

A new year marks both an ending and a second chance. Here, writers explore all that a year's end could bring

‘NO CAUSE FOR FEAR... NO INDIAN CAN BE DENIED CITIZENSHIP WITH CAA’ Will consult states before NRC... may or may not use NPR data for it: Law Minister

KAUNAIN SHERIFFM
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 28

SPEAKING ABOUT the contentious Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) plan that have sparked protests across the country, Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad has said that a “proper legal process” will be followed for a nation-wide NRC, including consultation with state governments, and that “some” data collected for the National Population Register (NPR) “may or may not be used” for the NRC.

His remarks, in a detailed interview to *The Sunday Express*, assume significance as more than half-a-dozen state governments, including Bihar, led by BJP ally JD(U), have opposed implementation of a nation-wide NRC. At least two have also said they won’t allow the NPR as it might lead to an NRC.

In an interview to ANI last week, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said the NPR and NRC were governed by different laws and NPR data would never be used for the NRC exercise. “There is no connection between the two processes, nor can they be used in each other’s survey,” he said.

Asked when the NRC would be implemented, Prasad told *The Sunday Express*, “A position has to be taken. There is a legal process. First a decision, second a notification, then the process, the verification, the objection,



‘PROPER LEGAL PROCESS WILL BE FOLLOWED IN CASE OF NRC’
RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD

the hearing of the objection, right of appeal. There will be a consultation with the state government, feedback will be taken. If anything is to be done, it will be done publicly. Nothing will be a secret on an NRC.”

He also reiterated that the NRC conducted in Assam was on the Supreme Court’s directives.

On documents that would be acceptable for a nation-wide NRC, Prasad said no decision had been taken on this. “This question is entirely academic. When the process will start under Rule 3 and Rule 4 of The Citizenship (Registration of Citizen and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003, then there will be a proper public declaration of that.”

The Law Minister slammed the Congress and senior leader P Chidambaram for protesting against CAA and the NRC, saying that it was the former

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Priyanka Vadra at home of former IPS officer S R Darapuri in Lucknow Saturday. Vishal Srivastava

Roughed up by police on way to meet family of detainee: Priyanka Cong leader changed route, were doing our duty, say police

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, DELHI, DEC 28

A WAR of words erupted between the Congress and Uttar Pradesh government on Saturday as party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, who was in Lucknow to participate in the Congress foundation day function, claimed she was

roughed up by police in a bid to stop her from meeting the family of a retired IPS officer who was arrested on December 19 during protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

Priyanka walked some distance and later rode pillion with a party leader on scooter to reach the home of S R Darapuri. While she said she was grabbed by the neck and fell down, police denied this.

The Congress lodged an offi-

cial complaint on the “breach” in the security of the party leader, and against Hazratganj Circle Officer Abhay Mishra and other police personnel over their “misconduct”. The party also wrote a letter to the CRPF IG, Delhi.

Around 5 pm, soon after Priyanka had left the state party headquarters for Darapuri’s residence, Deputy SP Archana Singh intercepted her cavalcade and

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The minister was speaking at an ABVP event in Pune. File

Only those who say Bharat Mata ki jai can stay in India: Pradhan

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
PUNE, DECEMBER 28

AMIDST CONTINUING protests over the new citizenship law and a proposed nationwide NRC, Union Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Saturday said that only those who are ready to say “*Bharat Mata Ki Jai*” should be allowed to live in India.

Addressing the 54th state conference of the Akhil Bhartiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), the student wing of the RSS, Pradhan on Saturday said, “*Aaj desh ke*

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FIR against SHO, five other cops for Bijnor death during protests

ASAD REHMAN
LUCKNOW, DECEMBER 28

AN FIR has been lodged against six policemen, including the then Station House Officer of Nahtaur police station, Rajesh Singh Solanki, over the death of 20-year-old Mohammad Suleiman in UP’s Bijnor district during the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

Satya Prakash Singh, who replaced Solanki as SHO, told *The Sunday Express* that apart from Solanki, local outpost in-charge Ashish Tomar, constable Mohit Kumar and three other “unidentified” policemen have been named in the FIR filed by Suleiman’s brother Shoaib.

Singh said the FIR has been registered under IPC Sections 302 (murder), 147 (rioting), 148 (rioting, armed with deadly weapon) and 149 (every member of unlawful assembly guilty of offence committed in prosecution of common object).

Singh said Solanki has now been transferred to the District Crime Record Bureau (DCRB).

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CONG PROTESTS ON FOUNDATION DAY

RUCKUS AT HISTORY CONGRESS

RUSH FOR BIRTH CERTIFICATES

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Bijnor Additional SP (Rural) Vishwajeet Srivastava said Solanki has been transferred from the Nahtaur police station “because he was injured and

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After onion sting, Centre to meet dairies to review milk stocks, prices

PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS
PUNE, DECEMBER 28

THE CENTRE has called a meeting of all leading dairies, both co-operative and private, next week “to review the milk situation in the country”.

