



Progressive painter
Akbar Padamsee
passes away at 91
page 9



90% of promises
in BJP manifesto
fulfilled: Amit Shah
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Austria's Sebastian Kurz
returns as world's
youngest head of govt.
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Saini and Thakur set up
India's thumping win in
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NEARBY



3-member AAP panel to draft election manifesto

NEW DELHI
The Aam Aadmi Party on Monday formed a three-member committee for drafting the party's manifesto for the Delhi Assembly elections. Senior party leader Atishi is chairperson of the committee, while Jasmine Shah and Ajay Kumar are its members.

CITY ► PAGE 2

AASU to protest if PM visits State

NEW DELHI
The North East Students' Organisation and the AASU said on Tuesday that they would protest if Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the State for the Khelo India Games 2020, scheduled from January 10.

NEWS ► PAGE 13

CRASH COURSE STARTS 16th JANUARY
70+ QUESTIONS ASSURED
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OPPORTUNITIES ► PAGE 15

At least 50 killed in stampede at Soleimani's funeral in Iran

General was killed in a U.S. drone strike near Baghdad airport

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KERMAN

A stampede broke out on Tuesday at the funeral of a top Iranian General killed in a U.S. drone strike near the Baghdad airport in Iraq, leaving more than 50 people dead and many injured as huge crowds packed his hometown.

The tragedy in the south-eastern city of Kerman came as Iran prepared to bury Revolutionary Guards Commander, Qassem Soleimani, a hugely popular figure in the Islamic republic. More than 50 people were killed and 212 people injured in the stampede, semi-official news agency ISNA said, citing officials in the southeastern city.

The streets of Kerman overflowed with mourners, while others took refuge on hillsides around the city, where the General was to be buried at the martyrs' cemetery.



Tense moments: A woman enquiring about her brother outside the information office of a hospital in Kerman on Tuesday. • AFP

tery.

Schoolgirls joined chants of "Death to Trump" from the crowd.

People converged from afar on Azadi Square, where two flag-draped coffins were on display, with the second one reportedly containing

the remains of Soleimani's closest aide, Brigadier General Hossein Pourjafari.

"We're here today to pay respects to the great Commander of the holy defence," said a mourner.

IRAN WARNS U.S. ► PAGE 14

Government projects slower GDP growth

5% estimate in line with RBI forecast

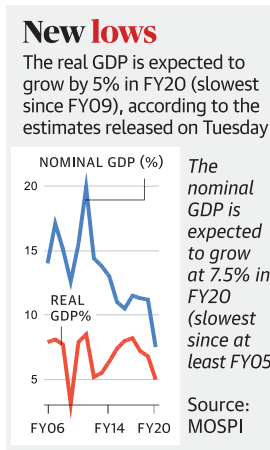
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The government expects the country's gross domestic product (GDP) to grow at a slower pace of 5% for the full year 2019-20, as compared to 6.8% in the previous year, according to the first advance estimates released by the Statistics Ministry on Tuesday.

This estimate is in line with projections made by the Reserve Bank of India, which had revised GDP growth downwards to 5% for 2019-20 from 6.1% during its October policy.

As per the data, the manufacturing sector is estimated to grow by 2% as compared to a robust growth of 6.9% in 2018-19. Likewise, the growth in the construction sector for the fiscal is expected to see a sharp decline to 3.2% as against a growth of 8.7% in the previous year.

Economic growth slowed



to a six-year low of 5% in the first quarter of the 2019-20 fiscal, while slipping further to 4.5% growth in the second quarter (July-September).

The advanced estimates also forecast slower rate of growth for real Gross Value Added (GVA) at 4.9% as against 6.6% in 2018-19.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 12

Charges against student leader, but none held for JNU attacks

Aishe Ghosh, 18 others charged with vandalising server room on campus

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Forty-eight hours after masked goons attacked students and teachers on the campus of the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), the Delhi police are yet to make any arrests in the case.

Instead, they have registered two FIRs against injured president of the JNU Students Union (JNUSU) Aishe Ghosh and several others for allegedly attacking security guards and vandalising a server room on January 4.

The two FIRs against Ms. Ghosh and the others were registered at 8.44 p.m. and at 8.49 p.m. on Sunday even as the masked intruders were going around the campus beating up students, entering hostel rooms and ransacking them.

Faculty plaint ignored

No FIR has been filed by the police so far on a written complaint filed on Monday by a JNU faculty member, Prof. Sucharita Sen, who suffered head injuries during the attack. In her complaint, which has a copy of her med-



Supportive role: Bollywood actor Deepika Padukone visiting JNU to show solidarity with the students on Tuesday. • ANI

ical report from the AIIMS, Prof. Sen has demanded that the police register an FIR that includes attempt to murder among other sections of the law.

The FIRs say a large number of student agitators, including Ms. Ghosh, Saket Moon and 18 others, allegedly entered the Communication and Information Services (CIS) office located in the administration block by "breaking" a glass door. They trespassed and damaged the fibre optic cables,

servers and biometric devices and "attacked" security guards, the FIRs say.

In a video posted online on Monday, a fringe right-wing group, Hindu Raksha Dal, claimed responsibility for the attack.

The video shows a man, identifying himself as Pinki Chaudhary, saying that those who resort to "anti-national activities" will be treated in the same way that JNU students and faculty were.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 12

Govt. invites diplomats to visit Kashmir

SUHASINI HAIDAR
PEERZADA ASHIQ
NEW DELHI/ SRINAGAR

Five months after its decision on Article 370, the government has invited the

first group of Delhi-based diplomats to travel to Srinagar and assess the situation there, and is now awaiting a response from them.

According to sources in

Delhi and Srinagar, security and hotel and travel arrangements are in place for the visit.

DETAILS ON ► PAGE 12

Kicked, abused in police custody, says Sadaf Jafar

Darapuri claimed he was denied a blanket in the cold and was also not provided food for 24 hours

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

Congress worker and social activist Sadaf Jafar on Tuesday alleged that not only did male police officers assault her in custody but they also subjected her to communal slurs and humiliation and asked her to "go to Pakistan".

"They said 'you are a Pakistani'," Ms. Jafar told *The Hindu* after being released from jail, more than two weeks after her arrest following the violence during the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in Lucknow.

"They said 'you eat here but sing songs of Pakistan. What have we not provided to you people? You are doing jobs here, getting to eat and also produce kids'," she claimed.

Ms. Jafar, a single mother with two minor children, said the police accused her of re-



Former IPS officer S.R. Darapuri and social activist Sadaf Jafar coming out of jail in Lucknow on Tuesday. • PTI

ceiving funds from Pakistan. She claimed that when she begged the police to allow her to inform her family of her detention on December 19, a male police officer beat her up while women constables slapped her multiple times and abused her.

"An officer walked up to me and pulled my hair – the whole strand of hair came off – and then he kicked me on my stomach and my knee,"

Ms. Jafar alleged. "They used such filthy language that I can't repeat it."

Ms. Jafar and retired IPS officer S.R. Darapuri were among the 14 persons granted bail by a Lucknow court on Saturday in connection with the violence.

Social activist and teacher Robin Verma and theatre artiste Deepak Mishra, who too were arrested in connection with the violence during the

anti-CAA protests in Lucknow, were granted bail on Tuesday.

Ex-IPS officer 'mistreated'

Mr. Darapuri (76), too, alleged mistreatment at the hands of the police. He claimed he was denied a blanket in the cold and was also not provided food for 24 hours. "On December 20, I was picked up from my house at 11 a.m. and kept the whole day at the Ghazipur police station and was taken to the Hazratganj police station in the evening. They showed my arrest at 7 p.m., and not 11 a.m., from some park," he said.

"I didn't have any [warm] clothes. They [police] refused to give me a blanket and food," the septuagenarian said. The police also did not record his statement at the police station and fabricated it, he alleged.

‘With what confidence will students go to universities?’

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

AAP national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, while addressing the seventh town hall meeting on Tuesday, asked with what confidence will students go to universities.

He also accused the Central government of giving orders to Delhi Police to not take any action.

The seventh town hall meeting, part of AAP’s election campaign, was anchored by *Aaj Tak*, a Hindi TV news channel.

Talking about the violence in JNU and Jamia Millia Islamia, he said: “I am too worried. The way violence is happening in universities, that is not good. Children go to university to study... The way students were attacked inside Jamia and the violence that happened in JNU, I am very worried.”

‘L-G assured to inquire’

“With what confidence will the children go to universities? Soon after the incident, I had spoken to the L-G and he assured to inquire into it. There should not be violence in universities and colleges. Whatever must be done on this, everyone should do it together,” he said.

Accusing the Central government, the Delhi CM said: “Delhi Police is capable, constables are capable. But order is given from above “just stand there don’t take any action”.”

DELHI TODAY

Talk: Seminar on “North Korean Nuclear crisis: How we got here and where we are going” by Vipin Narang, Associate Prof. of Political Science, MIT, Massachusetts, USA at Conference Room II, India International Centre (IIC), 3 p.m.

Talk: Discussion on two books: “Instrumental Lives: An Intimate Biography of an Indian Laboratory” by Pankaj Sekhsaria and “Money, Culture, Class: Elite Women as Modern Subjects” by Parul Bhandari. Discussants: Dr. Simona Sawhney, Dept. of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT, Delhi; Dr. Dev Pathak, Dept. of Sociology, South Asian University, New Delhi; and Dr. Lipika Kamra, School of Liberal Arts and Humanities, O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonapat. Chair: Prof. Saurabh Dube, El Colegio de México, Mexico City at Conference Room - I, India International Centre (IIC), 6.30 p.m.

Book Launch: T.C.A. Ranganathan, retired Chairman of Exim Bank and T.C.A. Srinivasa Raghavan, a noted columnist will launch their latest book ‘All the Wrong Turns’ in the presence of Dr. Rajat Kathuria, Director & Chief ICRIER along with Ajit Ranade, Chief Economist, Aditya Birla Group, at Seminar Rooms I, II & III, India International Centre (IIC), 6 p.m.

Exhibition: “Light and Lines in the Middle Land”, a solo exhibition of photographs by Amit Verma at Convention Centre Foyer, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Exhibition: “Katha”, a solo painting show by Chandar Panjre at Triveni Gallery, Triveni Kala Sangam, 205, Tansen Marg, 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Exhibition: Vision’20 a group art show by 12 young artists at All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society, 1 Rafi Marg, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

(Mail your listings for this column at cityed@delhi@thehindu.co.in)

AAP forms three-member panel to draft its election manifesto

Party to unveil it before Jan. 20; cleaning city and resolving traffic jams on agenda



STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party on Monday announced a three-member ‘manifesto committee’ for drafting the party’s manifesto for the upcoming Delhi Assembly elections.

The three-member committee includes, senior party leader Atishi as the chairperson, Vice Chairperson of Dialogue & Development Commission (DDC), Jasmine Shah and party spokesperson Ajoy Kumar as the members.

“All the three members will incorporate suggestions of people and the vision of our party while preparing the manifesto. The manifesto will be released between



Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal addresses a gathering at Connaught Place on Tuesday. •PTI

January 15 and 20,” said senior party leader Gopal Rai while addressing a press conference.

Mr. Rai said that issues highlighted by AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal during his town hall meetings such as cleaning the city and finding a solution to traffic congestion would be part of the manifesto.

The party also said that

they have reached out to 30 lakh households with the ‘AAP ka report card’ and also distributed it to about 13 lakh people during 650 mohalla sabhas since December 26.

On December 24, the party had launched ‘AAP ka report card’, which describes the top 10 achievements of the government in the last five years and had set a target to take it to 35 lakh hou-

seholds. From December 26, the party has been taking it to households and mohalla sabhas held in all Assembly constituencies.

“We have reached out to 30 lakh households with the report card. Will complete it by January 10,” Mr. Rai said.

Campaign drive

Taking the report card to the people and Mr. Kejriwal holding seven town hall meetings were part of the second phase of the party’s election campaign. He said that the party will announce the next phase of the campaign after releasing the manifesto.

Mr. Rai said that current schemes and works of the AAP government will continue and they will now prepare new schemes to be included in the manifesto.

Model code in place, civic bodies told to enforce provisions

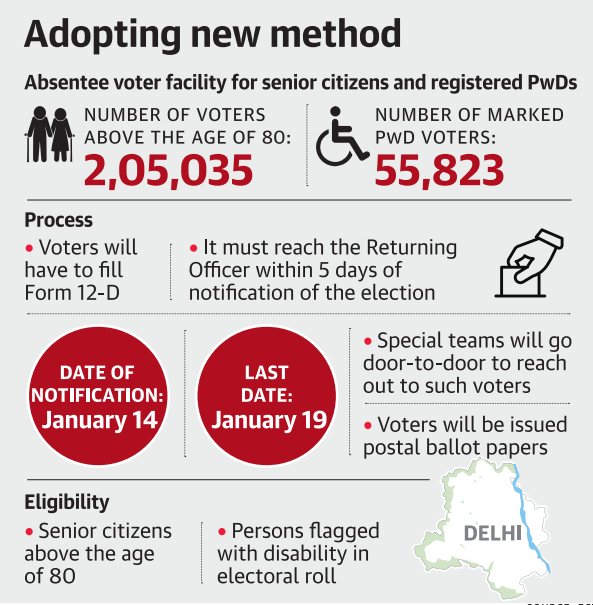
Two complaints related to violation of code received so far over certain TV programmes, says CEO

SIDHARTH RAVI
NEW DELHI

With the announcement of the dates for the Delhi Assembly elections on Monday, the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) has come into place, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Ranbir Singh said on Tuesday.

