



Kerala did not inform me of its plan to appeal against CAA: Governor

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NIA to take over probe into arrest of J&K police officer Davinder Singh

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Three students of Visva-Bharati beaten up over CAA protest

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M.S. Dhoni dropped from BCCI's central contracts list

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NEARBY

Congress alleges tender racket by Fadnavis govt.

MUMBAI
The Maharashtra Congress on Thursday claimed to have exposed a tender management racket run by the previous Devendra Fadnavis government. The racket includes CIDCO tenders worth for PMAY and for Metro Bhavan project at Aarey colony.

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Court seeks status report on execution

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A day after the Delhi government said none of the four convicts in the 2012 Nirbhaya gang rape and murder case could be hanged on the scheduled date of January 22 as one of them has moved a mercy plea, a Delhi court on Thursday directed Tihar jail authorities to submit a report about the status of scheduled execution.

CITES MERCY PLEA • PAGE 12

India to invite Imran Khan for Shanghai Council meet

Move comes hours after the UNSC discusses the situation in Kashmir

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Imran Khan of Pakistan will be invited to participate in the Heads of Government Council meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) that will be hosted in India this year, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Thursday. The invite move came hours after the UN Security Council discussed the situation in Kashmir.

"As per the established practice and procedure within SCO, all eight members of the SCO, four observer states, and other international dialogue partners will be invited to attend the meeting," said Official Spokesperson Raveesh Kumar in response to a question on whether Mr. Khan will be invited for the summit.

Since becoming full-time member of the SCO in 2017, both India and Pakistan have participated in multiple

Regional power play

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's (SCO) annual Heads of Government Council meeting will be hosted by India later this year. Here is a brief look at the organisation

- **Current SCO members:** India, China, Pakistan, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan
- **Observer states:** Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia
- **SCO dialogue partners:** Azerbaijan, Armenia, Cambodia, Nepal, Turkey, Sri Lanka
- **SCO permanent bodies:** Secretariat - Beijing; and Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) - Tashkent
- **Founded on June 15, 2001**
- **8-9 June 2017:** India and Pakistan became full SCO members at the Astana summit

Imran Khan has not been invited to India after he assumed office as Pakistan PM in 2018

meetings of SCO and the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) despite hostilities and tension in Kashmir. The Heads of Government Council meeting is attended by the Prime Minister-level leaders of the member states that deliberate on the regional body's economic and other pressing issues. The meeting also firms up SCO's annual budget.

Prime Minister Khan who assumed office in 2018 has been a tough critic of India's continued lockdown of Kashmir. He has also taken up the Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2019 and the National Register of Citizens both domestically and on global platforms.

Though his predecessor Nawaz Sharif had visited India in May 2014 for the "mi-

ni-SAARC summit", Mr. Khan has not been invited to India till now. On Thursday, the Pakistani leader welcomed the discussion on Kashmir held at the UN Security Council in New York, saying that the meeting "reflects a recognition of the seriousness of the prevailing situation (in Kashmir)".

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Children being radicalised in Kashmir: Gen. Rawat

'We have deradicalisation camps going on in our country'

DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

Children as young as 10-12 years are being radicalised in Kashmir and there is need to isolate those completely radicalised and put them in "deradicalisation camps", Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen. Bipin Rawat said on Thursday. He also said that security forces cannot be blamed for injuries caused by pellet guns.

Speaking on a panel on countering terrorism at the ongoing Raisina Dialogue organised by the Ministry of External Affairs and Observer Research Foundation, he said radicalisation could be countered by looking at where it was happening and who were behind it.

"What we saw in Kashmir, we saw radicalisation happening. Today we are seeing radicalisation being undertaken even amongst young people. Girls and boys as young as 10-12 are now being radicalised. These people

These people [girls and boys] can still be isolated from radicalisation in a gradual way, but there are people who have been completely radicalised. These people need to be taken out separately

GEN. BIPIN RAWAT, Chief of Defence Staff



can still be isolated from radicalisation in a gradual way, but there are people who have been completely radicalised. These people need to be taken out separately and possibly taken into some deradicalisation camps," Gen. Rawat said.

"We have deradicalisation camps going on in our country," he added, in the first comments on such camps from the Army.

Counter strategy

Gen. Rawat said radicalisation was happening in schools, universities, religious places and other sites. "First we need to get to the

nerve of who is radicalising people... You can start isolating these people gradually and then start a counter-radicalisation programme by identifying people who have been radicalised, to what degree. We have got to segregate them in degrees and then look at those who are completely radicalised, first target them, but also looking at the future," he said.

He said even Pakistan had such camps and they understand that some of "the terrorism they have been supporting, it is now hitting them back."

CONTINUED ON • PAGE 12

No relief for telcos; to pay ₹1.47 lakh-cr.

SC dismisses review petitions filed by Bharti Airtel, Vodafone Idea and others

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court led by Justice Arun Mishra, on Thursday, dismissed petitions filed by telecom companies, including Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea, for a review of its October 2019 judgment upholding the recovery of past dues amounting to ₹1.47 lakh crore from them.

The recovery by the government was based on adjusted gross revenue of about ₹92,000 crore.