The meeting comes in the wake of the recent Rs 2-3 per litre increase in pouch milk prices by the Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF, better known as Amul), Mother Dairy and other major brands. There are also reports of most dairies registering lower milk procurement this year, including in the “flush” period after October, when animals normally produce more because of better fodder and water availability as well as reduced body stress from high temperatures and humidity levels.

The meeting, to be held on January 3 and chaired by the secretary of the Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying, will discuss the overall availability of milk and also stocks of conserved commodities — mainly skimmed milk powder (SMP) and white butter — with dairies. It will also review the trend in procurement rates being paid to producers and consumer prices of milk and milk products, *The Sunday Express* has learnt.

After the onion fiasco, where the extent of shortfall in production wasn’t anticipated well in time and led to retail prices of the bulb crossing Rs 100/kg levels, the Narendra Modi government does not want to take chances with milk. Dairies usually convert the surplus milk they get during the “flush” season (October-March) into SMP

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Govt soothes banks over harassment by CBI: ‘Won’t go after genuine decisions’

Notices will carry registration number, agency won’t take up suo motu cases

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 28

IN AN attempt to allay concerns of harassment by investigative agencies, the government on Saturday assured that honest commercial decisions taken by bankers would be protected and said that a system would be put in place for handling fraud cases.

Announcing a mechanism whereby notices issued by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to banks will carry a registration number to avoid any scope for unauthorised communication and consequent harassment, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said, “Banks have gone through a slightly worrying period wherein decision making was getting difficult because of fear of 3Cs (CBI, CVC, CAG). There was concern and bona fide decisions are not being made by banks because of what they would say undue harassment, uncalled for harassment happens because of these agencies pursuing on cases.”

Sitharaman was speaking after a review meeting she held with heads of state-owned and private sector banks and attended by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Director RK Shukla.

The concept of a registration number with the agency’s notices is in line with a similar system of Document Identification Number (DIN) mandated by the tax department. This is aimed at preventing arbitrary issuance of

EXPLAINED

Another step towards accountability

THE MOVE to build in more accountability while initiating investigative action against bankers follows up on an earlier step where the government had directed investigative agencies to carry out a preliminary examination to ascertain whether a case of bank loan turning into NPA was the result of a criminal conspiracy or a bonafide commercial decision. Over a dozen officials of commercial banks and the RBI are facing inquiries by the CBI and ED.

notices by tax officials and to ensure audit trail of all such communications. Till November 11, 5.33 crore communications with DIN have been issued by the Income Tax Department.

It was also decided at the meeting that no case involving banks would go to the CBI without the banks themselves deciding to send it.

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Gloves off as Mary knocks out Nikhat on way to Olympics

GAURAV BHATT
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 28

CHAIRS WERE hoisted, competitors taunted, expletives exchanged and foul play alleged. The long-awaited showdown between Mary Kom and Nikhat Zareen — in a trial bout to decide who would make it to the Indian team for next year’s Olympic boxing qualifiers in China — will be remembered for the post-match ruckus.

After her 9-1 win, six-time World Champion and Olympic bronze-medallist Mary first shouldered away an attempt at a hug by Nikhat and then uttered an expletive at her. In turn, as she passed by the enclosure marked for spectators, Mary and her coach Chhote Lal were mouthed off by Nikhat’s supporters.

The contest was a culmination of a months-long public spat



Mary Kom after the win in Delhi on Saturday. Tashi Tobgyal

over the 51-kg spot, during which Mary repeatedly questioned the need for a trial while Nikhat clamoured for a fair fight. In October, Nikhat had written a letter to Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju, demanding that she be given a trial bout against Mary Kom before the Indian squad for the

Olympic qualifiers was decided. This was after the Boxing Federation of India (BFI) stated that it intended to pick Mary Kom for the qualifiers based on her bronze-winning performance in the World Championships in Russia.

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WORLD



AT LEAST 90 PEOPLE KILLED IN MOGADISHU CHECKPOINT BLAST

HONG KONG PROTESTERS WANT MAINLAND CHINESE TRADERS TO LEAVE
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RAAKHI JAGGA
LUDHIANA, DECEMBER 28

MARRIED AT the age of 14 to a daily wageer and stitching clothes for a living at the fish market slum in Ludhiana, Aneeta had a dream. That was five years ago. Today, the mother of two is living that dream.

Aneeta is among “150 students” at the “jhuggi classrooms” in three slums within 5 km of each other in the city. The face behind these schools is Hari Om Jindal, a 53-year-old lawyer who

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is living his own dream — providing basic education for free to slum dwellers.

Last year, Aneeta cleared the Class 3 exam under the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) curriculum and is ap-

pearing for her Class 5 exam in four months. With her three-year-old daughter and five-year-old son in tow, Aneeta attends classes for three hours, besides learning basic computer skills and typing at another class in Jindal’s home in the evening.

“My father sells fish in the market near the slum. Though I always wanted to study, I could never do that. Now I want to study till Class 10 at least. If I can get a job in an office with my computer skills, my dream will fully come true,” she says.

Jindal says his initiative got



Lawyer Hariom Jindal holding a class in a slum on Hambran Road in Ludhiana. He runs three such ‘schools’. Gurmeet Singh