All government departments have been instructed to take down political posters and images of political leaders from their websites and social media accounts within 24 hours, the CEO said.

All five urban local bodies of the city have also been instructed to enforce these provisions which primarily deal with enforcement of the anti-defacement law, the CEO said. This includes ensuring all such defacement is removed from private property as well within 72 hours. The MCC also provides that



no new development work must be started and that government vehicles and other resources are not misused, the CEO added.

At a meeting of all politi-

cal parties held on Tuesday, provisions of the MCC were conveyed and the process of Media Certification and Monitoring Cell (MCMC) were also explained. So far,

two complaints on violations of the MCC had been received from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) over certain television programmes, the CEO said.

In a first, the CEO said that persons with disabilities flagged on the electoral roll and senior citizens above the age of 80 across Delhi will have the facility to cast their vote as “Absentee Voters”. Such voters would have to file their applications with the respective returning officer within five days from the notification of the election on January 14. Between January 14 and January 19, special teams will be constituted to go door-to-door and facilitate the process, the CEO said.

Digital voter slip

Apart from this, at 11 constituencies in Delhi, voters will also have the facility to

Cong. asks whether Tiwari decided poll date; ECI refutes allegation

BJP leader had said that AAP’s fate would be known on Feb. 8

DAMINI NATH
JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI

Over two weeks before the Election Commission of India on Monday announced that the Delhi Assembly elections would be held on February 8, Delhi BJP president Manoj Tiwari told a television channel on December 18 that Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and the Aam Aadmi Party’s fate would be known on February 8. After the Congress on Monday questioned whether Mr. Tiwari decided the election date, the ECI on Tuesday termed the allegation incorrect.

Sharing a video clip of Mr. Tiwari speaking at the News 18 Chaupal event, Congress spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said in a tweet on Monday night:

“The nation knows CBI, ED, DRI, CBDT and Income Tax are permanent allies of Modi-Shah duo! Has ECI joined the bandwagon with Manoj Tiwari? Delhi wants to know - Delhi polling dates were decided by ECI or in advance by Manoj Tiwari? Tiwari decides, ECI stamps?.”

Video clip

In the video, Mr. Tiwari responds to a question about Mr. Kejriwal by saying: “Whether or not he is *da-bang* [fearless], we will find out on February 8.” Asked by the anchor how he knew the date when elections had not been announced, Mr. Tiwari said the 2015 Assembly elections were on February 7. “If not February 8, it will happen on February 14,”

he said. When asked whether any complaint had been received in the matter and for comment on Mr. Surjewala’s allegation, an ECI spokesperson said: “No complaint received by ECI. Such averments are factually incorrect.”

Tiwari’s response

On his part, Mr. Tiwari rejected the allegation.

“This is an attempt to spread misconception among the people. What I said was that the result would be out on February 8 - but I have clearly been proved wrong since the results will be out on February 11. What was said was based on the dates of the previous elections. Everyone has a right to speculate,” said Mr. Tiwari.

No need for binoculars, just look up to find CCTVs: AAP

Party was reacting to Shah’s statement

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party on Tuesday attacked the BJP over Union Home Minister Amit Shah’s statement that the latter couldn’t spot CCTV cameras in Delhi and showed footages of Mr. Shah from government-installed CCTV cameras in Lajpat Nagar.

“You don’t need binoculars, when you are doing door-to-door [election campaigning], just look up, you can see them at 10 feet height,” AAP leader Manish Sisodia said during a press conference, after showing footage of Mr. Shah from the CCTV.

“The Bharatiya Janata Party is now nothing but a ‘Bharatiya Jumla Party’, and one that now believes that all other political parties make false promises like

they do. We want to remind the Bharatiya Janata Party and Amit Shah that Delhi has a government that actually does real work that impacts and transform the lives of the citizens,” Mr. Sisodia said.

Mr. Shah has been repeatedly asking about the CCTV cameras since the last two or three days, the AAP said.

“In the very same locality of Lajpat Nagar where he had conducted door-to-door campaigning two days ago, 16 cameras were installed by the AAP government. In fact, right opposite the house where he had gone to meet voters, there was a CCTV camera,” Mr. Sisodia said.

He also said that the Delhi government has fulfilled its 2015 manifesto promise of installing CCTV cameras in buses and public spaces.

Unseasonal rain



Motorists caught during a spell of rain in the city on Tuesday morning. The minimum temperature, however, increased due to a cloud cover and stood at 11.6 degrees Celsius, four notches above normal. •SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Focus on food security in manifestos: Delhiites

Residents narrate their experience while availing of govt. services at public meeting

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A day after the Delhi Assembly elections’ schedule was announced, women, residents of slums, homeless people and Delhiites from different backgrounds gathered on Tuesday to demand all political parties to focus on food security while drafting their manifestos.

At a public meeting organised by the Delhi Roti Roti Adhikar Abhiyan, residents from across the Capital narrated their experience with availing of ration, pension and other

government services.

Ramwati, a resident of Mangolpuri, said about 50 applicants in her neighbourhood had been awaiting information about the pension scheme forms they had filled in June, but there had been no update from the government.

Quality of ration

Noor Jahan, a resident of Begumpur, said the quality of ration received through the public distribution system was poor. “At the time of voting, they [political parties] promise all kinds of

things, but after the elections, it all stops,” she said.

Kamlesh, a resident of Janta Mazdoor Colony, said she had applied to add names to her family’s ration card in 2016, but there had been no progress.

With several speakers complaining of the pending ration card applications, Anjali Bhardwaj of the Delhi Roti Roti Adhikar Abhiyan, said while the Centre decides the amount of ration and funds to be allocated to the PDS, the Delhi government could give funds from its own budget to expand

the PDS benefits.

At the end of the meeting, the Delhiites gathered there demanded that the political parties promise they will provide pulses, oil and sugar at subsidised rates to all food security cardholders, enhance the coverage of food security to include the homeless, transgenders and migrant workers and end the quota system in PDS. Representatives from the Aam Aadmi Party, the Congress and Swaraj India were present, while no one from the BJP attended, a statement from the Abhiyan said.

‘It breaks my heart to see JNU go down this way’

Professor Sucharita Sen recalls how masked attackers barged into campus and unleashed violence on a ‘peace meeting’

HEMANI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI

Nursing her head injury while sitting at her friend’s house in south Delhi on Tuesday, Professor Sucharita Sen, who has become one of the faces of the violent attack that took place inside Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) on January 5, said that the “regime (JNU administration) had completely disconnected with the students and teachers”.

“For the first time, there is a regime (JNU administration and Vice-Chancellor) which has no relationship with the students and teachers. I do not think that the V-C, today, can turn around and say that these are my students and my teachers. It breaks my heart to see JNU going down this way,” she said, adding that there have been V-Cs with whom teachers and students have disagreed and dissented, but

there was never a lack of communication.

No security
Recalling the day of the attack, Ms. Sen said she noticed something unusual – the absence of security from the peace meeting on Sunday. The professor said that whenever there has been a call for any gathering, there are security officials around, but on Sunday “I did not see any, which was strange”.
Due to scuffles on campus over the past few days, the JNU Teachers’ Association (JNUTA) had called for a peace meeting on Sunday evening where they advised students to not indulge in violence. While the meeting was under way, a student came and informed Ms. Sen that a large group of people wearing masks and carrying sticks had entered the campus from the main gate and was coming towards Sabar-



mati T-Point where the meeting was taking place.
Ms. Sen’s colleague Amit Thorat then took his bicycle and went to check. A while later, he came back running and told them that he had been thrashed by the mob and had to leave his bicycle behind. “We decided to form

a human chain... the women came forward thinking that the group would not attack women. We had thought that group would show some respect for teachers. But I now realise that this thought process does not apply to them because they did not want to scare anyone... the attack

was murderous”.
As the violence ensued, Ms. Sen was attacked with a stone that she said was about half the size of a brick.
A student on a two-wheeler and a colleague came to her assistance and tried to get her to a hospital but they were stopped at the university’s main gate.
“There were police on one side and a very aggressive group on the other. I was unable to register much but the student I was with kept arguing with the aggressive group to let us leave but we were not allowed to do so. The police did not intervene and kept watching. This is not the kind of police I want my country to have. They didn’t even facilitate the movement,” she said.
Ms. Sen was then taken to the health centre on campus and was later shifted to a hospital in her blood-soaked clothes.



A public meeting of JNU teachers and students on the campus; former student leader Kanhaiya Kumar speaks at the event on Tuesday. ■SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA, PTI



BJP wants to make JNU an election issue: Kanhaiya

‘The party has no work to show or a chief ministerial face to project ahead of the Delhi Assembly polls’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Former Jawaharlal Nehru University Students’ Union (JNUSU) president Kanhaiya Kumar alleged that the January 5 attack on the university was an attempt to create an election issue for the BJP as it did not have much work to show or a chief ministerial face to project ahead of the Delhi Assembly elections.
“It has been four years since the February 9 incident in JNU and they did not manage to prove anything. Now, just ahead of the Assembly elections, Home Minister Amit Shah brought up the issue on Monday at a public event as he wants to make JNU an election issue by defaming it and divert attention from the real issues,” Mr. Kumar said. A sedition case has been filed against Mr. Kumar and others for slogans raised on the campus during an event on February 9, 2016, against the hanging of Parliament attack convict Afzal Guru.
Mr. Kumar was speaking



Second from left: CPI(M) leader Sitaram Yechuri, CPI general secretary D. Raja, Swaraj Abhiyan chief Yogendra Yadav and All India Progressive Women’s Association secretary Kavita Krishnan at a public meeting on JNU campus on Tuesday. ■SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

at a meeting organised by the JNUSU and the JNU Teachers’ Association (JNUTA) that took place on campus after a solidarity march taken out by JNU alumni.
Several other alumni of the university spoke at the public meeting. Former JNU-SU chief and CPI (M) leader

Sitaram Yechury said that he headed the union during the Emergency and at that time also the fight was in defence of democracy and the Constitution. He alleged that on the night of the attack, he visited AIIMS where BJP MP Meenakshi Lekhi and other senior BJP leaders were en-

suring that some members of the ABVP were admitted to the hospital so that they could say that the violence happened on both sides.
“I salute the doctors at AIIMS who did not succumb to such pressure and treated those who really needed medical care,” Mr. Yechury

said, while encouraging the students to keep their struggle alive. “It is an extreme form of patriotism to defend the Constitution... if there is anybody who is anti-national, it is the government.”
“Modi-Shah duo, please remember that JNU students sent back Indira Gandhi during the Emergency and did not let her enter campus and ensured that she was defeated in the elections soon after due to the students’ movement. We can do it to you as well,” Mr. Yechury said.
AIPWA secretary Kavita Krishnan said that the Delhi Police is quick to lathi charge JNU and Jamia Millia Islamia students but provide safe passage to masked attackers.
D. Raja, Yogendra Yadav, Bezwada Wilson and Sharmishta Mukherjee also spoke at the event and said that the attack on JNU students was an attack on the minds of reason and critical thinking.
Several JNU alumni were not allowed on campus after their march as the university shut the gates.

Nearly 48 hours after attack, V-C dodges tough questions

Let us put the past behind: Kumar

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) Vice Chancellor M. Jagadeesh Kumar on Tuesday faced a volley of questions from reporters on how a large number of masked visitors managed to unleash violence at the university on January 5. The V-C said that there were many versions about how the people with weapons got onto campus, and that the police were investigating the matter.
“Let the police investigate, let the facts come to the front and then we will know what exactly happened. We must not add additional versions to what is going around and cause further confusion,” said Mr. Kumar.
The V-C said that a security committee will be formed to find the facts behind the incident, but did not give a timeline for when the report would be tabled. “Let the committee work and come out with the facts instead of pressurising them,” he said.



M. Jagadeesh Kumar

dents that JNU campus is a secure place. I urge all students to come back to the campus. Let us put the past behind,” the V-C said.
Commenting on the university’s statements after the incident, which suggested that the people behind the violent attack were students who were protesting against the fee hike, Mr. Kumar said that on January 3, students with masks had attacked JNU’s server rooms to derail the registration process.
“These masked students damaged the data centre to prevent hundreds of students from registering and had a clear intent to stop the academic functioning of the university,” he said, adding that the investigation would tell whether the same students were behind the January 5 violence.
He added that since registration for the new semester reopened on Tuesday, over 2,800 students had paid their hostel fee, “which shows that students want to resume their academic life”.
Reacting to allegations that he had not reached out personally to injured students and faculty members, the V-C said that several administration officials had contacted students and staff.

