

'LOOK FORWARD TO BEING WITH PEOPLE OF INDIA, GOING TO BE EXCITING'

On their way

An honour, says Modi; Amit Shah in Ahmedabad to monitor preparations

PARIMAL DABHI & SHUBHAJIT ROY
AHMEDABAD, FEBRUARY 23

HUNDREDS OF billboards hailing "strong leaders", "two dynamic personalities", "great democracies"; decorations depicting events in the life of Mahatma Gandhi; traditional artists from across the country; 28 stages representing different states along a journey labelled India Road Show; a security contingent including 15 bomb detection squads; and, the Namaste Trump event.

The government is pulling no stops in rolling out the red carpet for Donald Trump who lands in Ahmedabad at 11.40 am Monday for what officials have described as "the first stand-alone visit by a US President to India".

Setting the stage for the two-day visit, which will cover the Taj Mahal in Agra and bilateral talks in Delhi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted Sunday that "India looks forward to welcoming" the US President. "It is an honour that he will be with us tomorrow, starting with the historic programme in Ahmedabad!" he tweeted.

Trump, meanwhile, retweeted a meme on him based on a sequence from the blockbuster movie *Bahubali*, and wrote: "Look so forward to being with my great friends in INDIA!" Later, speaking to reporters outside the White House before his departure, Trump said: "I look forward to being with the people of India. We are going to have many millions and millions of people. It's a long trip. I get along very well with Prime Minister Modi. He is a friend of mine."

He said: "I had committed to this trip long time ago. I look forward to being with the people of India. We are going to have many millions and millions of people. It's a long trip. I get along very well with Prime Minister Modi. He is a friend of mine."



President Donald Trump, First Lady Melania Trump board Air Force One at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland, Sunday. AP

On the table: plan to counter China's reach with Blue Dot network

SHUBHAJIT ROY
AHMEDABAD, FEBRUARY 23

WITH CHINA moving to expand its strategic footprint through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), India and the US will discuss the Blue Dot network, a new proposal to cover infrastructure and development projects across the region and other countries.

The Blue Dot network is "a multi-stakeholder initiative to bring together governments, the private sector and civil society to promote high-quality, trusted standards for global infrastructure development", sources said.

The US, which is leading the proposal, has already got Japan and Australia as partners in this idea.



The proposal, which is part of the US's Indo-Pacific strategy, is aimed at countering Chinese influence. CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Waiting for Trump in Agra. Praveen Khanna

HIS DAY	
11.40 AM:	Arrives in Ahmedabad
12.15 PM:	Visit to Sabarmati Ashram
1 PM:	Namaste Trump, Motera stadium
3.30 PM:	Leaves for Agra
5.15 PM:	Visit to Taj
7.30 PM:	Reaches Delhi

RELATED REPORTS
PAGE 5

Visit will push move to set up six N-reactors

ANIL SASI
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 23

AN ANNOUNCEMENT on a "project proposal" for the setting up of six nuclear power reactors in collaboration with Westinghouse Electric Company is expected during US President Donald Trump's visit this week.

The emergence of a viable proposal would set the stage for a commercial agreement to be initiated with Westinghouse Electric, which would pave the way for commencement of work on the project in coastal Andhra Pradesh.

Pittsburgh-based Westinghouse Electric employs over 10,000 people globally and is a flagbearer of the US nuclear sector, alongside the

Shaheen Bagh: Hearing today, ex-CIC says shifting will put protesters at risk

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 23

ANY ATTEMPT to "forcibly shift" those protesting against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act from the road they are sitting on in Shaheen Bagh, Delhi, "would compromise their safety", former Chief Information Commissioner Wajahat Habibullah said Sunday, adding that police barricading of unconnected roads was behind the traffic chaos in the area.

