

# 6 GOVT & POLITICS



## CAUSE FOR CONCERN

DURING HIS press conference on the eve of his first Army Day as Army chief, General M M Naravane mentioned how empowering the service chiefs has helped the Army, Navy and Air Force. However, he did not mention that it has been over a week since he took over as Army Chief on January 1 but the position he left behind, vice-chief of the Army, has since been vacant — one of the longest periods when India has not had a vice-chief of the Army. There is growing concern in the Army brass, since the vice-chief is responsible for planning and acquisitions, as well as day-to-day handling. Sources said that ideally the government should have started preparing the day Naravane's name was announced as the next chief on December 16, as the file with potential names was sent to the government immediately, but there is no word on the vice-chief's appointment yet.

## SPECIAL INTEREST

ON THURSDAY, the Chinese embassy hosted the second youth dialogue, which was the first event in a series to follow to mark 70 years of the India-China relationship. During the inauguration of the event, the Chinese ambassador to India, Sun Weidong, was asked whether he watched Bollywood films and if he had a favourite. He said that Raj Kapoor's Awaraz was the first Hindi film he watched, and that Dangal and Secret Superstar, both produced by Aamir Khan, are among his favourites.

## MEETING LINE-UP

A SERIES of meetings of the Council of Ministers may conclude next week. According to the initial plan, the Council was scheduled to meet on the 13th, 17th and 20th of this month. While three groups of secretaries made their presentations at the last meeting on Wednesday, two such groups are yet to present their draft recommendations. It is, however, learnt that the group of secretaries on finance will not make its presentation to the Council. Which means that the remaining group will make a presentation at the last meeting on January 17.

# Kishor pats Cong for resolution against CAA, JDU colleague takes swipe

**SANTOSH SINGH**  
PATNA, JANUARY 12

JD(U) NATIONAL vice-president Prashant Kishor on Sunday took to Twitter to thank the Congress after the party's Working Committee passed a resolution asking the government to stop the process to update the National Population Register and withdraw the new citizenship law. He also said CAA and NRC would not be implemented in Bihar.

Shortly after Kishor's tweet, senior JD(U) leader Ajay Alok said all states were bound to implement the new law and also sought to know the "punishment for speaking the language of sedition".

Kishor tweeted, "I join my voice with all to thank #Congress leadership for their formal and unequivocal rejection of #CAA, NRC. Both @raahulgandhi & @priyankagandhi deserves special thanks for their efforts on this count. Also would like to reassure to all - Bihar me CAA-NRC laagu nahi hoga (CAA-NRC would not be implemented in Bihar)." Soon after, Alok tweeted, "CAA



**Prashant Kishor**

has become a law from January 10, 2020 and is in effect in the entire country. All states have to follow it or else the President can take action under Article 365 (of the Constitution). But the question is: What is the punishment for speaking the language of sedition. There must be not be a state of confusion in the NDA."

Taking a swipe at Kishore, Alok tweeted that that there are "some who cannot digest love and respect bestowed upon them by the leadership".

Bihar BJP spokesperson Nikhil Anand told *The Indian Express* that "over-intelligent people are creating propaganda on NRC".

"But the fact is that there is no initiative by Central Government on the issue... We appreciate the support of our NDA allies for supporting CAB in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha... The Bihar government has already notified to start NPR in May 2020."

## EXPERTS WANT STUDY ON ECOLOGICAL IMPACT OF CUTTING LARGE NUMBER OF TREES

# J&K admin to fell 21 lakh trees to 'reclaim' Wular Lake

**BASHAARAT MASOOD**  
GUND JEHangIR (BARAMULLA), JANUARY 12

THE JAMMU and Kashmir administration has embarked on a project to cut over 20 lakh trees to "reclaim" the shrinking Wular Lake spread across north Kashmir's Bandipore and Baramulla districts. With the cutting of 2 lakh trees already underway in the first phase, experts advise caution.

The Wular Conservation and Management Authority (WUCMA) has started cutting trees on the Ramsar wetland — an area of international importance and once Asia's largest freshwater lake. The project was started on the basis of a 2007 report by Wetlands International South-

**EXPLAINED**

## Freshwater lake shrinking over decades

THE LARGEST freshwater lake in Jammu and Kashmir, Wular has considerably shrunk over the past eight decades. Officials records show that 27 sq m of the lake has silted up and turned into a land mass. In the 1980s, the central government proposed to dam the water by constructing Wular barrage. The project, however, was shelved after rise in militancy in the state.

Asia, a non-profit organisation that works to sustain and restore wetlands. Experts, however, call for a study on the ecological impact of cutting trees in such large numbers.

"We have to cut around 21.84

## 'ANTI-NATIONAL SLOGANEERS SHOULD BE IN JAIL'

# Won't rest until all refugees from Pak made citizens: Shah

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
JABALPUR, JANUARY 12

UNION HOME Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said that how-ever much the Congress opposes the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), the government "will not rest" until all the refugees from minority communities in Pakistan are given Indian citizenship.

