



on Sunday



2 militants killed in an operation in Anantnag district: J&K police chief
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Rahul Gandhi remains 'top leader' in Congress, says Salman Khurshid
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Afghans mark start of weeklong partial truce amid isolated attacks
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Captain's knock from Williamson puts New Zealand in control
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NEARBY



No Kejriwal, Sisodia in Melania's school event
 NEW DELHI
 Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia will not be present during U.S. First Lady Melania Trump's visit to a Delhi government school on Tuesday as their names were dropped from the guest list, sources said.
NEWS ▶ PAGE 11

Dangerous building razed, several evacuated
 NEW DELHI
 Scores of people have been evacuated from their houses in front of JNU main gate on account of a dangerous six-storey construction being demolished. With valuables and various documents left behind, many of them, who have taken shelter on the footpath outside their houses, are worried about their livelihoods.
CITY ▶ PAGE 3

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Truth cannot be eclipsed by prejudices: President Kovind

He inaugurated *The Hindu's* thought conclave The Huddle in Bengaluru

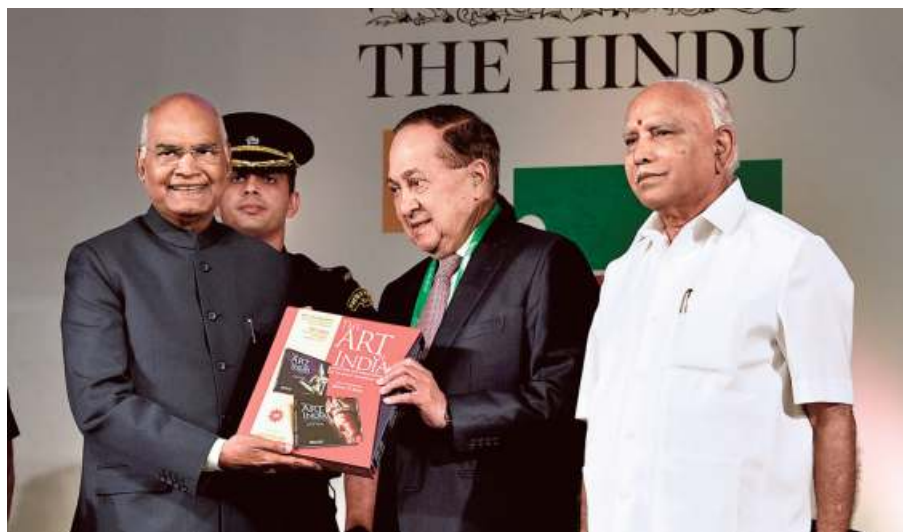
AMIT BARUAH
 BENGALURU
 "Truth exists in absolute form which cannot be eclipsed by blinkers of prejudices. It cannot be a case of 'your truth' versus 'my truth'. Truth has to be one," President Ram Nath Kovind said on Saturday, while inaugurating the fourth edition of The Huddle, organised by The Hindu Group of Publications.

Paying glowing tributes to *The Hindu* for "relentlessly aiming to capture the essence of this great country", Mr. Kovind pointed out that sometimes dogmas and personal prejudices distort the truth.

As one of the oldest newspapers in the subcontinent, *The Hindu* had contributed immensely to nation-building.

"Fired by a nationalist impulse, six intrepid youth of Madras, barely out of their teens, founded *The Hindu* in 1878 to redeem our cultural pride. They challenged the imperial power at its peak and nourished nationalism," the President said.

"Since then, the story of *The Hindu's* journey is quite instructive for those who



Big start: N. Ram, Chairman, THG Publishing Pvt. Ltd., felicitating President Ram Nath Kovind at the inauguration of The Huddle 2020 in Bengaluru on Saturday. At right is Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa. *K. MURALI KUMAR

wish to understand the spirit of India that is Bharat. Readers too responded enthusiastically. For many in Chennai and elsewhere, the morning came to mean a cup of filter coffee and a copy of *The Hindu*," Mr. Kovind said.

