson's strategy of crowding out his half with trusted defensive-minded players and looking to find his tall front men with long balls played dividends as TRAU found it tough to penetrate.

The first goal, in fact, came against the run of play. The strapping Scottish reposed his coach father's faith in playing him up-front yet again, when he dispossessed Sandeep Singh at the heart of the TRAU defence before unleashing a crisp right footer across the goal to beat Mithun Samanta all ends up. TRAU continued to press for an equaliser but could not prize open Phurba Lachenpa's goal till the end of the half.

They did so as late as the 78th minute, when a measured cross from left-wing back Denechandrani Meetei saw Emeka meet it with a bouncing header, beating Lachenpa for the first time in the match. Fellow Nigerian Patrick Uche then beat him for the second time in the 82nd minute, this time from a free-kick which got an unfortunate deflection from Mason, wong-footing the keeper.

Mason, who was rightly adjudged Hero of the Match, ensured that the home side did not enjoy their lead for more than a minute. From another wonderful cross from Danish Farooq from the left, Mason rose perfectly to

lob a header over Mithun to cancel out the TRAU lead. Following the draw, Kashmir remain ninth on the table having bagged a couple of points from as many games while TRAU move up one place to tenth with one point from four matches.

Football to return to the Valley

Real Kashmir FC will play their season's first I-League home match against defending champions Chennai City FC on December 26, the first big sporting event in the valley since it became a union territory. The abrogation of Article 370 and the ensuing lockdown in the valley had raised security concerns, but Real Kashmir have made elaborate arrangements since then, allaying the fears of the visiting teams. "We are looking forward to hosting the defending champions in front of the home crowd. We have done our bit by tying all the loose ends and I am sure the match will be a treat to the football lovers in the valley," said RKFC vice-president Samarth Chattoo.

[SPORTS BAR]



Bayern confirm Flick as coach till season's end

Bayern Munich interim coach Hansi Flick will remain in charge until the end of the season, the German Bundesliga champions said on Sunday. Flick was promoted from the coaching staff after Niko Kovac's dismissal following Bayern's 5-1 thrashing away to Eintracht Frankfurt last month. He was initially hired for two matches against Olympiakos in the Champions League and against Borussia Dortmund in the league. But after two wins he was trusted to continue until the winter break. Following Bayern's 2-0 win at home to VfL Wolfsburg on Saturday, CEO Karl-Heinz Rummenigge and sporting director Hasan Salihamidzic agreed that continuing with Flick is "explicitly a viable option". Bayern currently sit third in the Bundesliga standings, four points behind leaders RB Leipzig.

Salah, Mane and Mahrez shortlisted

Liverpool pair Sadio Mane and Mohamed Salah, plus Riyad Mahrez from Manchester City, were named as the three candidates for this year's African Footballer of the Year award, to be decided next month. Senegal talisman Mane will be the favourite for the award ahead of his Egyptian club mate after Liverpool won the Champions League. However, he faces stiff opposition from Mahrez, who won the Premier League with City and also captained Algeria to the Africa Cup of Nations title in mid-year. The nominees were named on Sunday after being selected by a panel of technical experts from the Confederation of African Football plus former players and media.

Ahmedabad receives provisional clearance

The Local Organising Committee of the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup 2020 on Sunday confirmed Ahmedabad as a provisional venue for the tournament. Addressing the media at TransStadia, LOC tournament director Roma Khanna said. "We are happy to give a provisional clearance to Ahmedabad. The government of Gujarat has committed its full support and assistance into making the FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup India 2020 a big success in the state."



Novak Djokovic's Grand Slam count stands at 16.

Lasting legacy, not trophies, drives Djokovic

Novak Djokovic says the main source of his motivation at this stage of his career is securing a lasting legacy rather than simply trying to win tennis matches and trophies. For nearly two years, from mid-2016 until mid-2018, the 32-year-old Serb had admittedly struggled with motivation after pulling off the historic feat of winning four Grand Slams in a row — a first in men's tennis since 1969. Djokovic recaptured his spark and has since added a quartet of majors to his overall tally, which now stands at 16. While the world number two remains in a tight battle with Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer in the race for most Grand Slam titles won, Djokovic believes what currently drives him in the sport is something deeper than that. "You need to constantly give yourself fuel from the source, whatever the source is," Djokovic said at the Mubadala World Tennis Championship exhibition event in Abu Dhabi, where he secured third place.