Doctors back students

ELISHA VERMANI
NEW DELHI

Doctors and medical students carried out a protest march against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and National Register of Citizens at Jamia Millia Islamia on Tuesday. The protest was held to show solidarity to the ongoing movement against violence in universities across the country.
Several protesters expressed concerns over obstruction of medical professionals from carrying out their duty and tending to people who were wounded during the violence at JNU on January 5.
Terming the attack on doctors in JNU a “war crime”, Dr. Mohammed Shadab Khan (23) said: “Medical professionals are not targeted even during actual wars, but here ambulances are being vandalised.”

Haryana teachers ask President to visit JNU

Demand inquiry by independent panel

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

The Teachers’ Association of Central University Haryana (TACUH) has written a letter to the President condemning the violence that was unleashed at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) campus on January 5, and demanded an inquiry by an independent panel comprising ex-Supreme Court judges and renowned educationalists.
The association also asked President Ram Nath Kovind to visit the JNU campus and assure the students and teachers that there would be an atmosphere of free teaching.
The letter further said that the absence of any action by JNU security or the police to stop the violence, despite being informed of

it, brought the role and intention of the JNU administration under doubt.
Quoting former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru that a university stood “for tolerance, for reason, for the adventure of ideas and for the search of truth”, the letter said that what happened on January 5 juxtaposed this vision.
‘Reign of terror’
“Fierce debate on local and global issues among the students, and slogans of ‘Inquilab Zindabad’, ‘Azaad!’ and social justice resonating in the atmosphere, and songs and theatre reflecting the dream of a just society, are identifiers of the ‘normal’ JNU life, but on January 5 this life was eclipsed by the horrible reign of terror,” read the letter.

IN BRIEF

DUTA to extend strike, boycott official duties
NEW DELHI
The Delhi University Teachers' Association (DUTA) on Tuesday resolved to extend its indefinite strike and boycott all official duties, including evaluation. The union has been on strike for nearly a month now, demanding absorption of ad-hoc teachers. The DUTA's general body meeting on Tuesday passed a resolution condemning the attack on JNU students and teachers.

Air quality likely to be in 'satisfactory' category
The air quality of the city improved to the 'poor' category on Tuesday and is expected to improve to 'satisfactory' on Wednesday, said government-run monitoring agency System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR). "Scattered to fairly widespread rainfall is expected and the washout process may further improve AQI to 'satisfactory' category by tomorrow," SAFAR said.

Air quality of Delhi-NCR			
Delhi	254	Gurgaon	168
Ghaziabad	297	Faridabad	232
Noida	274	Greater Noida	272
Legend: Good (0-50), Satisfactory (51-100), Moderate (101-200), Poor (201-300), Very poor (301-400), Severe (>401)			
AIR QUALITY INDEX AT 4 P.M. YESTERDAY (AVERAGE OF PAST 24 HOURS) [SOURCE: CPCB]			

Give information on air quality management, NGT tells States

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI
The National Green Tribunal on Tuesday directed the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to obtain information from Chief Secretaries of all States and Union Territories pertaining to compliance of solid waste management rules, air quality management and restoration of polluted river stretches across the country.
While pursuing a report furnished by the apex pollution monitoring body, a Bench headed by NGT chairperson observed that the data was insufficient and that information pertaining to sewage generation and treatment reflected a gap. "Grading made by the CPCB into "good", "average", "poor" and "no information" is not based on any qualitative analysis but the extent of information furnished," it said. With regard to the restoration of 351 polluted river stretches, the NGT directed the State governments to provide information on the in-situ and ex-situ remediation.
The Tribunal added: "Chief Secretaries need to monitor and compile information on the subject of execution of action plans for containment of air pollution in 122 cities where air quality is not within permissible limits." The NGT also sought information on the quantity of municipal solid waste generated, segregated and treated along with data on the quantity of legacy waste.

'Nirbhaya convict broke down after hearing execution date'

3 other convicts in 2012 gang rape-murder case remained impassive, says officer

SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI
After a Delhi court on Tuesday issued death warrants against all four convicts in the 2012 Nirbhaya case, one of them broke down while the rest remained impassive when the Judge announced the execution date, said a senior officer with Tihar jail.

January 22 at 7 a.m.
The convicts, who were produced before the court via videoconferencing, will be hanged on January 22 at 7 a.m.
On hearing the verdict, Pawan (25) who was in a separate cell broke down while Mukesh (32), Vinay Sharma (26), and Akshay Singh (31), who were together at the time, remained expressionless, the officer said.
Three of the convicts are lodged in Jail No 2 while Pa-



(Clockwise from top left) Nirbhaya rape convicts — Pawan, Vinay, Mukesh and Akshay. • PTI

wan is in Jail No 4.
"As per procedure, the convicts have to be moved to a separate condemned cell. They will be put under round-the-clock surveillance and their health will be monitored daily," said the officer.

We will inform the family members of the convicts and their last meeting will be arranged in Tihar. Four gallows are ready

AN OFFICER WITH TIHAR JAIL

DG (Tihar) Sandeep Goyal said they have received the judgment copy and the death warrants. On Tuesday, the court was hearing the applications moved by Nirbhaya's parents and the prosecution (Delhi government), seeking issuance of death warrant against the convicts.

A relief: hangman
Hangman Pawan, who is likely to execute the task, said he will get relief after hanging the rape convicts. "It will give a message to all those who disrespect women," Pawan

from Meerut said. He will be approached by the Tihar jail authorities on Wednesday as another hangman in Lucknow's jail is said to be unwell.
"We had earlier written to the prison authority of Uttar Pradesh seeking service of hangman. Now that the death warrants have been issued, we will be writing to the prison authority again for the same," said the officer.
Jail Superintendent of Meerut prison, V.P. Pandey, said he has not received any letter for sending Pawan for the execution.
"We will inform the family members of the convicts and their last meeting will be arranged in Tihar. Four gallows are ready and the rope ordered from Buxar jail has already reached Tihar," said an officer.
All convicts will be hanged together, the officer added.

Chief Minister welcomes verdict

Award death penalty to rape convicts within 6 months: Maliwal

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party on Tuesday welcomed the Delhi court's verdict on the 2012 Nirbhaya gang rape and murder case.
"Today, a long term wish of the people of Delhi has been fulfilled. I think, the others will also learn that people who misbehave with women will not be spared," said AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal while addressing the seventh town hall meeting, a part of the party's election campaign.
The meeting was organised by AAP and anchored by *Aaj Tak*. During the meeting, senior AAP leader Manish Sisodia said: "I am happy that the efforts of their lawyers, family, friends and activists have paid off. The court took a decision, for which people of the country have been waiting for a long time."
Mr. Kejriwal tweeted: "There is some sense of satisfaction after the issuance



Nirbhaya's mother and father along with lawyers after the verdict outside the Patiala House Courts on Tuesday. • SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

of death warrants against the convicts in the Nirbhaya case. It took seven years. This system will have to change. Such a system must be put in place, which ensures that the rapist is hanged within six months."
Terming the verdict "justice to all Nirbhayas", Delhi Commission for Women chief Swati Maliwal on Tuesday said: "Even though it has taken a long time, the verdict is a win for all the Nirbhayas of the country."
When asked whether the death penalty handed will

act as a deterrent, she told *The Hindu*, "It will of course act as a deterrent in future as the hanging of the convicts will send out a strong message. Up until now, perpetrators were under the impression that there is no grave consequences to such heinous crimes. However, now with this judgment, it will be proved that justice will be brought in each case henceforth."
Ms. Maliwal, who had gone on an indefinite hunger strike last December as well, demanding the death penalty for rape convicts maintained that such verdicts should be meted out within six months of the crime and "not wait for seven years".
"I appeal to the Centre to ensure that in the future, the death penalty should be awarded within six months so that justice is provided swiftly. It has to be guaranteed that perpetrators will be punished at the earliest," she added.

Green tribunal seeks report on sewage overflowing on NH-19

Haryana pollution board, Faridabad DM given one month

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The National Green Tribunal on Tuesday directed the Haryana State Pollution Control Board and Faridabad District Magistrate to furnish a factual and action taken report on sewage overflowing on the Delhi-Agra Highway.
Taking cognisance of a report published by *The Hindu* on safety concerns being raised due to the overflowing sewage on National Highway-19, a Bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel directed authorities to furnish the report within one month.
The Bench said: "The news report gives rise to a substantial question of the environment which may call for the intervention of this Tribunal. The situation may



The flooded stretch on the Delhi-Agra Highway. • ASHOK KUMAR

need to be remedied forthwith in the interest of the environment and public health."
The Hindu on January 6 had highlighted how sewage from the Seekri village was overflowing onto a service road for the last six months and had become a major cause of hindrance to locals and motorists.
The locals had complained of foul smell and water-borne diseases resulting

from the sewage.
They had also raised concerns about accidents being caused due to the water logging in the area.
The green panel noted: "The flooded road hampers the movement of vehicles, emits a foul smell, causes water-borne diseases and accidents on the highway. Pipeline and drains get frequently choked due to dumping of garbage in the open drain, leading to overflowing of sewage to the service road."
An egg-stall owner, Prahlad, had said: "A portion of the road is damaged due to waterlogging and a truck overturned a month ago. The highway authorities then closed the right turn to the road passing through Seekri and connecting a dozen villages."

Blithe spirit



Seagulls fly over the Yamuna on a cold day in the city. • SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Man found dead on Noida road, belongings missing

Case of murder and loot registered

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NOIDA

A Gurugram-based private firm's employee was found dead on a service lane in Greater Noida early on Tuesday with his car and other belongings missing, the police said.
The victim — Gaurav Chandel — was a resident of Fifth Avenue Gaur City in Greater Noida (West), they said, adding that case of murder and loot have been registered against unknown persons.
His body was found near Hidon Vihar Stadium at 4.15 a.m. with injuries on his head. "Chandel was returning home last night when

the incident took place," a police spokesperson said.
"Along with his car, objects like his mobile phone, laptop and wallet were also missing," an officer said. His family members said he had called them at 10.55 p.m., saying he would reach home in five minutes. "But he did not reach home even after 45 minutes and calls made on his mobile phone went unanswered after which his wife asked some of their neighbours to help trace him," a family source said.
GautamBuddha Nagar's SSP Vaibhav Krishna said investigation has been taken up to track the culprits.

Registrations for e-auction of vacant Delhi Development Authority plots begin

Exercise to be carried out from January 28 to 31, say officials

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Registrations for an e-auction of vacant residential, commercial, industrial and institutional plots among others, under the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) began on Tuesday, said officials.
Last date
The e-auction will take place between January 28 and January 31 while the last date of registrations is January 24, said a senior DDA official.
Under the scheme, 51 institutional, 164 residential, 50 industrial and 90 commercial vacant plots will be

put on offer, they said.
Around 129 plots meant for expandable housing scheme, seven group housing plots, 67 spaces for offices and shops will also be put on offer.
Additionally, 55 vacant plots meant for installing mobile towers and 12 spaces meant for kiosks will also be put on offer for interested stakeholders.
First phase
The land-owning agency, had in January last, launched the first phase of the scheme where around 645 vacant plots in the Capital were put under consideration.

HC junks PIL for probe into IGIA duty-free shops

Fine of ₹10,000 imposed on petitioner

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court dismissed a PIL seeking a high-level inquiry into the affairs of duty-free shops at the Indira Gandhi International Airport here and imposed a cost of ₹10,000 on the petitioner.
'Private interest'
An HC Bench refused to entertain the PIL, saying it was "absolutely a private interest litigation".
The Bench noted that the PIL was filed after a duty-free shop at the airport had given chocolates worth ₹360 to the petitioner instead of change when he

purchased a bottle of wine priced ₹9,740. "We see no reason to entertain this writ petition because it is not a Public Interest Litigation at all. This is absolutely a private interest litigation," it said. The counsel for the petitioner, who claimed to be a book publisher, submitted that on June 17, 2019, when he landed at the IGIA from abroad, he had gone to the duty-free shop to purchase wine, which cost ₹9,740.
The plea alleged that such shops are selling small products like biscuits, chocolates to customers without their permission and demand and in this way they are disposing of old stock.