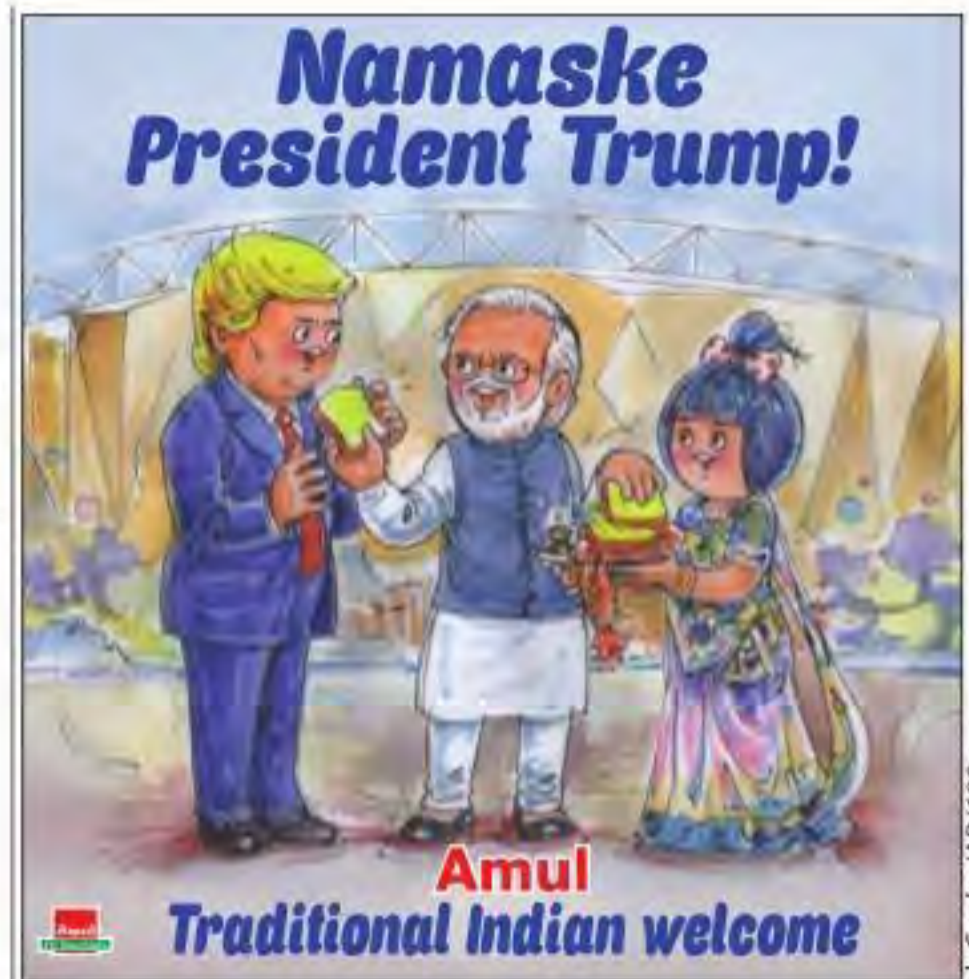
In an affidavit to the Supreme Court, which will hold a hearing in the matter on Monday, Habibullah said he visited the site on February 19 and personally inspected the barricades placed by police. He said he noticed that "there are numerous... roads that have no connection with the protest that have been barricaded by the Police unnecessarily, abdicating their responsibilities and duties and wrongly laying the blame on the protest". "It is this barricading of unconnected roads that has led to a chaotic situation."

Habibullah contended, "Any attempt to forcibly shift them (the protesters) from the present site would compromise their safety, especially in view of the abuses and threats that are regularly being meted out and hate speeches that have taken place in different parts of the country (against) those protesting against the CAA, NPR (National Population Register) and NRC (National Register of Citizens)."

The Supreme Court is hearing PILs against the Shaheen Bagh protest and the blockade of roads, saying this was causing difficulties for people in nearby areas. Expressing concern over the blockade, the court had deputed Senior Advocate Sanjay Hegde and Advocate Sadhana Ramachandran to hold talks

EXPRESS NETWORK

GANGSTER RAVI PUJARI EXTRADITED, TO REACH INDIA TODAY PAGE 6



Clashes erupt in Delhi after BJP leader's rally near anti-CAA protest



Violence started in Maujpur, Babarpur soon after ex-MLA Kapil Mishra left. Gajendra Yadav DAY OF CLASHES IN DELHI P 3

AMIL BHATNAGAR
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 23

SOON AFTER a rally was taken out by BJP leader Kapil Mishra near a demonstration against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in northeast Delhi's Jaffrabad on Sunday, clashes erupted between pro- and anti-CAA protesters in the area. Security officials at the spot admitted the violence, including stone-pelting, threatened to take a communal turn, but was contained.

Mishra, a former MLA who had been in the news during the recent Assembly polls campaign for provocative slogans, earlier in the day called people, via Twitter, to gather to protest against an

anti-CAA demonstration that had moved to a road near the Jaffrabad Metro Station on Saturday night from a nearby sit-in.

In a video released by him after the violence, Mishra can be heard threatening the anti-CAA protesters. He told *The Indian Express* he had to make the statements to "release pressure" building among the crowd.

The BJP leader gathered along with supporters next to the Maujpur-Babarpur Metro Station, 2 km from the Jaffrabad anti-CAA protest, in the afternoon. As the crowd swelled to more than 200,

CLASHES IN ALIGARH, 6 INJURED, PAGE 6

Food data raises alert: Indians are consuming less pulses and milk

PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS & HARISH DAMODARAN
PUNE, NEW DELHI, FEB 23

IS THERE stagnation in demand for pulses, milk and other protein-rich foods in India? The National Statistical Office (NSO) withheld its household consumption expenditure survey report for 2017-18 but alternative data sources do suggest a slowdown — at least in respect of the ubiquitous *dal* and *doodh*.

At a global Pulses Conclave held earlier this month in Pune, the overwhelming concern expressed by participants was: Why are we not eating enough pulses?

