



Centre trying to divide people in the name of CAA, says Pinarayi

page 8



Congress demands court-monitored probe into Delhi riots

page 13



'We expect Yes Bank moratorium to be lifted by weekend'

page 15

Mary Kom and Amit Panghal book berths to Tokyo Olympics

page 18



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NEARBY

Two Hizbul militants killed in Shopian

SRINAGAR
Two Hizbul Mujahideen militants were killed in an operation by security forces in Shopian on Monday. The militants were identified as Shabir Ahmed Malik from Kulgam and Aamir Ahmed Dar from Anantnag.

Two killed, one hurt in hospital wall collapse

NEW DELHI
Two men were killed and one injured when a boundary wall of an eye hospital collapsed in Lajpat Nagar on Monday, the police said. The deceased were identified as Amit (30) and Gagan Wadhwa (45). The injured person, Sharafat Ali (35), has been undergoing treatment at AIIMS.

Brother of ex-AAP councillor arrested

NEW DELHI
Delhi Police on Monday arrested the brother of suspended AAP councillor Tahir Hussain in connection with violence in north-east Delhi. Shah Alam was arrested by Delhi Police Crime Branch.

THE HINDU
greet its readers on the occasion of
Holi
There will be no issue of The Hindu dated March 11, as Holi is a holiday.
Readers can access the online edition of The Hindu at www.thehindu.com

Worst single-day fall for Sensex

The benchmark index loses a whopping 1,941.67 points to close at 35,634.95

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The benchmark Sensex on Monday witnessed its biggest single day fall in absolute terms amid a global sell off in equities. This came on the back of rising concerns over the economic impact of the COVID-19 outbreak and a plunge in crude prices that further fuelled worries about a global slowdown.

The Sensex lost a whopping 1,941.67 points, or 5.17%, to close at 35,634.95 – a 52-week low for the barometer – with all its 30 constituents ending the day with huge losses.

The Sensex has now lost 6,639 points, or nearly 16%, from its record intra-day high of 42,273.87 that was touched on January 20.

The broader Nifty plunged 538 points, or 4.90%, to close at 10,451.45.

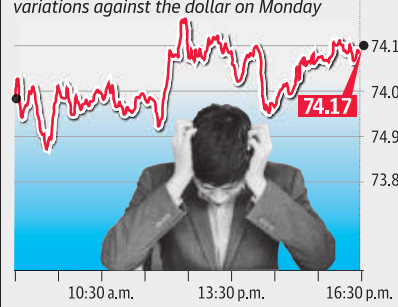
The India VIX index, considered a barometer of near-

Monday meltdown

Global stock markets plunged on Monday following a record slump in oil prices, dealing a blow to investors who were already under pressure over the coronavirus outbreak. A look at how rupee, Sensex and other markets reacted

A new high | Rupee slipped past the ₹74-mark against the dollar to settle at ₹74.17

The graph shows the rupee's intra-day variations against the dollar on Monday



World markets' fall in % terms

Index	Change (%)
Euro Stoxx 50, Eurozone	-8.33%
Dax, Germany	-7.89%
FTSE 100, U.K.	-7.88%
S&P 500, U.S.	-7.29%
BSE Sensex, India	-5.17%
Nikkei 225, Tokyo	-5.07%
Hang Seng, Hong Kong	-4.23%
CSI 300, Shanghai	-4.23%
Kospi, S. Korea	-4.19%

term volatility, jumped nearly 35% during intra-day trading to touch a new 52-week high of 34.4, before closing at 30.8 – 20.11% higher than Friday's close.

"The Indian markets followed the global market meltdown which was triggered by the rapidly spreading virus and a free fall in crude oil prices," said Siddhartha Khemka, head, Retail

Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

Global crude prices registered their biggest drop since the Gulf War in 1991. After falling to an intra-day low of around \$27 per barrel, crude was trading at around \$33 a barrel level – nearly 20% lower than previous day's price – around 8 p.m.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 12

Rupee sinks below 74 mark

The rupee breached the 74 to a dollar mark on Monday. The currency opened weak at 74.04 and went on to touch the day's low of 74.19 a dollar. It finally closed the day at 74.17 a dollar. ► PAGE 15

Punjab, Karnataka, Jammu report first COVID-19 cases

Bengaluru techie among 45 confirmed cases nationwide

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI

With six more persons testing positive for COVID-19, the number of confirmed cases in India climbed to 45 on Monday. Punjab, Jammu and Karnataka reported their first cases, while fresh cases have been confirmed in Kerala, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh. The country now has over 40 active cases.