Praise from Gandhiji
 When the newspaper celebrated its golden jubilee in 1928, the President quoted Gandhiji as saying: "I gladly add mine to the many tri-

butes that will be paid to *The Hindu* on its Golden Jubilee. I consider *The Hindu* to be one of the best, if not the best, among the Indian-owned dailies throughout India."

"In the 150th year of Gandhiji's birth, let us ponder this question: will it not be proper to pursue truth itself as the ideology? Gandhiji has shown us the path by walking ceaselessly in search of truth..." the President

said to a packed house at The Huddle. Mr. Kovind pointed out that today, the world seemed to be living in the post-truth era. "I wonder what Gandhiji would have said about it. Of late, there have been attempts to give various shades to truth and define its stages as if some truth exists beyond provisional truths," he said.

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Road near Shaheen Bagh opened by protesters: police

The move follows a visit by court-appointed interlocutors

SIDHARTH RAVI
 NEW DELHI

A stretch of a road near the Shaheen Bagh protest site here was opened on Saturday, following a visit by a Supreme Court-appointed interlocutor.

However, volunteers involved in the protests whom *The Hindu* spoke to differed on who opened the road — the police or the protesters themselves.

Shaheen Kauser, a social activist who has been protesting against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act for the last two months, informed that Sadhana Ramchandran, one of the interlocutors, visited the site on Saturday morning to speak to the protesters here. "She listened to us without imposing her views and told us that all our concerns would be placed before the court," she said.

Protesters insisted that in order to open one side of the National Highway on which the protests have been taking place, they would need assurances from police officials, Ms. Kauser said. But no discussion on opening any other road took place, she said.

The police said a small stretch was opened by prot-



Open again: A stretch of the road that was closed for over two months being cleared on Saturday. *PTI

esters, followed by a visit by the interlocutors in the morning. "A section of the protesters opened the stretch that joins Abu Fazal Enclave to Kalindi Kunj Junction but after a few minutes, it was closed again by another group. Subsequently, the stretch was opened again by the protesters and it remains open," Deputy Commissioner of Police (South East) R.P. Meena said.

Blockade removed
 Meraj Khan, a volunteer, said Road No. 9, which connects Sarita Vihar and Kalindi Kunj, was opened by the protesters. While the road had been blocked by the police earlier, the protesters

had also put up a blockade here but were allowing ambulances and school vans to pass through, he said. Mohamed Shabazz, another volunteer, said the blockade of the road to Jamia Millia Islamia was cleared by the police, and the protesters were not involved.

After talks on Friday, interlocutor Sanjay Hegde had said the protesters, in principle, were not against opening of the non-protest side of the road if their security could be guaranteed in writing by the police under suitable orders of the Supreme Court.

(With inputs from PTI)

TRUMP MAY RAISE CAA ▶ PAGE 11

Marching as one



Ready for action: As many as 1,160 personnel, including 84 women, were inducted into the Central Industrial Security Force after a passing out parade held at the Regional Training Centre near Arakkonam in Tamil Nadu on Saturday. *C. VENKATACHALAPATHY (SEE PAGE 9)

Modi a versatile genius, says Justice Arun Mishra

'He thinks globally and acts locally'

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
 NEW DELHI

Supreme Court judge Arun Mishra described Prime Minister Narendra Modi as an "internationally acclaimed visionary" at a public forum on Saturday. He also called Mr. Modi a "versatile genius" who "thinks globally and acts locally".

Justice Mishra, one of the first five senior-most judges of the court, twice lauded Mr. Modi in his vote of thanks at the inaugural session of the International Judicial Conference 2020 'Judiciary and the Changing World'.

"India is a responsible and most friendly member of the international community under the stewardship of internationally acclaimed visionary Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi... We thank the versatile genius who thinks globally

and acts locally, Shri Narendra Modi, for his inspiring speech, which will act as a catalyst for the deliberations and agenda of the conference," he said.