Kherki Daula toll plaza traffic shifts to alternative route due to congestion

Heavy traffic diversion is causing revenue loss to company, which will be claimed from agency responsible for construction of new road, says toll operation manager

ASHOK KUMAR
GURUGRAM

In the wake of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways order for dedicated FASTag lanes at all National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) tolls from December 15 last year, a sizeable chunk of traffic at Kherki Daula toll plaza here has shifted to an alternative road connecting the Southern Peripheral Expressway to the Delhi-Jaipur Highway, opposite Hyatt Regency Hotel.
Though the 5-km road passing through Sector 77 has been in use for the past six months, the traffic has suddenly increased on this stretch over the past few weeks due to congestion and

long waiting time at the toll plaza. The commuters also save the toll fees into the bargain.
Millennium City Expressway Private Limited (MCEPL) toll operation assistant manager Mohammad Sohrab Khan told *The Hindu* that the traffic at the toll has gone drastically down from 80,000 vehicles per day earlier to around 65,000. He said the heavy traffic mostly had diverted to the new route, causing revenue loss to the company.
Legal aspects
He said the MCEPL was looking into the legal aspects of the matter since the agreement did not allow construc-



Motorists heading towards Delhi on NH-48 take right turn before Kherki Daula toll plaza to go to the new road through Sector 77. • ASHOK KUMAR

tion of an alternative road within 2-3 km of the toll plaza. Losses incurred would be claimed from the agency responsible for the construction of the road, he added.
Ajit Singh, a vendor, said

The traffic at the toll has gone drastically down from 80,000 vehicles per day earlier to around 65,000







MOHAMMAD SOHRAB KHAN
Millennium City Expressway Private Limited toll operation assistant manager

become busy. More private and commercial vehicles have started plying on the stretch," he said.
The traffic on the Jaipur-Delhi carriageway of the highway — mostly private vehicles from group housing societies along the Dwarka Expressway — take right from the U-turn cut, about 400 m

before the toll plaza, blocking the traffic on the adjoining carriageway to reach the service road on the opposite side. The motorists then drive another 200 m on the service road to turn left on the road connecting to the SPR.
Though the statistics for December indicate an increase of around 20% in FASTag users in a month's time, Mr. Khan said, still 50% of the users paid through cash and there was not much improvement in the traffic situation at the toll. "The real picture would emerge in the second week of January after the automotive companies open again after the routine shutdown and the regular com-

muters to IMT Manesar return to work," said Mr. Khan.
He said there was also a possibility of FASTag users going back to the cash payment mode and it was, thus, at a meeting with the NHAI officials, a decision to begin charging penalty from the cash users entering the FASTag lanes was taken. "Since the tag users may find it inconvenient to frequently recharge their tags and most are not comfortable using technology, they might go back to cash payment mode if we do not penalise the cash users," said Mr. Khan.
Though eight lanes on Jaipur-Delhi carriageway and 11 lanes on Delhi-Jaipur carriageway were declared as dedi-

cated FASTag lanes on December 15, all the toll lanes, except one on each side, would be operated as FASTag lanes from January 15. The trial for one only-cash lane on each side, i.e. Lane No.22 (heading to Delhi) and Lane no.28 (heading to Jaipur), will start on January 8.
"All the users under the exemption category will be allowed free passage on the production of a valid document to authenticate their exemption. However, they are also advised to get the exempted tag fitted on their vehicle as per the standard operation procedure of MoRTH," said NHAI Project Director (Gurgaon) Ashok Sharma.

Timings DELHI		
WEDNESDAY, JAN. 08		
 RISE	07:16	SET 17:41
 RISE	15:30	SET 04:38
THURSDAY, JAN. 09		
 RISE	07:16	SET 17:42
 RISE	16:20	SET 05:39
FRIDAY, JAN. 10		
 RISE	07:16	SET 17:42
 RISE	17:18	SET 06:39

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	19	12
Safdarjang	19	12
Palam	19	11

Delhi Palam Today
17°C Few spells of rain/thundershower is likely during evening hours. The night will be cool and pleasant.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
16°C Moderate fog is likely to develop in many parts with isolated dense. Cool day is likely.

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Couple claims baby not released over bills

Nursing home not in the wrong: doctor

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GHAZIABAD
A doctor at a private nursing home in Baghpat district allegedly held parents to ransom by holding on their baby, as the couple could not pay the hospital bills of ₹40,000.

Anil Kumar Singh, Additional Superintendent of Police, said a couple of days ago the police got a complaint from a Scheduled Caste couple from Bijrol village of Baghpat. According to the complaint, Shikha, wife of Mohar Singh, gave birth to a child in Usha Nursing Home of Baraut in September 2018. They were not in a condition to pay ₹40,000, the bill for C-section. When they paid ₹10,000 only, they were asked to give thumb impressions on blank papers and were told that the infant would remain with the hospital till they pay the rest of

the amount. “When they returned to pay the amount, they were allegedly driven out,” said Mr. Singh.

He said after the police started investigating the case, the couple started changing the statement. “They alleged that the doctor sold the child in Muzafarnagar. We are looking into that angle.”

Mr. Mohar also told local reporters that some people tried to kidnap him.

Teshu Hooda, the doctor at the Usha Nursing Home, said they were not in the wrong. “When the police approached us, we submitted all the documents. Shikha delivered a male child by C-section and the couple had made the required payment.”

Local sources said the two parties seem to have reached a compromise.



Guest faculty members singing 'bhajans' during their ongoing strike in Bhopal on Tuesday. ■ A.M. FARUQUI

With the appointment of 3,418 permanent faculty members in government colleges by the M.P. Public Service Commission last month, around 2,300 guests – assistant professors, librarians and sports officers – faced removal from present postings on December 7. Although the



Any feeling of insecurity would be detrimental to the community's interest, as well as that of the nation

minorities in the country.

While he himself did not agree with the Akal Takht Jathedar's remarks, the Chief Minister in a statement here said that if the former did feel that way then he should take up the matter with the SAD and ask them to leave the BJP-led coalition government at the Centre, of which they are a part.

“Unlike Pakistan, India has always taken pride in be-

ing a secular nation, with no discrimination on religious grounds,” said Capt. Amarinder, adding that any feeling among the Sikh community that they were not secure here was a matter of grave concern. “If Sikhs were feeling insecure in this country, as stated by the acting Jathedar of Akal Takht, Giani Harpreet Singh, then it was the dispensation at the Centre which was to blame,” he said.

Capt. Amarinder said that given that the Akalis' claim to be the custodians of the Sikh religion, and the community, they should take a stand on the issue, and SAD

chief Sukhbir Singh Badal should also ask his wife Har-simrat Kaur Badal to resign immediately as a Union Minister.

Capt. Amarinder said that while some incidents here and there could not be construed to be a case of Sikhs not being safe in India, perception was as important as reality. “The Sikhs had lived through a very dark period in the 1980s and any feeling of being at the receiving end in any way would revive their sense of fear, which would be detrimental to the community's interest, as well as that of the nation,” he added.

AMU to reopen in three phases from January 13

Winter vacation was extended after clashes between students and police

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GHAZIABAD
Aligarh Muslim University will reopen from January 13 in a phased manner. A statement released by the office of the Controller of Examinations on Tuesday said that at a consultative meeting of the deans of faculties, principals of colleges and other functionaries of the university under the chairmanship of Vice-Chancellor Tariq

Mansoor it was decided that the university would open in three phases.

The medicine, management and engineering faculties would open on January 13, faculties of law commerce, science, life sciences and agricultural sciences would open on January 20. Rest of the faculties would open on January 24.

The university was closed a week ahead of its schedule when clashes broke out between students and police on December 15. It was supposed to open on January 6 but the winter vacations were extended by the administration because of the “prevailing conditions”.

‘Wasn’t allowed to enter temple’

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

SHIMLA
Himachal Pradesh Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Rajiv Saizal, who is a Dalit, on Tuesday told the Assembly that he and a legislator were not allowed to enter a temple in the State.

Mr. Saizal was speaking while participating in a discussion on a bill that extends reservation for SCs and STs in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies by another 10 years.

Mr. Saizal said that he and Nachan MLA Vinod Kumar were not allowed to enter a temple, but did not mention its name, location and the time of the incident.

U.P. police rescue minor girl from traffickers

7 persons, including two women, held

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

GHAZIABAD
The Uttar Pradesh police have busted a human trafficking ring in Bulandshahr and rescued a minor girl who was allegedly being sold for marriage in Ahmedgarh area. Seven persons, including two women, have been arrested, police said.

According to the FIR, the 16-year-old, who hailed from a village near Ranchi in Jharkhand, was being sold by her step-aunt at Naurangabad village for ₹75,000. “The police team raided the house of Savitri after a tip-off. We found the girl locked in a room,” said Harendra Kumar, SP (Rural) Bulandshahr.

Suresh Kumar, CO, Shikarpur said the girl's step-aunt Kalawati brought her to the village to sell her to a family looking for a bride. “People usually consider

Haryana as the hub of such marriages but we do get such cases in western Uttar Pradesh as well. Here the sex ratio is poor as well and rural unemployment is widespread but gets covered because districts of eastern U.P. fare better,” he said.

The FIR said wedding material, such as sari and a vanity kit, was recovered from the spot. “Prima facie, Kalawati, from Ranchi, made use of the girl's poor financial condition. The girl was allegedly sold by her step-mother,” said Mr. Kumar.

POCSO Act

Seven persons have been booked under Sections 363 (kidnapping), 366A (procuring a minor girl), 370 (trafficking), 342 (wrongful confinement), 120B (criminal conspiracy) of IPC and Sections 81, 84 and 87 of the POCSO Act 2015.

Guest staff demand regularisation of jobs

On dharna in Bhopal, they call upon Congress to keep its election promise

SIDHARTH YADAV

BHOPAL

Besides teaching Hindi, Shaheen Khan, removed recently as a guest faculty member at a college in Katni district, for 15 years mentored students with their career goals, even lent them emotional support. But never did she imagine that despite having a PhD and qualifying the National Eligibility Test and the State Eligibility Test, her own future could look this bleak.

“Should we focus on our own future or our children's?” wonders Ms. Khan, a single mother of a daughter, a BSc student, and a son in Class XII. Not paid salary for six months, she is left grappling to pay ₹8,000 as house rent every month, and has even accrued a ₹2-lakh debt.



Guest faculty members singing 'bhajans' during their ongoing strike in Bhopal on Tuesday. ■ A.M. FARUQUI

With the appointment of 3,418 permanent faculty members in government colleges by the M.P. Public Service Commission last month, around 2,300 guests – assistant professors, librarians and sports officers – faced removal from present postings on December 7. Although the

State government has extended them an edge in securing a job, though ad hoc, elsewhere, the former guests, who earned ₹1,500 a day, demand regularisation. The last appointments happened in 2007, and before that in 1993.

As the dharna in Bhopal entered the 29th day on

Tuesday, Devraj Singh, who taught in Vidisha district, called upon Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and the party to keep its election promise.

Section 17.22 of the party's manifesto for the M.P. Vidhan Sabha election in November 2018 reads “...they will not be removed”.

Kamal Nath, now Chief Minister, had asserted, “The party doesn't believe in the tradition of guests and contracts. And this is about justice. Just wait for some days, and you won't complain any more.”

D.P. Ahuja, Higher Education Commissioner, told *The Hindu*, “The guests were appointed in a temporary arrangement. And in the next three years, we plan to fill all the regular posts.”

Genome of Indian cobra sequenced

More potent anti-venom can be produced, but may be ineffective against other species

JACOB KOSHY

NEW DELHI

A consortium of scientists, including some from India, have mapped the genome of the Indian Cobra, among the most poisonous snakes in the country. Knowing the sequence of genes could aid in understanding the chemical constituents of the venom and contribute to development of new anti-venom therapies, which have remained practically unchanged for over a century.

Every year, approximately five million people worldwide are bitten by venomous snakes resulting in about 400,000 amputations and more than 100,000 deaths. Each year, about 46,000 people die and 140,000 people are disabled in India from snakebites by the 'Big 4' – the Indian cobra, the common krait, Russell's viper, and the



The Indian cobra is among the most poisonous snakes.

saw-scaled viper.

“High-quality genomes of venomous snakes... will enable generation of a comprehensive catalogue of venom-gland-specific toxin genes that can be used for the development of synthetic anti-venom of defined composition,” the scientists said in the paper published in the peer-reviewed journal *Nature Genetics* this week.

Somasekar Seshagiri, of the SciGenome Research

Foundation, Bengaluru, and among the authors of the study, used the genome and gene expression data from 14 different cobra tissues. They annotated venom-gland-relevant genes and analysed the genomic organisation of gene families encoding toxin proteins involved in venom-gland function.

The authors found that 19 toxin genes are expressed exclusively in the venom gland and verified the presence of protein for 16 of these genes.

“Targeting these 19 specific toxins using synthetic human antibodies should lead to a safe and effective anti-venom for treating Indian cobra bites,” Mr. Seshagiri said in a statement.

Sequencing a genome is an important step to making anti-venom but wouldn't on its own solve the problem of making and supplying

enough of the product to address the huge volume – and variety – of snakebites in India, according to independent scientists.

“India is the snakebite capital of the world,” says Kartik Sunagar, Assistant Professor at the Centre for Ecological Sciences, IISc.