He challenged Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to show him any provision in the new legislation that will snatch the citizenship of any citizen in the country.

"I am saying it loudly. You Congress leaders, listen carefully... Oppose it as much as you can, but we will rest only after giving citizenship to all these people. No one can stop us from doing so. Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist and Christian refugees from Pakistan have as much right over India as you and I have. They are the sons and daughters of India. The country will embrace them," Shah said, addressing a public



**Home Minister Amit Shah and former chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan in Jabalpur on Sunday. PTI**

meeting here in support of the new citizenship law.

His statements come a day after the Congress demanded immediate withdrawal of the CAA and stopping the process of National Population Register (NPR), accusing the government of using brute majority to impose its "divisive" and "discriminatory" agenda.

Shah also accused Rahul,

Banerjee and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal of misguiding people over the CAA. "I challenge Rahul Baba and Mamata Banerjee, tell me if there is a single provision in the CAA that is meant for snatching anybody's citizenship," he said. "There is no provision for taking away anyone's citizenship. The Act in fact is meant for giving citizenship,"



**A protest in Kolkata on Sunday against PM Narendra Modi's visit. Partha Paul**

# In Kolkata, protests against CAA, Modi continue overnight

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
KOLKATA, JANUARY 12

PROTESTS BY students, mostly affiliated to the Congress and Left Front parties, against the new citizenship law and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who came to Kolkata on Saturday on a two-day visit, continued overnight and went on through Sunday till he left for New Delhi.

Several Youth Congress workers protested against Modi, shouting "go back" and showing black flags at the Race Course helipad and Netaji Indoor Stadium, where the Prime Minister attended the 150th anniversary celebrations of Kolkata Port Trust. Police rounded up the demonstrators and took them to the city police headquarters at Lalbazar.

Protesters, who hit the streets on Saturday with placards that read 'Modi go back', continued their sit-in all night at Esplanade area of central Kolkata, protesting against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), proposed National Register of Citizens and the National Population Register.

They continued their dharna overnight with music and slogans, besides playing chess, football and badminton among other activities.

On Sunday, several CPI(M) and Congress leaders also joined them.

Replying to Modi's claim that some political parties were fuelling misconception about the CAA, CPI(M) leader Md Salim said, "Basically Narendra Modi and (Home Minister) Amit Shah are misleading the people."

Congress leader Somen Mitra said they started the movement, along with the Left Front, and would continue with it.

On Saturday evening, a group of students affiliated to

the Left parties reached the Trinamool Congress Chatra Parishad (TMCP) protest venue nearby on Rani Rasmoni Road, where Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had arrived after attending the Millennium Park programme, and shouted slogans against her. They demanded an explanation from Banerjee for meeting the Prime Minister.

Banerjee tried to pacify the students and said she had gone there to meet the Prime Minister as Chief Minister.

"Show me one leader who has the guts to say it on the face of Narendra Modi that we are opposing the CAA. We (TMC, Left and Congress) are protesting against the same issue, so please don't deviate from it. I would request you all to protest in a democratic way," she had said.

The Prime Minister said that it is the youth who are leading the country today. "India is moving ahead with confidence. Who is leading the innovation, equations

was not our mandate whether trees should be cut or not. Our mandate was to see what would be its effect on the water body. Our study was a rapid one based on secondary data. We were of the opinion that carbon is sequestered in these trees and if they are cut, it would be added to the atmosphere. Secondly, what do they want to achieve? If they cut trees, do they think water will reach there?"

Another study by Wildlife Trust of India, while recommending the cutting of trees, has called for proper studies to assess the impact. The WTI report says that on an average, 33 kg of carbon dioxide is trapped by each tree annually, making it over 72,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide by 21.84 lakh trees.

While WUCMA officials cite a draft study by Kashmir University on the impact assessment of Wular restoration as a green signal for felling trees, experts caution that proper studies should be conducted in this regard.

Professor Zafar Reshi, who led the team that conducted the Kashmir University study, said, "It

the minister said.

"I want to tell the human rights champions the world over that scores of people have faced atrocities in Pakistan they were raped, killed and converted. You did not see their human rights. Don't they have human rights?" he asked.

During the Assembly polls in Rajasthan, the Congress had promised in its manifesto that Hindu and Sikh refugees from Pakistan would be given Indian citizenship. "But now they are opposing the BJP... (Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok) Gehlotji, check your manifesto," he said.

Referring to the attack in Jawaharlal Nehru University, Shah said, "Some boys raised anti-national slogans like 'Bharat tere tukde honge ek hazar, inshallah, inshallah'. But Rahul Baba and Kejriwal are saying 'save them'... Are they your cousins? Such people deserve to be put behind bars."

