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NEARBY



'Peaceful protests will deepen democratic roots'

NEW DELHI
Referring to the ongoing agitation against the amended citizenship law and a proposed nationwide National Register of Citizens exercise, former President Pranab Mukherjee on Thursday said that the "peaceful protests" would lead to a deepening of India's democratic roots. He was speaking at the first annual Sukumar Sen Memorial lecture.

CITY ► PAGE 4

644 extremists surrender in Assam

GUWAHATI
A total of 644 extremists from eight banned outfits surrendered at an official function here on Thursday. The event, attended by Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, was part of a series of "mainstreaming" programmes for extremist groups held since 1992.

NEWS ► PAGE 13

Security beefed up in city ahead of Republic Day

NEW DELHI
With intelligence inputs warning of a terror strike and to prevent any disruption by anti-CAA protesters, adequate security measures have been put in place in the city for the Republic Day celebrations here.

CITY ► PAGE 4

FRIDAY REVIEW ► 4 PAGES

Virus-hit Wuhan locked down

Trains and planes indefinitely suspended; travel curbs in neighbouring cities too

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIJING

China on Thursday locked down some 20 million people at the epicentre of the new coronavirus outbreak, banning planes and trains from leaving in an unprecedented move aimed at containing the disease, which has spread to other countries.

The respiratory virus, 2019-nCoV, has claimed 17 lives since emerging from a seafood and animal market in the central city of Wuhan, infected hundreds of other people and been detected as far away as the U.S.

Streets and shopping centres in Wuhan, with a population of 11 million, were eerily quiet after authorities told residents not to leave the city, where most of



On alert: A soldier uses a digital thermometer to check a driver's temperature in Wuhan on Thursday. ■ AP

the cases have been identified. Trains and planes out of Wuhan were indefinitely suspended and tollways on roads out of the city were closed, leading to fear and panic among those trapped. "We are feeling as though it is the end of the world," said a resident on China's Twit-

ter-like Weibo platform, voicing concerns about shortages of food.

Hours later, authorities in the neighbouring city of Huanggang, with a population of 7.5 million, announced that public transport and train services would be suspended at mid-

Indian nurse tests positive

An Indian nurse working at a hospital in Saudi Arabia tested positive for the novel Coronavirus when she and nearly 100 of her Indian colleagues, mostly from Kerala, were screened, the government said. She is being treated at Aseer National Hospital. ► PAGE 9

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CALL FOR HELP ► PAGE 14

India again rejects Trump offer on Kashmir

U.S. President's comments came after a meeting with Pakistan PM Khan at Davos

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Ruling out any role for a "third party" in the Kashmir issue, India rejected U.S. President Donald Trump's comments offering to mediate between India and Pakistan.

The President's latest offer was made at a joint press appearance with Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan at the World Economic Fo-

rum meeting in Davos, Switzerland, on Wednesday, repeating a previous offer made in June 2019.

"We have seen President Trump's remarks. Let me once again reiterate that there is no role for any third party in the matter. If at all there are any issues between India and Pakistan to be discussed, it should be done bilaterally," MEA spokesper-

son Raveesh Kumar said, adding that "the onus is on Pakistan to create a conducive atmosphere free from terror and violence".

The Ministry of External Affairs has not yet confirmed a possible visit by Mr. Trump to India on February 24. However, asked in Davos about the planned visit, reported by *The Hindu* last week, Mr. Trump did not deny it, only

replying that as he had just met Mr. Khan, he would not require to visit Pakistan when he comes to India.

"What's going on between Pakistan and India – if we can help, we certainly will be willing to. We have been watching it very closely," Mr. Trump said.

(With PTI inputs)

FATF GOALS ► PAGE 14

In full finery



Getting it right: The BSF camel contingent at the full dress rehearsal for the Republic Day parade at Rajpath in New Delhi on Thursday. Several roads were closed for the rehearsal, leading to traffic snarls in the city. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR (REPORT ON PAGE 9)

The condemned can't fight endlessly, says CJI

'A judge can only ensure punishment is proportionate'

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

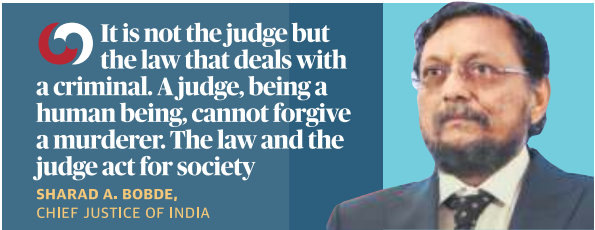
Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sharad A. Bobde on Thursday said a condemned person cannot fight the death penalty endlessly and it was important for the capital punishment to reach its finality.