Prof Sunagar and his colleagues reported last month that though bites from 60 of 270 species of Indian snakes are known to kill or maim, anti-venom now available is only effective against the 'Big 4.'

“These 4 species are not found in northeastern India but the region reports a significant number of snake bites. That implies we need new kinds of anti-venom against species here. The krait in Punjab produces a venom chemically different from the krait in South India,” he explained to *The Hindu*.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

BIRTHDAY REMEMBRANCE

Birthday Remembrance



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08.01.1952 - 08.08.2005
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Taran Siddarth
Sheela Ramachandran
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Left trade unions confident of total strike in Bengal

Supporting issues, not bandh, says TMC

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT KOLKATA
The Left trade unions, which have called a 24-hour general strike on Wednesday in protest against the economic policies of the Centre, are confident of a total shut-down in West Bengal.
Representatives of the trade unions said on Tuesday that not only the working class but also the students, youth and middle class, who are opposed to the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the National Register of Citizens, would join the strike and make it a huge success.
The strike called by 10 trade unions, including that of the Congress, has a long charter of demands, including universalisation of the public distribution system, containing unemployment through concrete measures, increase of minimum wages, trade union rights among other issues. “A number of issues have been added since we called the strike and people are keen to protest against the fascist tendencies of the Centre. Not only the working class, but tomorrow [Wednesday] we will see the support of students, youth and the middle class,” said State president of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions and

former Labour Minister Anadi Sahu.
Mr. Sahu said rallies in Kolkata would start in different parts of the city at 6 a.m. “The central rally from the CITU headquarters in central Kolkata will start at 10 a.m.,” he said.

TMC’s stand
A day after Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said though she supported the issues related to the strike, she would not allow a bandh, Trinamool leader Partha Chatterjee said strike was the last weapon and by using it often the Left parties were making it blunt. “For 34 years in the Left Front rule bandhs had become holidays,” he said. Asked whether they were opposed to the strike, Mr. Chatterjee reiterated what Ms. Banerjee had said, “We are not in support of the bandh, we are supporting the issues.”
The representatives of the trade unions however, expressed confidence that unlike the aggression shown in the past, the ruling TMC would not foil the bandh this time. “If they show any aggression to foil the strike, they will do at their own peril because people want to show resistance through the bandh,” Mr. Sahu said.

Bengal to get 2 new districts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA PATHARPRATIMA (W.B.)
Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday announced that Sundarbans and Basirhat will be made new districts.
A major part of the Sundarbans is in the South 24 Parganas district, while Basirhat subdivision is in the North 24 Parganas district.

Abode of peace turns venue of protests against JNU violence

Visva-Bharati students, teachers condemn attack on campus

BISHWANATH GHOSH SANTINIKETAN
The new citizenship law and the mob attack in Jawaharlal Nehru University have ignited protests in Santiniketan – the abode of peace – which generally remains insulated from political unrest.
A place that has seen only candlelight marches in the past and where emotions are expressed mainly through art and poetry has, of late, been simmering with anger quite uncharacteristic of it, with students as well as teachers of Visva-Bharati University openly protesting against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the violence in JNU.
Many walls on the campus, usually adorned with artwork, now bear anti-CAA slogans and Upasana Griha, the famous glass-walled prayer hall, has become the venue of angry demonstrations.
On Monday, more than 500 students and teachers gathered outside the prayer hall to express solidarity with



Students of Visva-Bharati take part in a torchlight rally against CAA, NRC at Santiniketan. ■ FILE PHOTO

the JNU students. Rabindranath Tagore’s songs were sung, slogans chanted and speeches made. Visva-Bharati is a central university and its chancellor happens to be the Prime Minister.
“We are a part of India, and whatever is on India’s agenda is on our agenda as well. Right now, our aim is to make the [Wednesday’s] nationwide strike a big success,” said Sudipta Bhattacharyya, professor of economics and president of the Visva-Bharati University Faculty Association, who was at the forefront

of Monday’s protests.
“[On Wednesday] students are going to hold a demonstration outside the central office and we teachers are going to support them. I have already applied for leave so that I can participate in the strike,” Mr. Bhattacharyya, himself a former student of JNU, told *The Hindu*.
Ironically, the university is holding a lecture by BJP ideologue Swapan Dasgupta on Wednesday; he is going to speak in favour of the CAA. The protesting groups have given a call for its boycott.

IIT-Kharagpur scholars express solidarity with students, teachers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT KOLKATA
The Research Scholars’ Council of Indian Institute of Technology-Kharagpur issued a statement extending “full support and solidarity” to the faculty and students of Jawaharlal Nehru University.

In a strongly worded statement issued on Monday, the council condemned the “unprecedented violence and terror” on the JNU campus, led by “hooded, armed mobs”. The attack on students and teachers “some of whom are women... is horrifying in its barbarity”, the scholars said in the statement. “Such an act of terror has no place in any civilised world, least of all in the sphere of learning. We, at IIT-Kharagpur, feel this ter-

JNU alumni demand V-C’s exit

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT KOLKATA
A public meeting organised by the Jawaharlal Nehru University Alumni Association in Kolkata and a civil society body Citizen’s Forum for Peace and Democracy on Tuesday demanded the resignation of JNU Vice-Chancellor M. Jagadesh Kumar to restore normalcy in the university. Albeena Shakil, a

former JNUSU president, said the V-C is not “governing the university but pursuing some twisted agenda”.
“...the V-C has not once said he is willing to talk to the teachers and students... Rather he is asking the students to join the university arguing that registration will be renewed as if nothing has happened. This is unacceptable,” said Ms. Shakil.

ror more keenly as we have also been part of various movements in the past.”
The scholars also criticised the Delhi police. “In JNU, the attacking mob was protected by the Delhi Police who stated that they cannot

enter a campus without permission. However, the same police did not wait for permission when they assaulted students inside other university campuses, turning them into war zones,” the council said.

Heavy cash transaction in IAS officer’s accounts

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT BHUBANESWAR
Investigation by Odisha’s Vigilance Directorate has revealed heavy cash transactions in the bank accounts of the IAS officer who was arrested last week for accepting illegal gratification of ₹1 lakh from the representative of a private company.
Scrutiny of accounts of Bijay Ketan Upadhyaya revealed cash deposits of around ₹70 lakh in three banks between 2012 and 2019.

CM urges India Inc. to revive business environment, create jobs

Industrialists commend Uddhav for speaking ‘with passion, from the heart’

PIYUSH PANDEY
LALATENDU MISHRA
SHARAD VYAS
MUMBAI

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has assured industrialists that the new three-party government under his leadership will not work with a vendetta against business deals signed by the previous regime.

Mr. Thackeray promised top CEOs and industrialists a basket of incentives for businesses agreeing to promote employment for local youth, while assuring a business-friendly environment in the State over the next five years.

In his first interaction with top corporate honchos, the Shiv Sena leader urged the corporates to help Mumbai become a global tourism hub and transform cities like Pune, often called the Oxford of the East, into global educational centres on the lines of Oxford.

The interaction at State guest house Sahyadri was attended by industry captains, including Tata Sons chairman emeritus Ratan Tata, Reliance Industries chairman Mukesh Ambani, Anand Mahindra, Adi Godrej, Sajjan Jindal, Uday Kotak, Deepak Parekh, Gautam Singhania and Baba Kalyani.

Environment Minister Aaditya Thackeray said the government will develop 66 urban forests in Mumbai, and at the same time work to promote night life in the financial capital.

Industrialists told *The Hindu* they left the meeting impressed with the CM's honest appeal to revive the State's business environment and attempts at fostering a personal bond with each of them.

“It was a fabulous talk, he was unprepared and spoke from the heart, as he was not supposed to speak. Everyone went and congratulated Uddhav Thackeray that the star of the show was none of us, but Aaditya Thackeray,” RPG Group chairman Harsh Goenka told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Goenka suggested making Pune a global educational centre, and tapping in to investments in manufacturing moving away from China. “A lot of manufacturing is running away from China, and Vietnam is taking



Frank talk: The Chief Minister assured industry captains of a business-friendly environment in the State over the next five years. ■SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

hav Thackeray that the star of the show was none of us, but Aaditya Thackeray,” RPG Group chairman Harsh Goenka told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Goenka suggested making Pune a global educational centre, and tapping in to investments in manufacturing moving away from China. “A lot of manufacturing is running away from China, and Vietnam is taking

away 50% of those investments. Why cannot Maharashtra [focus on] getting those investments and becoming a manufacturing hub driven by electronics?” he asked.

Industrialist Venugopal Dhoot told *The Hindu*, “For the industrial growth of Maharashtra, [the CM] is ready to help the corporates at any level. If any corporate comes

to him at midnight ready to create jobs, he will go to any extent to help him. Further, he was more interested in dispersal of industry in backward areas. He also emphasised that his government will give maximum benefits to those who give employment to locals.”

Others present in the meeting said the Chief Minister spoke with a lot of pas-

sion towards the policies which would help facilitate future investments. He is said to have told industrialists, “I am there for you to serve you, and you all need to invest in Maharashtra and not anywhere else. Let me know how we can help. We will meet every three months to discuss issues. This is an action-oriented government, and we will continuously take feedback and action accordingly.”

One industrialist said it was a rare meeting where “everybody felt happy”. “We attend so many meetings by chief ministers and political leaders, where you go just to fill the quorum. But here, he was speaking with passion and from the heart. He was treating the businessmen like family, and not like ‘I am the master and you are the slave’,” the industrialist said.

Raymond Ltd. CMD Gautam Singhania said the meeting was very fruitful. “I urged the Chief Minister to enhance the quality of infrastructure and public trans-

port in Maharashtra and more specifically in Mumbai, which is the commerce capital of India,” Mr. Singhania said.

Uday Kotak, president designate of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), said business and industry would strongly support the CM's vision, and the CII is committed to work with the government for the development of the State. “At around 15%, Maharashtra contributes highest to the Indian GDP. Mumbai can play a significant role in being the financial capital of the world, and the State should leverage significant opportunity in the Fintech space,” he said.

Gopichand Hinduja, co-chairman of the Hinduja Group, and Ashok Hinduja, chairman, Hinduja Group of Companies (India) said the CM had clearly laid down the roadmap to make the State into a \$1 trillion economy. “His blue print had a clear emphasis on building more industry, upgrade health and education facilities, give

boost to tourism in order to create more jobs, coupled with policy-friendly governance to increase ease of doing business. The single most important business-friendly message to all of us he gave with humility was to consider [that] it's your own government and the one that listens – come and work with us hand in hand,” the Hinduja said.

For Anand Piramal, executive director of Piramal Group, the meeting had a great symbolic significance as it recognised the critical role that companies can play in nation building. “The State can and wants to play a greater role in the revitalisation of the real estate sector. The Chief Minister listened to both our constructive feedback and suggestions, and committed to take actions to simplify and shorten the approval process as well as to rationalise ready reckoner rates to make real estate more affordable, in order to boost consumer sentiment,” Mr. Piramal said.



‘Will ask airlines to give honey as sweetener’

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PUNE

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said he would request airlines to provide honey sachets as sweetener while serving tea and coffee to passengers in flights.

He was speaking at the Central Bee Research and Training Institute here on Monday. “Normally, one spoon of honey is equal to three spoons of sugar. Currently, refined sugar sachets are provided on board to passengers, so we are trying if we can provide honey sachets or honey cubes in flights and hotels,” the MSME Minister said.

Passengers would be able to choose one of the two, he said. “I am going to call Air India, IndiGo, Spicejet and GoAir and also chairperson of the Khadi Gramudayog Commission, and request them to make both the options available in flights,” he said.

Raj meets Fadnavis, sets tongues wagging

‘MNS to declare future plans on Jan. 23’

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

Fuelling speculation of what could be yet another strange political alliance in the State, Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray on Tuesday met former chief minister and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Devendra Fadnavis.

The meeting held in Prabhadevi lasted for more than an hour, but neither of the two leaders was available for comment after it ended. However, sources said the meeting could be the beginning of the two parties coming together.

Driving force

The BJP's long term ally, the Shiv Sena, quit the partnership to form a government with the Congress and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP). The MNS, which managed to win only one seat in the Assembly polls, neither has any power left in the ruling alliance, nor the Opposition. This seems to be compelling the two parties to join hands, despite the animosity between them in the last five years.

“Mr. Thackeray is set to address a public meeting on January 23, where he will announce the future course

of action. There have been talks within the party fold to turn to the Hindutva ideology as the Sena has deserted it by joining hands with the Congress and the NCP,” an MNS leader said on the condition of anonymity.

According to sources, the party is also likely to change its flag to add more saffron colour to it.

Strained past

The relations between both parties were strained last year after Mr. Thackeray campaigned against the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, though his party did not contest the Lok Sabha polls. Mr. Thackeray was later served a notice by the Enforcement Directorate in the Kohinoor mill case, which further worsened the relations.