While the Union Health Ministry confirmed 44 cases, the Karnataka government announced its first case in the evening.

"Karnataka confirmed its first positive case after a 40-year-old software professional, who returned from the U.S. on March 1, tested positive. The condition of the patient, who has been admitted to the State-run Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Chest

Rising cases

The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases has jumped to 45 across the country

State/U.T.	Indians	Foreigners
Delhi	4	0
Haryana	0	14
Kerala	9	0
Rajasthan	0	2
Telangana	1	0
U.P.	9	0
Ladakh	2	0
T.N.	1	0
J&K	1	0
Punjab	1	0
Karnataka	1	0

Diseases (RGICD) is stable," a State government release said. In Punjab, a man who returned from Italy was confirmed as positive – the first

IAF plane leaves for Iran

India sent a C-17 Globemaster military aircraft with a medical team on board to Iran on Monday night to bring back Indians stranded there. According to the IAF, the plane left for Iran from the Hindon airbase at 8.30 p.m. "IAF is ensuring required operational and medical measures are in place for an expeditious and safe return of Indian citizens from Iran," it tweeted. ► PAGE 9

case in the State, Health Minister Balbir Singh Sidhu said. CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 12

Special offering



Religious fervour: Women cooking Pongala, a sweet dish, during the annual festival at the Attukal Bhagavathy temple in Thiruvananthapuram on Monday. Despite concerns over fresh cases of COVID-19 in Kerala, lakhs of devotees took part in the women-only event. ■ S. MAHINSHA

16 Ministers submit resignations in M.P.

Midnight drama as pro-Scindia MLAs go incommunicado

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BHOPAL/ BENGALURU

Sixteen Cabinet Ministers of the Congress government in Madhya Pradesh resigned on Monday night and requested the Chief Minister to reconstitute the Cabinet.

The Ministers, including Home Minister Bala Bachchan, Finance Minister Tarun Bhanot and Law Minister P.C. Sharma, tendered their resignations to Mr. Nath at a late night Cabinet meeting. The development capped a day of hectic political activity with Mr. Nath forced to rush back to Bhopal from Delhi after 17 Con-



Twist in the tale: Minister Umang Singhar after submitting his resignation in Bhopal on Monday night. ■ A.M. FARUQUI

gress MLAs – allegedly supporters of Jyotiraditya Scindia – went incommunicado. Several of them, including a Minister, reached the BJP-ruled Karnataka by a special flight later in the day. Speaking to reporters outside Mr. Nath's residence,

where the meeting was held, Sajjan Singh Verma, who resigned as the Public Works and Environment Minister, said, "Given the vicious atmosphere created by the BJP, we have requested Mr. Nath to reconstitute the Cabinet independently. We

want to thwart the efforts of the BJP to topple the government."

Stating that the Congress had called a meeting of party MLAs at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Mr. Verma said the government was stable. "We have been given the mandate for five years by people. We will complete our term."

Umang Singhar, who resigned as Forest Minister said, "The government is safe. New Ministers will be appointed."

Mr. Nath had reached Delhi on Sunday to brief Congress president Sonia Gandhi on the political turmoil in the State and discuss an imminent expansion of the Cabinet.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 12

Release Omar, others: Oppn.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Opposition on Monday called for the immediate release of all political detainees in Kashmir, especially Farooq Abdullah, Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti, who have been detained for seven months on the "flimsiest of grounds".

In a joint statement, the leaders termed these detentions a blatant violation of the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

DETAILS ON ► PAGE 12

HC orders removal of hoardings

Court slams 'violation of Constitution' by U.P. govt., police

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

Termining it an "unwarranted interference in privacy" of people and a violation of Article 21 of the Constitution, the Allahabad High Court on Monday directed the Lucknow administration to remove forthwith the controversial 'name and shame' hoardings identifying persons arrested during protests last December against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

The High Court also asked the Lucknow District Magis-

trate to submit a compliance report by March 16 and directed the State government not to place such hoardings, containing personal data of individuals, on roads without legal approval.