Listless Sandhu finishes eleventh

India's Ajeetesh Sandhu shot four-under 67 to end Tied-11th as Jazz Janewattananond signed off from his 2019 Asian Tour season with a commanding five-shot victory at the Thailand Masters here on Sunday. It also marked a barren year for Indian golf and this was the first time since 2001 that no Indian emerged winner on an international Tour. The last two years have seen Indians win six titles both in 2017 and 2018. Jyoti Randhawa (68) at Tied-39th, SSP Chawrasia (70) at Tied-48th, Aadil Bedi (68) at Tied-54th, Arjun Atwal (76) at Tied-60th and Viraj Madappa (73) at Tied-73rd were the other Indians in the field.



Ajax's Blind undergoes heart procedure

Dutch-born Ajax Amsterdam defender Daley Blind has undergone a successful heart operation, the Eredivisie club has said. Blind who previously played for Manchester United between 2014 and 2018, suffered from dizziness in Ajax's Champions League match against Valencia this month, but continued playing. The 29-year-old has been fitted with a subcutaneous implantable cardioverter defibrillator, the club confirmed on Saturday. "The most important thing is that I'm feeling good at the moment and trying to come back as soon as possible," Blind said in a video posted on Twitter. Blind, who was a regular starter in Ajax's incredible run to the Champions League semi-finals last season, will miss the club's January training camp in Qatar, and will continue his recovery in Amsterdam.

Cityzens march

Guardiola's team reasserts status as Liverpool's challengers with win over Leicester

RORY SMITH
MANCHESTER, DECEMBER 22

IT HAS reached the stage, now, when it comes to gauging Pep Guardiola's mood, his state of mind, where no detail can be overlooked.

It is not just Guardiola's words — scouring the Manchester City manager's public comments for signs of hidden meaning, clandestine messages — but examining his behaviour, too. He is always agitated on the touchline, obviously, but is he now too agitated? Is it a different form of agitation? And what about the bags under his eyes: What does their precise shade tell us about the storm clouds gathering over Etihad Stadium? The purpose of the search, of course, is to try to find the key to the mystery that has swirled around Guardiola's City team ever since the second week of the Premier League season: Why has this record-breaking, history-making, title-retaining team felt in some way diminished these last few months?

What, precisely, has led a team that has recorded the two highest points totals in English history to lose four games before the halfway stage of this campaign? How has City, a team that swept the domestic board last year, managed to find itself staring up at Liverpool — who lead them by 11 points even after Saturday's 3-1 win over second-place Leicester — as Jürgen Klopp's team, now European and world champion, streaks into the distance?

There are some easy answers to those questions. City, as Guardiola has acknowledged privately, made a mistake in not replacing Vincent Kompany, its long-standing captain and most charismatic presence on the playing squad, when he departed last summer. His absence has been keenly felt since injury-deprived Guardiola of Aymeric Laporte, by some distance his best defender.

The likes of David Silva and Sergio Agüero have missed tranches of the season, too. It is true that City — by some estimates the most expensive club team ever built — does not plead poverty of resources especially convincingly, but that does not, in the white heat, make losing key players any less damaging.

There are some mitigating circumstances, too, most notably Liverpool's searing pace: Guardiola is right to feel that the missteps his team has made have been amplified by the fact that its principle rival for the Premier League title has made, well, none. Liverpool has won 16 of its 17 games. Such form would cast almost



Gabriel Jesus (kneeling) after scoring Manchester City's final goal in a 3-1 win over Leicester. AP

1 Gabriel Jesus netted his first goal in 12 home games for Manchester City in all competitions, since netting against Schalke in March.

3 Leicester has conceded three goals in an EPL game for the first time since February. They have not conceded more than twice in their last 28 games.

11 Manchester City has closed the gap against Liverpool to 11 points. The win puts Guardiola's team within a single point of Leicester in second place.

any opponent into shade. But that is not to say that the suspicion that City has been lacking something this year is entirely misplaced, that its injuries and its rival's imperiousness explain everything. It does seem to have developed a vulnerability in the heart of its defense.