The MNS chief had met NCP chief Sharad Pawar and party leader Ajit Pawar prior to the polls, giving rise to speculation that he might reach a tacit understanding with the NCP.

For the BJP, the loss of the Sena as an ally in Mumbai and Pune creates difficulty in civic polls, and an alliance with the MNS would mean the party can break into the Sena's Marathi vote bank.

Goa passes CAA Bill, GST amendment



The Goa Assembly passes the GST amendment and CAA Bill amidst protests by Opposition parties, including the Congress, Goa Forward and Mahashtrawadi Gomantak Party, in a one-day session held at Porvorim on Tuesday. ■ATISH POMBURFEKAR

State reverses decision on APMCs

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

The State cabinet on Tuesday reversed yet another decision of the previous government to appoint four technical experts on agriculture produce market committees (APMCs).

The Bharatiya Janata Party-led (BJP) government had brought in an amendment to the Agriculture Produce Marketing (Development and Regulation) Act, 1963, which gave the government power to appoint four spe-

cial invitees on every market committee whose income from fees levied and collection exceeded ₹5 crore. For APMC's with income up to ₹5 crore, the government could appoint two special invitees.

The Congress and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), then in the Opposition, had called the decision the BJP's attempt to control the APMC's as it could not win them by contesting internal elections. The APMC's have for long been strongholds of the Congress and NCP, ena-

bling the two parties to control rural politics.

The Cabinet on Tuesday decided to annul the amendment. “We have been against this amendment from the start. The move will ensure smooth functioning of the APMC's without any conflict,” Cooperation minister Balasaheb Patil said.

The government will have to table the Bill for the same in the Budget session of the legislature, before which an ordinance will be issued.

Pawar to keep tabs on NCP ministers

Party chief to hold periodic meetings

ALOK DESHPANDE
MUMBAI

The performance of ministers of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) in the State government will be monitored directly by party president Sharad Pawar through periodic meetings.

The first of these meetings will be held on Wednesday. Apart from guiding the ministers on their administrative duties, Mr. Pawar is also likely to discuss with them how to handle politically sensitive matters.

With the NCP getting the lion's share in the Cabinet and key portfolios like Home, Finance, Rural Development and Cooperation, the party leadership sees this as an opportunity to expand its base in areas other than western Maharashtra and Marathwada.

The NCP has not been able to make inroads in Vidarbha, north Maharashtra and urban areas such as Mumbai. The three-party Maha Vikas Aghadi alliance has now given it an opportunity to cement its organisation in these areas.

Mumbai NCP chief and Minority Development Minister Nawab Malik told *The Hindu* that Mr. Pawar would interact with the party's mi-



Sharad Pawar

nisters earlier too. “This is his method of working – taking feedback and guiding the junior ministers. He will be talking to us about priorities of the government and how priorities of the work need to be fixed,” he said.

Housing Minister Jitendra Awhad said the meeting is to provide guidance to the ministers. “This is the first meeting and Pawar *saheb* is likely to take such review meetings at regular intervals,” he said.

Mr. Pawar has already called three senior ministers – Home Minister Anil Deshmukh, Labour and State Excise Minister Dilip Walse-Patil and Mr. Malik – to Pune after the portfolio distribution and discussed the functioning of their respective departments.

Ajit allays fears of transgender community about NRC, CAA

Delegation meets Deputy CM after ‘others’ excluded in Assam

SHARAD VYAS
MUMBAI

The State government has assured the transgender community that the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) will be inclusive for all in Maharashtra.

After reports of transgender people being excluded from the NRC in Assam, a delegation representing the community met Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Tuesday. Mr. Pawar assured them that the NRC/ CAA, if implemented in the State at all, will be made inclusive for the third gender.

An estimated 2,000 ‘others’ were left out of the NRC process in Assam.

The delegation also demanded inclusion of the third gender in the police force, an age restriction on sex change, and a chapter on the community in text books, officials present in the meeting said. “The Deputy CM has assured them all help possible, while promising a gender-inclusive Budget,” said an official.

The government also agreed to constitute a welfare board to ensure the third gender is mainstreamed in Maharashtra.



Ajit Pawar and other NCP leaders meet a delegation of transgender people on Tuesday. ■TWITTER/@AJITPAWARSPEAKS

The welfare board will have a helpline to ensure community members are able to ask for help by just making a call. “The board will ensure speedy social, political and financial growth of the community,” Mr. Pawar said.

The meeting was attended by Social Justice Minister Dhananjay Munde, Public Health Minister Rajesh Tope, and MP Supriya Sule, among others.

The delegation was told that the government's new gender budget norms have identified transgenders as potential beneficiaries of direct benefit transfer under State-run social schemes. Under the new norms released on Monday, transgenders have been included in

three different categories – A-1, A-2, and B – of direct and indirect expenditure.

The A-1 category for “100% direct expenditure on women/girls/transgenders” will cover schemes related to provision of free bicycles, maternity benefits and support to self-help groups. The A-2 category, with less than 100% direct expenditure, includes schemes related to scholarship, housing and livelihood.

The B category will include indirect expenditure for transgenders in intangibly targeted schemes, where beneficiaries cannot be counted. This includes schemes for building roads and bridges, and incentives for vasectomies.



Amaravati protesters block highway

GUNTUR
Tension mounted on the National Highway 16 between Guntur and Vijayawada on Tuesday as people gathered in large numbers protesting against the decision of the Andhra Pradesh government to announce Visakhapatnam as its executive capital. Traffic was held up for six hours.

IT Minister opens Cyient development centre

WARANGAL
Telangana IT Minister K.T. Rama Rao inaugurated a state-of-the-art development centre of Cyient at the IT Park in Madikonda on the outskirts of Warangal on Tuesday. He said bringing IT companies to Warangal is just the beginning and he wants to see these companies spread their operations across the State.

What happened in JNU is appalling, says Amartya Sen

Nobel laureate says CAA ‘violates the demand of the Constitution’

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

Economist and Nobel laureate Amartya Sen termed the violence at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) as “appalling”, and condemned the delay by the university administration and the police in bringing the situation under control. Interacting with reporters on the sidelines of the award function of the Infosys Prize 2019 here on Tuesday, where he was the chief guest, Prof. Sen said: “I’m appalled by what’s going on...that the establishment of the university can’t prevent outsiders from coming in and creating such bloody violence within the campus. I’m also appalled that communication between the administration and the police would be so de-



Infosys co-founder N.R. Narayan Murthy, left, and Nobel laureate Amartya Sen in Bengaluru on Tuesday. ■ PTI

played that ill-treatment of students could go on for quite some time without being prevented by forces of law and order.” Responding to questions about the massive protests across the country against

the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, which are also seeing huge participation from students, Prof. Sen said, “The student community has great many issues to think about. But the CAA in my judgment should really

be turned down by the SC on the grounds of being unconstitutional. You cannot have certain types of fundamental rights of human beings – in this case connected with citizenship – be related with religious differences rather than the things that really matter such as where you were born, and what the citizenship laws require you to do.” He further went on to say that the Act “violates the demand of the Constitution,” arguing instead for a more equitable process of granting citizenship. “If you read large volumes of the Constituent Assembly records, you will see that using religion for discrimination of this kind will be regarded as not acceptable,” he said.

Politics should be kept out of campuses, says Venkaiah

Some universities are in news for wrong reasons, he notes

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

Vice-President of India M. Venkaiah Naidu said that he was disturbed over “one or two universities that have been in the news recently for the wrong reasons.” He was speaking at the silver jubilee celebrations of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council in Bengaluru on Tuesday. Politics should be kept out of the campuses of educational institutions, said Mr. Naidu, adding that while there are over 900 universities in the country only a few



M. Venkaiah Naidu

universities were in the news for the wrong reasons, without directly referring to the incidents at the JNU. “One should not disturb the peace on the campus. There is nothing wrong in discussing

ideologies, but that should be done outside the campus. Universities are places of learning,” he said. He argued that academic endeavours and co-curricular initiatives must attain primacy in universities and not factionalism or divisive tendencies. “Our children, when they leave the portals of educational institutions, must be enlightened citizens who will take an abiding interest in protecting our democracy and preserving the fundamental values that are enshrined in our constitution,” he said.

Sabarimala case: dissenting judges are not part of Constitution Bench

It will hear 60 petitions against entry of women into temple

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

None of the three Supreme Court judges who dissented at various points in the Sabarimala litigation is part of the nine-judge Constitution Bench, which will hear, from January 13, over 60 petitions challenging the entry of women of menstruating age into the temple in Kerala. The court on Tuesday published the names of the judges who would be part of the Bench, led by Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde. The other judges are Justices R. Banumathi, Ashok Bhushan, L. Nageswara

Rao, Mohan M. Shantanaoudar, S. Abdul Nazeer, R. Subhash Reddy, B.R. Gavai and Surya Kant. Justices Indu Malhotra, A.M. Khanwilkar, Rohinton Nariman and D.Y. Chandrachud are not part of the Bench. Justice Indu Malhotra was the lone dissenter on September 28, 2018, when the court, in a 4:1 decision, quashed the rule that barred women aged 10-50 from entering the temple. Justices Nariman and Chandrachud, part of the Review Bench, had jointly dissented from the majority decision on November 14,

2019, to refer the issue to a larger Bench. Justice Nariman, in a minority opinion for himself and Justice Chandrachud, ordered Kerala to grant women pilgrims protection. Incidentally, Justice Khanwilkar, who is also not a part of the nine-judge Bench, had agreed with the majority decision on September 28, 2018, and on November 14, 2019. The nine-judge Bench will set the parameters for a judicial review in cases touching on customs and practices believed to be essential to a religion.

Supreme Court has reservations over land-grabbing case

Case tied to Yediyurappa, Shivakumar

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday expressed reservations about an NGO, Samaj Parivartana Samudaya, intervening to fight a land-grabbing case allegedly involving Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa and Congress leader D.K. Shivakumar when the original complainant had himself withdrawn from the litigation. A Bench led by Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde asked advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for the NGO, to make good its claim that it did not parachute into the case at the level of the Supreme Court but had been doggedly fighting for justice right from the level of the Karnataka Lokayukta.

The court gave the NGO two weeks to provide proof of its long-standing involvement in the case and that it too had filed a separate complaint with the Lokayukta. The original complainant and petitioner in the case, Kabbale Gowda, had suddenly withdrawn his case from the Supreme Court on February 21, 2019. It was then that the NGO had intervened to get the top court to recall its order disposing of the petition. Mr. Bhushan, who had earlier appeared for Mr. Gowda and is now representing the NGO, said the case had seen many such complainants become “compromised” and bow out. In the previous hearing in March 2019, Mr. Bhushan had urged the court to list the case again for hearing



B.S. Yediyurappa

on merits, saying it concerned “corruption and crime” across party lines in the State. He had alleged how neither the Lokayukta nor the State government challenged the Karnataka High Court’s decision in December 2015 to quash charges. On Tuesday, Chief Justice Bobde orally observed that the NGO cannot “ride piggy-back” on Mr. Gowda’s petition, especially after the latter has withdrawn from the case. “You are riding on someone else’s shoulders. You cannot do that.. This person [Gowda] has withdrawn. Now, you can separately pursue your own case... And if you claim that you had filed a complaint with the Lokayukta, show us what happened to that complaint... Was it dismissed or allowed?” Chief Justice Bobde addressed Mr. Bhushan in court. Mr. Gowda’s petition was originally filed in the Supreme Court against a Karnataka High Court decision in December 2015 to set aside a trial court order of February 2012 to prosecute the politicians and other accused. The High Court had quashed the entire criminal proceedings. Mr. Gowda was the de-facto complainant in the case.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Wednesday: Heavy rain/snow likely over isolated places in Uttarakhand. Thunderstorm accompanied with hail and lightning likely over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, eastern Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar and Jharkhand.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	18.4	10.8	Kozhikode	—	35.2	25.0
Ahmedabad	—	31.0	16.7	Kurnool	0.2	31.6	22.2
Aizawl	—	—	—	Lucknow	—	23.1	12.2
Allahabad	—	24.5	11.5	Madurai	—	34.0	22.6
Bengaluru	—	—	18.9	Mangaluru	—	—	23.0
Bhopal	—	—	—	Mumbai	—	34.4	19.6
Bhubaneswar	—	25.2	12.0	Mysuru	—	—	20.8
Chandigarh	8.6	14.6	11.1	New Delhi	—	19.1	11.6
Chennai	2.1	30.1	24.9	Patna	—	19.8	9.2
Coimbatore	—	32.0	21.6	Port Blair	1.3	30.4	24.6
Dehradun	11.2	15.1	10.1	Puducherry	1.0	30.9	22.6
Gangtok	3.3	—	3.8	Pune	—	30.3	16.3
Goa	—	33.0	24.3	Raipur	—	26.8	12.4
Guwahati	—	—	—	Ranchi	—	21.4	8.6
Hubballi	—	29.0	19.0	Shillong	—	—	—
Hyderabad	—	—	—	Shimla	21.8	5.0	-0.1
Imphal	—	—	—	Srinagar	—	—	—
Jaipur	—	23.3	12.8	Thiruvananthapuram	—	33.3	24.2
Kochi	—	33.6	25.2	Tiruchi	1.2	31.0	23.4
Kohima	—	—	—	Vijayawada	—	29.2	22.0
Kolkata	—	21.6	12.2	Visakhapatnam	—	27.5	20.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	NO _x	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE	Yesterday
Ahmedabad	65	30	40	139	148	—	—
Bengaluru	13	54	95	—	74	—	—
Chennai	—	30	42	73	—	—	—
Delhi	12	26	105	327	214	—	—
Hyderabad	2	62	42	124	103	—	—
Kolkata	24	79	28	290	219	—	—
Lucknow	46	102	70	386	—	—	—
Mumbai	13	39	41	232	141	—	—
Pune	76	30	83	230	153	—	—
Visakhapatnam	13	31	49	95	101	—	—

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.
NO_x: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.
CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.
PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

‘It is up to States to provide 10% quota’

Centre responds to charge that law is not implemented in T.N. and Karnataka

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Centre on Tuesday informed the Supreme Court that it would be the States’ prerogative to provide 10% economic reservation in government jobs and admission to education institutions.