The BJP chief also said that Ram temple will be built in Ayodhya in four months. "The complex will be so high that it will touch the sky," Shah said.



**(From left) Governor Jagdeep Dhandkhar, PM Narendra Modi and Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya at the 150th anniversary celebrations of Kolkata Port Trust. Partha Paul**

# PM renames Kolkata Port Trust after Syama Prasad

## Mamata skips event; CPM slams Modi

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
KOLKATA, JANUARY 12

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Sunday renamed Kolkata Port Trust (KoPT) after Jan Sangh founder Syama Prasad Mookerjee, prompting the CPI (M) to call his government a "name changer" as against the expectation of being a "game changer".

Speaking at the 150th anniversary celebrations of Kolkata Port Trust at Netaji Indoor Stadium, Modi said the Mamata Banerjee-led state government did not implement Central welfare projects like Ayushman Bharat and PM Kisan Yojana because there was no 'cut' money or syndicate involved.

Chief Minister Banerjee, who was invited to the event, and her party leaders were conspicuous by their absence.

Modi hailed Mookerjee for being at the forefront of industrialisation in the country. "Dr Mookerjee set the ball rolling for industrialisation in India... Chittaranjan Locomotive Factory, Hindustan Aircraft Factory, Damodar Valley Corporation and several other projects saw active participation from him.

Mookerjee is a living legend who fought for the idea of 'One Nation, One Constitution'," he said.

Targeting Banerjee, the PM said her government had deprived the poor of benefits from the Centre's schemes. He iterated his government's flagship projects and how they had benefited the poor and underprivileged.

"As soon as the state government gives its approval for Ayushman Bharat Yojana and PM Kisan Yojana... I don't know whether it will give its nod to it or not, but if it does, then the people of West Bengal will also start receiving the benefits of these schemes," Modi stressed.

Referring to the 'cut money' controversy in the state, he said, "There was no cut (money), no syndicate (while implementing both schemes across the country). When it (both schemes) reaches people directly without any cut or syndicate, then why would anyone want to implement such schemes? I pray to God that he instills good sense into policymakers so that the poor receive benefits of Ayushman Bharat and PM Kisan Yojana."

The CPM criticised the Centre for its decision to rename KoPT. "When Modi came to power, we thought the government will be a game changer. Now, we see the government is a name changer," CPI(M) leader and former MP Mohd Salim said.

# Country moving in direction of yuva soch, says Modi

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
LUCKNOW, JANUARY 12

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Sunday praised the youth of the country, saying the country is moving in the direction of their thinking — "yuva soch".

Addressing the five-day National Youth Festival in Lucknow through video-conferencing, he said, "Youth have wonderful capabilities — to solve problems in a new way. This way of thinking of the youth has helped us take decisions that would seem impossible to do. Their thinking tells us to face problems, and solve them. The country is also moving on their thinking. Today, in Jammu and Kashmir, Article 370 has been removed. The Ram Janmabhoomi dispute that had been going on for hundreds of years has ended, a law has been made on triple talaq. The CAA has become a reality today. After a terror attack, you see surgical and airstrikes... Our government is with the youth."

The Prime Minister said that it is the youth who are leading the country today. "India is moving ahead with confidence. Who is leading the innovation, equations

and start-ups in India today? It is you, the youth who is doing it. Today, in the world's start-up ecosystem, India is among the top three countries... The youth is behind this," Modi added.

Speaking on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, the PM said, "In the form of Swami Vivekananda, India got such energy this day that is still keeping our country energetic. Swami Vivekananda saw India's youth power as a strong link to its glorious past and future."

Urging the youth to buy only local products, Modi said, "Till 2022, as much as possible can we only buy local products. Through this, knowingly or unknowingly, we will help a fellow Indian."

Speaking at the event, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath criticised the protests on campuses, saying that slogans raised in "select" higher educational institutions warn about the centres of conspiracy. "The people who thrive on the resources of the country are trying to throw India in the cauldron of terrorism, Naxalism and extremism. This is confirmed by their statements," he said.

# 'Resolve to fulfil Constitutional goals summed up in Preamble'

*New Delhi:* Eight eminent personalities, including former SC judge J Chelameswar and former chief election commissioner S Y Quraishi, appealed to people on Sunday to "introspect and audit" the working of the Constitution.

"Is the Constitution a mere administrative manual which enables elected governments to claim legitimacy for abuse of power, and allows the citizens to convert liberty into license disregarding rights of others? Is it sim-

ply another text penned by ink, or a sacred text written in the blood of innumerable martyrs who transcended barriers of caste, religion, region, ethnicity and language?" they asked in a letter.

"We appeal to citizens to utilise this solemn occasion to celebrate our success, reflect on our current concerns... and resolve to fulfil the Constitutional goals envisaged by Dr Ambedkar and our forefathers as summed up in the Preamble," they wrote. **PTI**