One of the presentations at the event was a detailed analysis of the estimated consumption of individual pulses — *chana* (chickpea), *yellow peas*, *masur* (red lentil), *arhar* (pigeon-pea),

EXPLAINED Linked to income

WITH RISING income, the consumption of milk, pulses, eggs and meat had increased, especially among the poor. Flattening demand growth for protein-rich foods suggests incomes aren't rising as before. But whether consumption is actually slowing will be known only from the next NSO household survey.

moong (green gram) and *urad* (black gram) — based on year-wise opening stocks plus domestic production and imports, and deducting exports, diversion

Tharoor, Singhvi join the chorus: Cong seen to be adrift, time for action now

MANOJ CG
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 23

DISQUIET IS growing within the Congress over the leadership's reluctance to shed its inertia in addressing organisational challenges, mainly the election of a new party president.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Lok Sabha MP Shashi Tharoor said the "perception" that the party is "adrift" is hurting it as it is driving voters towards other political alternatives, and three-time MP Abhishek Singhvi said the time for "discussion and words" is over.

In Kolkata, senior leader Jairam Ramesh told PTI that a "collective submergence of individual egos and ambitions" was needed to revive the party, and suggested that "all senior Congress leaders, after a certain age, should be mentoring juniors rather than tormenting them".



Address selection of new chief. INTERVIEW P 5

Tharoor said it is high time the party find a new president to "fill the vacuum" created in the wake of Rahul Gandhi's resignation after the Lok Sabha elections last year. He said the party should decide what it stands for and communicate it effectively and repeatedly. "We must articulate a vision for the future that embraces the aspirations of India's majority — the young," he said.

"The Congress is indispensable for India, to give the country

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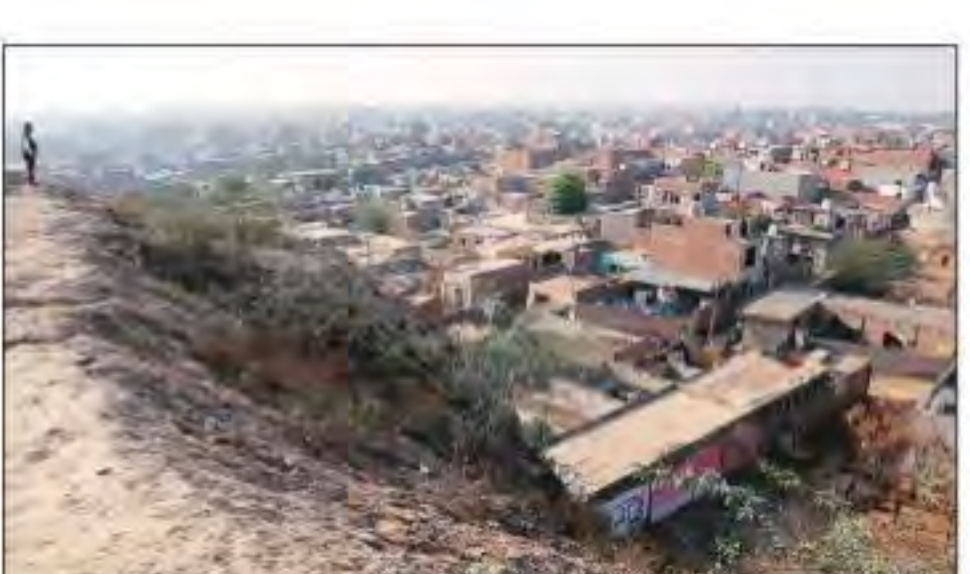
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BY ARUNK SINGH PAGE 9

Ancient city in Sirsa, under a mound & 50,000 people

PAGE 1 ANCHOR
VARINDER BHATIA
SIRSA, FEBRUARY 23

A MOUND in Sirsa indistinguishable from the dusty background of most Haryana small towns could hold clues to the ancient city of 'Sarishika'. Falling on the old route to Takshashila, the 6th-5th century BC city found mention in the Mahabharata, Panini's *Ashdadhyaayi* and the Buddhist text *Divyavadana*.

However, before the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) can confirm the historicity of the site, it has to convince the nearly 50,000 people living on the identified 82 acres to move. With 788 families forcibly rehabilitated three years ago following a high court order still struggling for basic amenities, the residents, many of whom settled here following Partition, are not willing to move. They also accuse the authorities of letting the situation fester, with a 1904 Ancient Monuments Preservation Act first declaring Sirsa's 'Ther Mound', which rises 15-18 metres above nearby areas,



Residents living on Ther Mound in Sirsa, holding remains of a 6th-5th century BC city, are resisting removal. Kamleshwar Singh

a protected monument back in July 1932. There is also a dispute over the size of the protected area, with surveys by the ASI and government departments such as Revenue and Archaeology and Museums coming up with different figures. Over the years, the inhabitants, who have formed a forum called the Apna Ghar Bachao Sangharsh Samiti, have acquired documents, including land conveyance deeds, sale-purchase agreements, municipal tax receipts, electricity and water meter

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