“Whether or not to provide reservation to the economically weaker section in appointment to State government jobs and admission to State government educational institutions, as per provisions of the newly inserted Articles 15(6) and 16(6) of the Constitution, is to be decided

by the State government concerned,” the Centre said in an affidavit.

The Centre was responding to a writ petition from Supreme Court advocate G.S. Mani complaining that the economic reservation law was not being implemented in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

However, the Centre said its Department of Social Justice and Empowerment “has no role in deciding the reservation policy of any State government”.

As per the notification issued by the Department of Personnel and Training on



Quota cauldron: The law has been put in place for people not covered under the 50% reservation policy. • K. BHAGYA PRAKASH

January 19, 2019, persons whose family has a gross annual income below ₹8 lakh are identified as those be-

longing to the economically weaker section. It said the 10% reservation law was enacted to promote the wel-

Celebrated painter and artist Akbar Padamsee passes away

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
COIMBATORE

Noted painter and artist Akbar Padamsee died at the Isha Yoga Center near Coimbatore late on Monday night. He was 91.

Paying tribute to the artist, Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev, founder of the Isha Foundation, said: “Akbar Padamsee, a genius of color and craft, it has been our fortune to have you spend the last part of your life with us at Isha Yoga Center. Generations to come shall relish and be inspired by your magic of color.”



Akbar Padamsee

he had a special affinity to.

“I came to know about Dhyanalunga through books. The moment I saw the picture of the Dhyanalunga temple on the cover of a book, I knew that I was looking at a 21st century temple,” he once said referring to the famous yogic temple at the Yoga Center, an official release from Isha recounted.

Though Akbar Padamsee was known for his radical

paintings, he was also a photographer, sculptor, filmmaker, engraver and lithographer.

But Padamsee was most recognized and decorated for his paintings which have found a place of prominence in eminent galleries in India and around the world. His brother was the late filmmaker and adman Alyque Padamsee.

Free-spirited

Born into a Muslim family, Padamsee embraced a free-spirited outlook, that was reflected in the versatile themes of his work. He was deeply influenced by Vivekananda’s commentary on the *yogasutras* of *Patanjali*, and studied *Shilpa Shastra*, the ancient text on the art of sculpting.

Padamsee was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 2010.

IOB officials booked for illegal transaction

DEVESH K PANDEY
NEW DELHI

The CBI has booked a regional resource manager, two assistant managers and a clerk of the Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) for allegedly helping a company and its proprietor get ₹90 crore illegally transferred to their accounts.

Timely action by other bank officials resulted in preventing the withdrawal of money from the accounts of accused persons.

Among those named as accused in the FIR are Green Valley Ministries Welfare Association (Visakhapatnam), a company named Bhaktinidhi and its proprietor Bellamkonda Murali Krishna Sharma, IOB regional resource manager Heli Veepuri, assistant managers Kandirathi Sreesha and Vuyyala Suresh and clerk

Mothukuri Adinarayana.

It is alleged that in September last year, Mr. Veepuri got opened a current account in the name of Green Valley Ministries Welfare Association in another branch. He then allegedly got a cheque for ₹90 crore, dated October 24, 2019, in the organisation’s name.

The FIR alleges that Mr. Veepuri personally took the cheque to the bank’s Mangalagiri branch the same day and without waiting for its clearance, got the amount debited and parked in the NEFT sundry creditors account.

Through eight transactions, ₹89 crore was transferred to the account of Bhaktinidhi with HDFC Bank and ₹1 crore was diverted to that of Mr. Sharma’s account with a different IOB branch.

IN BRIEF



‘Onions being offered at ₹49-58/kg to States’

NEW DELHI
The Centre has imported 12,000 tonnes of onion that is being offered to State governments at ₹49-58 per kg to bring prices under control, Consumer Affairs Minister Ram Vilas Paswan said. By the month-end, an additional 36,000 tonnes of imported onion are expected to arrive. PTI

Nationwide trade union strike today

NEW DELHI
Terming the government’s policies “anti-worker”, central trade unions have given a call for an all-India general strike on Wednesday to oppose the labour codes being implemented, the proposed privatisation of public sector undertakings and the Citizenship Amendment Act.

T.N. CM defends action taken on ‘kolam’ issue

CHENNAI
Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami on Tuesday told the State Legislative Assembly that action was taken against those who drew *kolam* (with anti-CAA/NRC messages) in Chennai, because they chose to do it in front of others houses.

Thirteen girls escape from shelter home

BERHAMPUR
Two security guards and the warden of Utkal Balashram were terminated from their jobs after thirteen minor girls escaped from Utkal Balashram, a child care institution in Odisha’s Berhampur, said District Child Protection Officer (DCPO), Subodh Kumar Sadangi.

Army gets working on GOCO model to improve efficiency

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Army has started identifying potential industry partners to implement the Government Owned Contractor Operated (GOCO) model for its base workshops and ordnance depots.

A Request For Information was issued on December 19, 2019 to shortlist service providers with experience in “warehousing, logistics and supply chain management” for Central Ordnance Depot, Kanpur. The Army has also started evaluating the GOCO model for Army Base Workshops (ABW) to drive “higher operational efficiencies”.

“The agenda of these interactions would be to understand from interest

ed industry participants their views on opportunities envisaged and issues/concerns if ABWs were to be run under GOCO model,” the official notice says. The last date to send responses is January 10.

The tasks undertaken by these workshops include depot-level repairs; overhaul of T-72 and T-90, guns, mortars and small arms, vehicles, communication systems, radars, air defence systems, armoured personnel carriers; manufacture of spares and overhaul of aviation rotables.

The GOCO model was one of the recommendations of the Lt. Gen. DB Shekatkar (Retd.) committee to “enhance combat capability and rebalance defence expenditure.”

SC to hear pleas challenging Delhi HC order on ultrasonography

It mandated six months’ training to perform the procedure

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday agreed to hear, in detail, pleas challenging a Delhi High Court decision removing the mandatory six-month training required under law for performing ultrasonography.

A Bench led by Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde scheduled the case for hearing on April 8.

In March 2018, the Supreme Court had passed an

interim order staying the operation of the High Court’s February 17, 2016 order. The SC had said prima facie, the HC verdict transgressed into an area of legislative policy.

“The Training Rules 2014 were made by the Central government in exercise of the power conferred by Parliament. Prima facie, the Rules are neither ultra vires the parent legislation nor do they suffer from manifest arbitrariness,” the court had observed

in its interim order.

The Supreme court had also observed that the High Court had “squarely impinged” on its November 2016 judgment in the *Voluntary Health Association of Punjab* case, which called for the strict implementation of the Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) (Six Months Training) Rules, 2014, to bring to an end the social evil of female foeticide.

Mega human chain planned

STAFF REPORTER
PATNA

The Bihar government has made it compulsory for all school students and teachers to participate in the over 16,000 km long human chain to be organized across the State on Jan. 19 to raise awareness about climate change.



A battle over welfare

The AAP will hope that the Assembly polls are a referendum on its government's work

Delhi, the Union Territory (UT) that hosts India's capital city, might lag behind several States in total population and in area, but it enjoys out-size significance in terms of media and political attention. With 1.47 crore electors spread across the largely metropolitan national capital region and its pockets of rural voters in some suburbs, Delhi is expected, in polls scheduled on February 8, to reprise the three-cornered electoral fight which has been the norm in recent elections. The Aam Aadmi Party, which graduated from a social movement to a political party less than a decade ago, will now seek to stand on its governance record, five years after nearly sweeping the Assembly results in 2015. The Bharatiya Janata Party will hope that unlike in Maharashtra, Jharkhand and Haryana, the legions of voters who supported it in the Lok Sabha election will not transfer their votes to its competitors, while the Congress will seek to regain the support of the UT's poorer and marginalised sections, most of whom shifted allegiance to the AAP in 2015. The AAP, if multiple opinion polls are to be believed, is on a strong wicket despite its setback in the Lok Sabha election where it won only 18% of the votes for the third place behind the BJP's 56.6% and the Congress's 22.5%. A Centre for the Study of Developing Societies-Lokniti survey of May 2019 found that most of Delhi's voters who voted against the AAP for other parties in the national elections wanted the party to return to power in the Assembly election. This dichotomy in support could be explained by the reasonable satisfaction among voters with the welfare and development work done by the Arvind Kejriwal led-government.

A PRS Legislative Research report has shown that Delhi spends the most – nearly 40% of its overall Budget allocation compared to an average of 23% elsewhere in India – on education, health, water supply and sanitation between 2011 and 2019. The AAP's focus on improving government-run primary education, health care (the Mohalla clinic scheme in particular), lowering electricity and water supply costs besides easing public transport woes (through schemes such as free ridership for women in government-run buses) has earned the party strong campaign points. This could not yield it dividends in May, as the party still does not have a coherent ideological position or a national presence, while voters were concerned with other issues such as national security that favoured the BJP. The AAP's incoherence on questions related to ideology was a drawback then, and that is the reason why it will seek to turn the polls into a referendum on its tenure. The BJP hopes to challenge the AAP on this turf after passing a Bill in December 2019 that came up with a legal framework to provide ownership rights to those living in Delhi's unauthorised colonies. Whether this recent gesture, that is of importance to the roughly five million people in such areas, will sway voters remains to be seen.

None for four

A four-day Test will make all cricket seem like limited over internationals

Brevity and quicksilver processes constitute a raging trend be it Twitter or two-minute noodles. It is in sync with the current era notorious for its shrinking attention spans and paucity of time. Organised sport too isn't immune from this need to shorten formats. In this universe of instant gratification, Test cricket with its five-day schedule and breaks for lunch and tea, might seem an anachronism. It may boggle the mind that there were timeless Tests in the past during which a contest stretched beyond five days till a result was arrived at. That phase ended in 1939 as visiting squads were constrained by the urgency to catch a ship back home. Since those days of the slow life, cricket evolved and Tests now have two raucous siblings in One Day Internationals and Twenty20s, where a result is inevitable and the thrills, however transitory, seem limitless in these abridged formats. ODIs and T20s draw in the crowds and sponsors while Tests are now seen as an ageing matriarch lost to nostalgia and the prospect of ever-dwindling revenues. In a bid to bolster cricket's original form, the International Cricket Council (ICC), is mulling over four-day Tests from 2023. Cold logic has trumped relevance and it is a move that will destroy the sanctity of Tests and all that it stood for.

The tussle spread over five days is considered as the ultimate benchmark for judging cricketing greatness. Batsmen have to cope with fast bowlers on a fresh first day pitch and also counter wily spinners on a wearing surface on the fifth day. The action gathers steam over four days before a spectacular combustion on the concluding day. Yes, in recent times many Tests have finished within three or four days and broadcasting companies that spend top-dollar for telecast rights, have to craft studio-analysis to justify their ad-inventory. Another factor is that the ICC is keen to create more space for various T20 leagues ranging from the Indian Premier League to the Big Bash in Australia besides supporting the World Cup for Twenty20s. However, a four-day Test will lack character. Imagine what would have happened during that epochal March in the summer of 2001 at Kolkata's Eden Gardens where V.V.S. Laxman, Rahul Dravid and Harbhajan Singh inspired India to stun Steve Waugh's Australians. If that Test had ended as a mere draw in four days, Indian cricket may not have progressed over the last decade-and-a-half. A five-day Test is the acme, a four-day one will slowly blur the distinction with limited overs cricket and it is a clear and present danger that players such as Sachin Tendulkar, Ricky Ponting and Virat Kohli have recognised. It is time the ICC woke up to this reality.