It has pressed its opponents with a little less fervour, at times. It has endured afternoons in which the ideas have not flowed quite so easily. Even Guardiola will, occasionally, through gritted teeth, hint that something has been missing, though he is yet to suggest to the pub-

lic what it is or why he thinks that might be. He has always felt, he said, "like even when we lost points, we were there."

Equally, though, he believes that his team's problems "started with the winning goal being ruled out against Tottenham," he said, referencing a 2-2 draw in the second week of the season. Perhaps it is hunger, or a lack of it; perhaps it is complacency, a tendency to "believe we are something we are not," as Guardiola has referred to it.

Perhaps it is weariness, after two years of relentless success and three years of

Guardiola's incessant demands. Perhaps opponents are starting to adapt to the way City plays, to find slightly more effective methods of disturbing its rhythm.

And yet, to watch Guardiola's team play Leicester City on Saturday, it was hard to believe that any of those doubts, any of those problems, had been real at all. Leicester arrived at the Etihad Stadium ahead of Manchester City in the table, hailed as one of the revelations of the season, a side full of courage and youth and pace and perfectly designed to exploit its host's newfound weaknesses. **NYT**

United, all at sea against feisty Watford

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE
WATFORD, DECEMBER 22

DAVID DEGEA made a mistake that led to a goal for the second straight Premier League game as Manchester United slumped to a 2-0 loss at last-place Watford on Sunday. The Spain goalkeeper allowed a tame volley by Ismaila Sarr to slip through his hands and creep into the net via the post, gifting Watford the lead in the 50th minute at Vicarage Road.

It was another moment to forget for De Gea, who failed to punch clear a corner to allow Everton to grab an equalizer in a 1-1 draw at United last weekend. On that occasion, De Gea could legitimately argue he was being fouled as he went for the ball but he had no excuses against Watford as he slid his arms down the post and fell to his knees in embarrassment.

"It was a mistake, it happens in football and it is what we train for every day to make sure they don't happen again," United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer said. "David has been very good lately, it is just one of those things that happen." Troy Deeney converted a penalty down the middle four minutes later after Aaron Wan-Bissaka tripped Sarr, putting the seal on only Watford's second league win all season, and first under new manager Nigel Pearson.

Watford stayed in last place but moved level on 12 points with Norwich after 18 games. They are six points adrift of safety.

"All the players put a shift in and that's what we need between now and the end of the season," said Deeney, who scored his first goal since April. Deeney said Pearson "has been great." "It's not been an easy start for him but it's been a blessing in disguise because we have had to roll our sleeves up as people had written us off before the game had even started."

One positive on a bleak afternoon for United was the return of midfielder Paul Pogba, the club's record signing who has missed nearly three months because of injury and, more recently, illness.

The France midfielder came on as a 64th-minute substitute for just his seventh game for United this season and was a bright spark, having a shot palmed away and pinged two brilliant long-range passes to set up chances. "He added urgency, quality, some great passes," Solskjaer said. "The boy has been working hard. He's fit and leaner. He'll bring us a lot. He is important for us. He makes us create more chances."

Since beating Tottenham and champions



David De Gea allowed the weakest of shots from Ismaila Sarr in the 50th minute, putting Watford in front. AP

Manchester City in the same week, United has collected just one point against Everton and Watford — two teams battling against relegation. Breaking down opponents who do not come out to attack has been United's weakness under Solskjaer. His team's defeats in the league this season have come against Crystal Palace, West Ham, Newcastle, Bournemouth and now Watford.

In contrast, United has beaten City, Chelsea, Leicester and Tottenham, while being the only team to take points off runaway leader Liverpool. "We had been doing well but you have to earn every single point in this league," Solskjaer said.

Ljungberg unhappy with Ozil's show of dissent

Arsenal interim coach Freddie Ljungberg has criticised Mesut Ozil's unacceptable conduct after his substitution against Manchester City in the Premier League last weekend.

Germany playmaker Ozil kicked his gloves in frustration after being withdrawn in the 59th minute of Arsenal's 3-0 defeat at the Emirates Stadium. Ljungberg, who took temporary charge of Arsenal for the final time in Saturday's goalless draw at Everton, revealed Ozil would have been dropped from the travelling squad had he not been injured.

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