PM on the dais

On the dais were Mr. Modi, Chief Justice of India Sharad A. Bobde, Justices N.V. Ramana and L. Nageswara Rao, Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad and Attorney-General K.K. Venugopal. Also in attendance were Supreme Court and High Court judges, judges from 24 nations, former judges and advocates.

In his inaugural address, Mr. Modi said 1.3 billion Indians had "wholeheartedly" accepted "some critical judgments" recently. These judgments were the subject of a global discussion.

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No relief for Nirbhaya case convict

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
 NEW DELHI

A petition filed by one of the four death row convicts in the Nirbhaya case seeking treatment for "insanity" was dismissed on Saturday by a Delhi court. It said he "is malingering" and "desires himself to be falsely diagnosed mentally ill".

Additional sessions judge

Dharmender Rana rejected Vinay Kumar Sharma's petition, saying there were no signs of psychological distress, and he did not find any occasion to refer him to the Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Sciences or any other hospital. The petition said he sustained a grievous head injury and a fracture in the right arm, and

was suffering from "insanity", "mental illness" and "schizophrenia".

The court said that "general anxiety and depression" in a death row convict "is obvious" and noted that adequate medical treatment and psychological help had been provided to the convict.

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Govt. cautions against travel to Singapore

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 NEW DELHI

Indians have been advised to avoid all non-essential travel to Singapore after the country registered a rise in the number of coronavirus cases recently.

The decision was announced after the Cabinet Secretary chaired a high-level meeting to review the action taken and preparedness of the States and the Union Territories to handle novel coronavirus (COVID-19) on Saturday.

"...in addition to the universal screening as per earlier advisories, universal screening at airports is now being planned for flights from Kathmandu, Indonesia, Vietnam and Malaysia," a release said.

CHINA DENYING NOD ▶ PAGE 11

Breaking barriers with Yakshagana

A young Muslim woman overcomes resistance to acquire prowess in the art form

RAVIPRASAD KAMILA
 MANGALURU

Unlike Mohammed Ghouse, Jokatte Mohammed and Jabbar Samo, who are well-known Yakshagana artistes in coastal Karnataka, Arshiya is a relatively new entrant to the art form. But she is growing in popularity.

There are far fewer women Yakshagana artistes compared to men, and a Muslim woman exponent is rare. At one time, this traditional art form was forbidden for women.

Arshiya, in her 20s, and working in an automobile company, was fascinated by it as a child and performed her first 'prasangas' (episodes) when she was 10 in her village, Okkethur Mada, near Vitla in Dakshina Kannada. She is perfecting



Arshiya preparing for a performance.
 *SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

her skills at Kadali Kala Kendra in Mangaluru. She grew up in an atmosphere where Yakshagana was all pervasive but it was a teacher of this traditional style, Jayaram, at Jaycees English Medium School in Vitla, who kindled her

interest. "The role of Mahishasura in a *Devi Mahatme* episode which I watched during childhood mesmerised me. I got addicted to *bannada vesha* [villain roles]," she said.

Many characters

"The most enthralling part of Yakshagana is the *pravesha* (entry) of *bannada vesha*. I still love it and enjoy performing," she said, recalling her portrayal of Nishambhasura, Raktha Beejasura and Mahishasura in *Devi Mahatme*.

Going by the stage name of Tanu Vitla, she is also learning to play the 'chende', a percussion instrument, under Ramesh Bhat of Kadali Kala Kendra.

Mr. Bhat said Ms. Arshiya was "in the process of

learning to use complicated Yakshagana make-up". She is also likely the first woman from the Muslim community in Yakshagana.

Entry into the field was not a cake walk. Though family members were supportive, some other members of the community were not. Overcoming such resistance and against all odds, she has performed in Mangaluru, Udupi, Karwar and Belagavi.

Her colleague in the automobile company, Prakruthi, said that Ms. Arshiya prompted her also to learn Yakshagana and she has been taking lessons for four months. Senior artiste S.N. Bhat Bayar said the country's heritage and culture recognised no religious barriers.

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