Retrieving ideas of democracy and nation

The substantive versions of these ideas have been evoked in the popular upsurge across the country today



VALERIAN RODRIGUES

Within much of modern Indian thought, the idea of India as a nation implied the assumption that it would invariably be a democracy – i.e., India realising itself or constituting itself as a nation will necessarily do so as a democracy. The relationship between the two was not problematised.

There were some exceptions though: the Gandhians laid stress on Swaraj but this idea, while not being not opposed to democracy, did not directly connote self-rule of the citizen-community. The socialists and communists who were interested in the idea of democracy, and uncoupling it from the idea of nation, tended to lay stress on the economic prerequisites and redistribution of power to realise the former. There were some thinkers such as V.D. Savarkar who argued that the idea of nation took shape in India in the epochal past, but they dwelt little on democracy. Some Islamic scholars such as Maulana Maududi introduced concepts such as “theo-democracy”, i.e., the mode of self-rule where believers ordain their common affairs; but apart from the hierarchisation and exclusion such a conception threw up, it was hardly linked to the idea of nation as a bond or fellowship that marks it off from every other kindred entity. There were those who thought through the lens of caste, examples being E.V. Ramaswami Naicker, K.M. Panikkar and B.R. Ambedkar and also Adivasi leaders such as Jaipal Singh, who argued that the idea of nation has to be profoundly rethought in India and

that such rethinking was needed to foreground democracy in an anticipatory mode.

While posing the relation between the ideas of the nation and democracy before the emerging public in India in this fashion is a gross simplification, and the arguments that people made and the positions they took were far more complex, this debate came to an abrupt end, or merely became the ideological fixtures of political parties, once India embraced constitutional democracy and held periodic elections under universal adult franchise. Interestingly, certain measures that the current government has embraced in the name of constitutional rectitude have reopened new fissures within the Indian body polity. It has made it imperative that we reopen the relation between the nation and democracy in India afresh even to sustain meaningful versions of constitutional democracy and periodic elections.

Trajectory of democracy

There were complex questions that had to be explored in the wake of Independence, and particularly following Partition. One was if India is a nation, what kind of a nation is it? If democracy is the mode of political association of this nation, what kind of democracy is conducive to it? However, giving short shrift to these questions, an amazing constitutional architecture came to be put in place. Amid a setting of bewildering social diversity and inequalities, India stepped into holding periodic elections on the basis of universal adult franchise.

The elite who were at the helm of operationalising constitutional democracy and periodic franchise made some place for diversity and preferential considerations to the disadvantaged in the Indian public. Some were aware of the course such a complex constitu-



GETTY IMAGES/STOCKPHOTO

tional and institutional ship was to set sail in and were apprehensive of its future course. Others wished it bon voyage for a variety of reasons including utility calculations. Whichever way one looked at it through a phalanx of institutions dovetailed to constitutional democracy and periodic elections, the elite thought the future of India lay in operationalising a set course of action rather than rethinking its foundations.

The course of action that India took came to be theorised by the likes of the late Rajni Kothari who argued that democracy is alive and kicking by accommodating diversity within the policy-making process through a distinct type of party system, that he termed one-party dominance. There was much claptrap that came from elsewhere too.

Comparativists such as Atul Kohli argued that India demonstrated “a delicate balance” between “forces of centralization and decentralization” and “the interests of the powerful” have been pursued “without fully excluding the weaker groups”. Consociationalists such as Arend Lijphart thought that the Indian case demonstrated that democracy is viable – in spite of diversity and inequality – if it accommodates them in the governing institutions of a polity. These arguments came to be profoundly qualified by their proponents later, in the context of the failure or inadequacy of these institutions, and the rise of powerful dissent movements from below. However, their emphasis re-

There is a design flaw with this military post

Creating a Chief of Defence Staff is problematic; it also erodes civilian supremacy over the defence establishment



MANISH TEWARI

The scale of the First World War underscored the command and control dilemmas of concurrent conflicts playing out simultaneously in multiple theatres of conflict.

War and the West

During the locust years of Great Britain, an issue that received consideration was the British higher command and control structures. With the declaration of the Second World War, the onus for the higher direction of war fell to the remit of the War Cabinet serviced by the Chiefs of Staff Committee. The British legislative system functioned through the Second World War. Winston Churchill, as Prime Minister, was given supreme powers but stayed accountable to Parliament through the War Cabinet. He assumed the portfolio of Minister for Defence, with the resultant duty of overseeing the British War effort. This allowed him, as Chairperson of Chiefs of Staff Committee, to exercise both tactical and strategic options.

After the United States entered the war, following the Pearl Harbor attack, an integrated command became the norm during the Second World War as diverse allies including the Soviet Union had to work in unison. A unified command required a single commander liable to the joint chiefs of staff supported by a joint staff and

exerting command over all constituents of his allocated force irrespective of their service.

After the war ended and the world split into two ideological blocs, General Dwight D. Eisenhower became the First North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) supreme commander while political power was vested in the NATO Council. The First Supreme Commander of the Warsaw Pact Forces was Marshal Ivan Konev, while de facto political authority resided with the General Secretary of the Soviet Union in Moscow. The United States, vide the National Security Act 1947, established the Joint Chiefs of Staff. They were jointly tasked to be Military Advisers to the President and the Secretary of Defence. Despite the experience of the Second World War, they chose not to appoint a Chief of Defence Staff (CDS). The U.S. amended this structure vide the Goldwater-Nichols Act in 1986 by having a chairperson and vice-chairperson of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Joint Chiefs in unison are again the principal military advisers to the government. There is no CDS. The military chain of command runs directly from the theatre commanders through a civilian Defence Secretary to the President. However, Britain, conversely in 1959, created a Chief of the Defence Staff. Air Chief Marshal Sir William Dickson became the first CDS after serving as the rotational chairperson of the Chiefs of Staff Committee. Was it required or was it the hubris of a declining power – the jury is still out on that.

The outline for India

In India, ‘in 1947, Lord Ismay, the Chief of Staff to Lord Mountbatten,



GETTY IMAGES/STOCKPHOTO

Governor General of India, recommended a three-tier higher defence management structure to Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Three committees were constituted: the defence committee of cabinet presided over by the Prime Minister; the Defence Minister's Committee chaired by the Defence Minister, and the Chiefs of Staff Committee integrated into the military wing of the Cabinet Secretariat. The chair of the committee was rotational, with the Service Chief longest in the committee becoming the chairperson’.

This procedure operated into ‘the middle of the 1950s despite the Commander-in-Chief only being an invitee to the Defence Committee of Cabinet. The designation of the Commander-in-Chief of the three services was consciously altered to Chiefs of Staff in 1955. After the 1962 Sino-Indian war, the Defence Committee of the Cabinet first morphed into the Emergency Committee of Cabinet and then later into the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs’. It is now the Cabinet Committee on Security, or CCS. This system has served India well over the years.

On December 24, 2019, a Press Information Bureau release on the Cabinet clearing the appointment of a Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) said: “The following areas will be dealt by the Department of Mil-

itary Affairs headed by CDS: The Armed Forces of the Union, namely, the Army, the Navy and the Air Force. Integrated Headquarters of the Ministry of Defence comprising Army Headquarters, Naval Headquarters, Air Headquarters and Defence Staff Headquarters. The Territorial Army. Works relating to the Army, the Navy and the Air Force. Procurement exclusive to the Services except capital acquisitions, as per prevalent rules and procedures.”

A notion of the nation

The rise of the ruling party has placed a particular notion of the nation on the political agenda, and it has sought to refract constitutional democracy and elections through it. It has confined constitutional democracy to the bare letter of the law and periodic elections to merely subserve a majority in the House. In the process it has shorn them off from even residual considerations of democracy as the self-rule of the citizen community and the nation as the outcome of this process.

One of the most ominous expressions of the Bharatiya Janata Party's version of the nation is found in the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, or the CAA, 2019 and the National Register of Citizens, allegedly on the anvil but officially denied in the face of widespread resistance. Several commentators have already pointed out that the CAA calls into question the foundations of citizenship in India, the role and place of the majority in a political democracy and minority rights and reorders them to suit the notion of the nation the current ruling dispensation cherishes.

How do we go about retrieving ideas of democracy and nation authentic to our context? One route leading to the same is subjecting the demands that the popular upsurge has voiced after the dilution of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, and particularly following the enactment of the CAA, to reflective consideration. There are many angularities to the popular upsurge of the scale that we are witnessing in India today. But certain issues stand out if we

read the kind of slogans that have been voiced, the songs that reverberate, paintings and plays that hold the crowds in rapt attention, and the extent and intensity of participation, and connect them to the popular demands that have been voiced by the very same people overtime.

In the Northeast, there is a widespread feeling that the CAA has watered down the autonomy that they sought for their culture, language, and land rights and very forcefully voiced before the Bodo-loi Committee of the Constituent Assembly. The large-scale participation of Muslims in this upsurge demonstrates that they do not want to be kept out but be treated as equal citizens. There is universal outrage about the communication blockade in the Kashmir Valley.

But what is more is the participation of the rest, especially students in this movement. They seem to be saying: We do not want you to shove down our throat your pet notions of the nation and rules. Stop befuddling us with your doubletalk. There are matters of much more profound concern and urgency that we need to put upfront, and since they can be pursued only together, we need to reopen a conversation across our divides. The nation can only be that big and small that such a conversation affords.

While this popular upsurge does not give us a full-blown ideal of democracy that we wish to be and the image of the nation it recasts, the indicators are all there to see. There is a surplus in the ideas of nation and democracy that formal rules of law and modes of representation can never exhaust, and you cannot trump the former by invoking the latter.

Valerian Rodrigues was a Professor at Mangalore University and Jawaharlal Nehru University

This will invariably encroach upon the domain of the service chiefs.

The CDS, as Permanent Chairperson of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, would outrank the three service chiefs even though theoretically all are four star. Moreover the advice of the CDS could override the advice of the respective Service Chiefs on critical tactical and perhaps even strategic issues.

With the creation of the DMA on most issues, the reporting structure of the three services to the Defence Minister would now be through the CDS; if not immediately it would become the norm over time. Even today while in theory the service chiefs report directly to the Defence Minister, in practice all files and decisions are routed through the Defence Secretary.

However most problematic is the erosion of civilian supremacy over the defence establishment in the Ministry of Defence itself. This impacts on the first principles of constitutionalism and has implications for our democratic polity also. Sophistry is being employed to suggest that the Secretary DMA would be in charge of military affairs and the Defence Secretary would look after the ‘defence of the realm’. The fact is that the defence of India is managed by the three services who would now report to the DMA.

Since the DMA would exercise control over the three services, it virtually makes the CDS the ‘Supreme Commander of the Indian Armed Forces’. A new czar has risen.

Manish Tewari is a lawyer, Member of Parliament and a former Information and Broadcasting Minister

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

Bulwark or misled?

The violence on the campus of the Jawaharlal Nehru University on Sunday night has given rise to much commentary as well as accusations and counter-accusations on who was responsible. A hunch I have is that this has been orchestrated in order to distract us – we the people – from the struggle which is on the streets all over India: namely, the protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 and the National Register of Citizens. Public dissent is not only spreading across the country but is also

resonating across generations. This mounting dissent has also been reflected in some of the political realignments. In Jharkhand, for example, there is now a new platform for non-BJP political parties and agencies to come together. All this could actually pose a serious political challenge to the BJP by the time of the next general election. So a word of caution to our youth who have been exemplary and who have also been a source of great hope for my generation; we must recognise that they are fighting for the

Constitution and for prevention of discrimination based on any of the various differences which make up the great Indian democracy. This little note is to say: be warned, do not let the JNU attack take away the focus from the protests against the NRC and CAA (Editorial page, “Students in the vanguard of democratic struggles”, January 7).

DEVAKI JAIN,
New Delhi

■ Students are admittedly a nation's future, but they must know their limitations

and, more importantly, their responsibilities. They should not become pawns in the hands of scheming politicians. If at all they are serious about the whole issue, their representatives should invite the powers-that-be to a meaningful debate on a public platform that must be telecast live. A neutral and initial approach is essential for understanding of the CAA's intended purport.

V. LAKSHMANAN,
Tirupur, Tamil Nadu

The charm of rail travel
Till three years ago, I used to travel to Mumbai, where my

son lives, by train; the journey times was 24-36 hours long. I now go by air, but the pleasure from train travel, especially with berth facilities, will be missed. There were numerous moments when they were like scenes of a film. Nothing

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

With reference to the report, “Officials help elderly man, who was ill-treated, regain bequeathed property” (some editions, Jan. 6, 2020), a reader had raised a doubt how the district administration could have nullified a will, when the person concerned is alive and can revise it on his own. It is clarified that on the senior citizen's complaint, the district administration got the transfer of property to his son declared invalid under Section 23 of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007, which provides for such a step. The use of the word “bequeathed” in the headline and the text was erroneous.

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can be more lively and interesting than train travel (Open Page, “Let the mind fly, take the train”, January 5).

D. SETHURAMAN,
Chennai