The Bench, also comprising



The SC rejected their plea for an open court hearing.

ing Justices Abdul S. Nazeer and M.R. Shah, rejected the review petitions in their chambers, finding no merit in them. It also rejected a plea for an open court hearing.

ing. "Having perused the review petitions and the connected papers with meticulous care, we do not find any justifiable reason to entertain the review petitions... Pending application (s), if any, shall stand disposed of," the Supreme Court observed in a short order.

On October 24 last year, the Supreme Court dealt a huge blow to telecom service providers when it upheld the Department of Telecom's move to recover adjusted gross revenue (AGR) of about

₹92,000 crore from them.

The Bench had said the telecom sector had long reaped the fruits of the Centre's liberalised mode of payment by revenue sharing regime. "The sector has benefited immensely under the scheme as is apparent from the gross revenue trend from 2004 to 2015," Justice Mishra had written. The service providers, in turn, had failed to fulfil their obligations to the government and instead raised frivolous objections.

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34,000 Bru refugees to be settled in Tripura

MHA signs quadripartite agreement

VIJAITA SINGH
NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday presided

over the signing of a quadripartite pact of the MHA with Tripura, Mizoram and leaders of Bru community to permanently settle around 34,000 internally displaced Bru people in Tripura.

Reangs or Brus are the second largest ethnic group in

Mizoram. Their exodus in 1997 was spurred by violent clashes in Mamith subdivision, a Reang-dominated area, when they demanded creation of an autonomous council that was vehemently opposed by Mizo groups.

The Centre has sanctioned

around ₹600 crore as a settlement package, Mr. Shah said on Thursday.

After the signing of the pact, Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb said: "You cannot be refugees in your own country."

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Bengal to skip MHA meet on Census, NPR

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry has convened a meeting on Friday to discuss the modalities for the 2020 Census and the National Population Register (NPR), officials said. Except West Bengal, the representatives of all other States have agreed to attend the meeting. Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai will chair the meeting.

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SC stays HC decision on HDIL directors

Order to shift them home is unusual, says Solicitor General

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday stayed a Bombay High Court decision to shift Housing Development and Infrastructure Limited (HDIL) directors Rakesh and Sarang Wadhawan, who are accused in the multi-crore Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank fraudulent loan disbursement scam, to their residence from the Arthur Road Jail to facilitate the sale of their assets.

A Bench led by Chief Justice Sharad A. Bobde, following

an urgent mention by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, froze the operation of the January 15 order of the High Court.

Mr. Mehta said the import of the 'unusual' order allowing the duo to go home was the same as granting them bail.

The direction to allow the Wadhawans to go home with two guards was part of the HC order appointing a committee led by Justice S. Radhakrishnan for the speedy disposal of the assets. The court reasoned that the duo would be able to better help

the cause of disposal of their assets by being available at home rather than in the jail.

The High Court had even barred lower courts from entertaining the bail applications of the duo until the next hearing.

It had said the Wadhawans would remain at home under the constant watch of the guards. They would travel with the guards "for ensuring compliance of the directions of the committee and for assisting in the process of sale". It had barred the duo from leaving the State.

Will act against prof. for 'Pappu' tweet: govt.

Let him return from leave, says Minister; what about JNU professors, asks BJP

SHARAD VYAS
MUMBAI

The Maha Vikas Aghadi government will take action against a Mumbai University professor for an 'abusive' post against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh announced on Thursday. On December 14, the professor had posted a video on Twitter targeting Mr. Gandhi for his statement against V.D. Savarkar, referring to him as 'Pappu'. The professor has since been sent on forced leave by the university administration. "A university professor's work is to teach children, not give statements like these (on Mr. Gandhi). He has been sent on leave for now but action will be taken once he is back," said Mr. Deshmukh.



Rahul Gandhi • FILE PHOTO

Professor Yogesh Soman, Director of the Academy of Theatre Arts at Mumbai University, had posted the video on December 14. Mr. Soman had said, referring to Mr. Gandhi, "You are right, you are not Savarkar. You have nothing of him in you, his dedication, his sacrifice, his valour, but you also do not have anything to be called Gandhi. I condemn your *pappugiri* (sic)."

The tweet set in motion a political blame game, with members of the Chhatra Bharti Students Union and activists of AIFS (All India Students' Federation) staging a sit-in, which was withdrawn after the Mumbai University general secretary issued a letter stating Mr. Soman had been sent on forced leave. The Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) had called that a violation of the professor's freedom of speech. "According to @INCIndia, criticising a venerated freedom fighter like Veer Savarkar is perfectly okay. But dare anyone criticise His High-

ness @RahulGandhi or anyone from the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty, they will be sent on forced leave! Hypocrisy, thy name is Congress," the ABVP tweeted, soon after.

The Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) too criticised the announcement to send Mr. Deshmukh on leave.

BJP leader Shweta Shalini said by the same token, action should be taken against professors protesting in Jawaharlal Nehru University. "Really, what about all the professors in JNU who are participating in marches, sloganeering and stone-pelting? What's their work, and guess what the Fascist government is doing against them? Nothing," she said.

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