

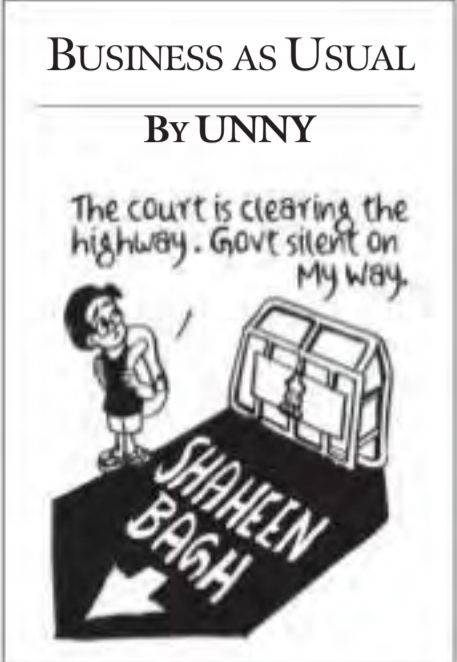
SC sends mediators to Shaheen Bagh: People have right to protest

ANANTHAKRISHNAN
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 17

ACKNOWLEDGING THAT people have a fundamental right to protest, the Supreme Court Monday appointed two advocates as interlocutors with the mandate to persuade anti-CAA protesters at Shaheen Bagh in Delhi to end their blockade of a public road. The court will hear the matter next on February 24.

The bench of Justices SK Kaul and K M Joseph said one set of people taking to public roads to air their grievance can inspire others to follow suit and this will ultimately lead to chaos. Democracy, the judges said, is about expression of views but "there are lines and boundaries" for it.

"Certain section of society is aggrieved by a legislation which is being tested in this court. We are not saying that despite pendency of matter, people will not



MORE JAMIA VIDEOS
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have the right to air their grievance or protest. Question arising is where to protest... Whether traffic can be managed better here or there is not the question. It cannot be a place like this. If

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

'CONSIDER PERMANENT COMMISSION, COMMAND POSTS' SC orders Army reform: Change mindset, give women equal role

Indefensible and disturbing: Court on arguments against greater role for women

ANANTHAKRISHNAN
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 17

CALLING FOR a "change in mindsets", the Supreme Court, in a momentous ruling Monday, directed that women officers of the Indian Army, serving under Short Service Commission, be considered for grant of Permanent Commission, irrespective of tenure of service, and also for command posts in non-combat areas since "an absolute bar on women seeking criteria or command appointments



The petitioners outside Supreme Court, Monday. Amit Mehra

would not comport with the guarantee of equality under Article 14".

Stating that "the absolute exclusion of women" from all com-

mand assignments except staff assignments is "indefensible", the bench of Justices D Y Chandrachud and Ajay Rastogi, CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

EXPLAINED
2 key arguments shot down

THE SUPREME Court rejected arguments against greater role for women officers, saying these violated equality under law. They were being kept out of command posts on the reasoning that the largely rural rank and file will have problems with women as commanding officers. The biological argument was also rejected as disturbing.

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Before he quit, Lokpal judge sent 3 letters to chief on lack of work, and gaps in processes

SHYAMLAL YADAV
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 17

WEEKS BEFORE he resigned from the nine-member Lokpal citing personal reasons, Justice Dilip B Bhosale, former Chief Justice of Allahabad High Court, sent as many as three letters to Lokpal Chairperson Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose, complaining about the lack of "any office/official work" and expressing reservations about pace of work in the watchdog body, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

Sources said that Justice Bhosale sent these letters in November-December last year — he resigned on January 6.

He was one of the four judicial members of the Lokpal, the other three being Justice Pradip Kumar Mohanty, former Chief



Justice Dilip B Bhosale

Justice of Orissa High Court; Justice Abhilasha Kumari, former Chief Justice of Manipur High Court and Justice A K Tripathi, former Chief Justice of Chhattisgarh High Court.

When contacted, Justice Bhosale declined to comment. The chairperson and members of Lokpal were appointed in March last year but with its rules still pending, as Justice Bhosale's letters suggest.

Sources said in his first letter to Justice Ghose dated November 14, Justice Bhosale said that since there was no CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

GOVT & POLITICS

J&K DELIMITATION
PANEL: SUSHIL CHANDRA
ISEC NOMINEE PAGE 7

In J&K, police invoke stringent UAPA in FIR against social media use

BASHAARAT MASOOD
SRINAGAR, FEBRUARY 17

POLICE IN J&K have invoked the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act to register a case against people using social media through proxy servers by getting past Internet firewalls.

The FIR was filed a day after a video of the ailing Hurriyat leader Syed Ali Geelani was uploaded on social media by different users.

"Taking serious note of misuse of social media, the Cyber Police Station, Kashmir Zone, Srinagar has registered a Case FIR against various social media users who defied the Government orders and misused social media platforms," police said in a statement.

"The FIR has been registered while taking cognizance of social media posts by miscreants by use of different VPNs, which are propagating rumours with

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After Wuhan, 406 are out of quarantine camp in Delhi: Homely, touched hearts

ANANYA TIWARI
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 17

"WE DIDN'T feel like we were alone. It was homely, and that touched our heart," Peerzadh Ahmed, a 22-year-old medical student from Kashmir's Budgam, said about the Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) facility in West Delhi where he and 405 others were quarantined after being evacuated from Wuhan in China on February 1-2.

On Monday, the 406 people were given certificates saying



At the ITBP quarantine facility in Delhi, Monday. Amit Mehra

they had tested negative for coronavirus, and were allowed to leave the facility in Chhawla. The all-clear was given after two round of tests by a team of around 45 doctors from ITBP, BSF, AIIMS, Safdarjung hospital, NCDC and others.

The group — 186 women, 209 men and 11 children — included a large number of medical students from Hubei University of Medicine in Shiyan, around 450 km from the epicentre of the epidemic.

While two persons left the CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

British MP who slammed Govt on Article 370 sent back from Delhi airport

SHUBHAJIT ROY & DEEPTIMAN TIWARI
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 17

A BRITISH Opposition lawmaker, who had criticised India's decision to revoke the special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 last year, said Monday that she was denied entry to the country and deported after she landed at Delhi airport despite holding a visa.

The government, however,



UK Labour MP Debbie Abrahams

denied the claim and said Labour Party MP Debbie Abrahams had landed in Delhi despite being informed that her visa "had been cancelled much earlier". "She had been duly informed about

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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