The death penalty, he noted, cannot be questioned at every turn by the convict. "One cannot go on fighting endlessly for everything."

Cardinal duty

The CJI said it was not for a judge to forgive a crime. The cardinal duty of a judge was to see if the punishment was proportionate to the crime. The law applied whether the criminal was a first-timer or a hardened one.

"Courts punish crime. If you go by the innocence of a human being, the worst criminal would have an innocent heart. There is nobody who is a criminal at the depth of their heart... It is not the judge but the law that deals with a criminal. A



judge, being a human being, cannot forgive a murderer. The law and the judge act for society. Imagine a situation when a judge tells a murderer 'Yes, I forgive you!'. Imagine the impact!" the CJI observed.

He asked Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta whether a condemned person, who reforms after the award of the death sentence, should be spared the noose. Mr. Mehta replied, "If that is accepted, there will be no death penalty. You can't kill your parents and then claim mercy saying you are an orphan."

The oral remarks came a day after the Centre filed an application, in the background of the Nirbhaya case, to modify a 2014 judgment

of the court in the Shatrughan Chauhan case.

2014 guidelines

The 2014 verdict had issued guidelines, which primarily held that an unexplained delay in carrying out an execution would lead to commutation of the death penalty to life imprisonment.

In its application, the government asked the court to set short deadlines for death row convicts to seek legal remedies. It wanted the court to limit the time for filing curative petitions. A mercy plea should be filed within a week of issuance of the death warrant.

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NEEDLESS IMPATIENCE
► EDITORIAL

Rajasthan govt. to introduce resolution against CAA

It is likely to be tabled and passed in the Assembly on Saturday; Congress issues whip

MOHAMMED IQBAL
JAIPUR

Slamming the Centre over the enactment of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot on Thursday said the State government would introduce a resolution against the implementation of CAA in the Assembly session beginning on Friday. The ruling Congress has issued a whip asking its MLAs to attend the session on the first two days.

The session will com-

mence with the customary address of Governor Kalraj Mishra. The resolution is likely to be tabled and passed in the House on the second day of the session, which will be extended after a gap for presentation of the State budget next month.

The Kerala and Punjab Assemblies have passed similar resolutions to build pressure on the Union government over the contentious citizenship law while the ruling Trinamool Congress in West Bengal is planning to introduce a

resolution on January 27.

Mr. Pilot, who is also the Pradesh Congress Committee president, said the State Assembly would request the Union government to reconsider the statute and withdraw it at the earliest. Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot had earlier asserted that the CAA will not be implemented in Rajasthan.

Rahul rally

The Deputy CM reviewed the preparations for Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's 'Yuva

Aakrosh Rally' in Jaipur on January 28 at a meeting held at the PCC headquarters here. He said Mr. Gandhi would raise the "real issues" concerning the people and focus on the fear and unrest among the youths, who were facing unemployment as well as challenges of economic recession.

"The BJP government at the Centre should listen to the people protesting against the CAA across the country. There is no dialogue with them... They are being at-

tacked and called anti-nationalists," Mr. Pilot said, adding that the peaceful protest was a constitutional right of citizens.

Mr. Gandhi's rally, to be held at the iconic Albert Hall where anti-CAA demonstrations are being staged every day, will be attended by Congress workers, youths and students.

This will be the first in a series of rallies of the Congress leader to be organised in different cities across the country.

India slips two places on corruption index

Opaque political financing blamed

Status check

The Corruption Perceptions Index uses a scale of zero (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean). The global average for 2019 is 43

Country	Score in 2019	Rank in 2019	Change in rank from '18
Denmark	87	1	0
New Zealand	87	1	1
U.K.	77	12	-1
U.S.	69	23	-1
India	41	80	-2
China	41	80	7
Brazil	35	106	-1
Pakistan	32	120	-3
Russia	28	137	1
Bangladesh	26	146	3
Somalia	9	180	0

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India's ranking in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI-2019) has slipped from 78 to 80 compared to the previous year, Transparency International said on Thursday, questioning the "unfair and opaque political financing" in the country. Its score of 41 out of 100 remains the same.

In democracies such as India and Australia, unfair and opaque political financing, undue influence in decision-making and lobbying by powerful corporate inter-

est groups have resulted in stagnation or a decline in the control of corruption.

The report has revealed that a majority of countries are showing little to no improvement in tackling corruption. "Our analysis also shows corruption is more pervasive in countries where big money can flow freely into electoral campaigns and where governments listen only to the voices of wealthy or well-connected individuals," Transparency International said.

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