"In entirety, we are having no doubt that the action of the State... is nothing but an unwarranted interference in privacy of people," a Division Bench of Chief Justice Govind Mathur and Justice Ramesh Sinha said.

The State police and the administration had put up several hoardings in Luck-

now revealing personal details of persons accused of violence during the anti-CAA protests, triggering fears among those named. As many as 57 persons have been identified in the hoardings. The hoardings however, continued to be up even hours after the court order.

The court had taken suo motu cognisance of the police action and pulled up the government in a rare Sunday sitting.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 12

SEE ALSO ► PAGE 5

'PFI man' held for Delhi riots

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Delhi Police on Monday arrested a 33-year-old man suspected to be a member of the Popular Front of India (PFI) for allegedly hatching a conspiracy to incite riots in north-east Delhi.

The accused has been identified as Mohd. Danish, a resident of the Trilokpur area in the Capital, police said. A city court sent him to four-day police custody.

The PFI, an alleged radical group, has been accused of funding anti-CAA protests, a charge it has denied.

Three men picked up by police in midnight swoop, families clueless

Kin claim they were guarding temple as part of post-riots vigil

HEMANI BHANDARI
NEW DELHI

Around 1 p.m. on Monday, families and relatives of three residents of Nehru Vihar were waiting outside the Dayalpur police station to meet them and know why they had been held. "Ye to goonda raj hai" (This is rule of lawlessness), said a relative, exasperated after an over 12-hour ordeal.

Around 12.30 a.m., Habib, Usman and Mohammed Yameen, all in their late thirties and early forties, were picked up by Delhi Police from Nehru Vihar's E2 Block. Their relatives claim they were guarding the area, especially a temple in the vicinity. In almost every locality since riots broke out in the city, locals guard the area themselves to ensure no untoward incident takes place.

"Like every other night, they were guarding the area. There are only five Hindu families in our block. We don't want any outsider to come and target the temple and blame our community for it, so a few of us keep vigil," said Alanoor, Usman's brother, who also lives in the area.

Recounting Sunday night's events, Habib's nephew Azeem said that while they (Habib and others) were sitting, a police van came and suddenly picked him up. "Habib called Usman for help and when the latter intervened, they picked him up as well. Locals gathered and tried to argue but a police-



Families of the three arrested men outside the Dayalpur police station on Monday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

man pulled out a pistol. They all then fled," said Azeem.

'No information'

Families of the three then reached the police station but were asked to come at 8 a.m. on Monday, they said. "We reached here at 6 a.m. but the police didn't let us speak to them. We aren't even being told why they have been held," said Shoaib, Usman's nephew.

Another person identified as Nafees, a resident of Sanjay Chowk, was also held by police on Saturday evening. His family claims the police are actually looking for Nafees's brother Gulfam. "Police came around 5.15 p.m. on Saturday and took Nafees. They asked us to hand over Gulfam... only then would they release Nafees. We are looking for Gulfam but what's Nafees's fault?" said Shakeel, another brother.

Noor Mohammed (86), another relative of Habib, said what the police are doing is one-sided and it's

wrong. "It's never one-sided in a riot," he said.

Shoaib said that the three held by police have families and kids to take care of. While Usman runs a clothing business, Habib is a tailor and Yameen runs a retail clothing outlet. "They have nothing to do with these riots. Our area was not even affected by violence. If they remain in jail and all of us spend time in police and court proceedings, who'll earn money for the families?" said Shoaib, adding that the families wouldn't have backed the three had they been actually involved in rioting. Around 2.30 p.m., policemen emerged from the station holding the trio. When asked, they said the three have been arrested and are being taken to be produced before the court.

Efforts made to contact senior officers in North East district and Crime Branch proved futile.

MORE REPORTS ON ► PAGE 3

When PGs pick up the broom to become govt. servants

Highly educated persons among newly posted conservancy staff in Coimbatore

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
COIMBATORE

When 23-year-old K. Sangeetha picked up a broom to sweep Raja Street on Monday morning she was going through mixed emotions.

It was the first day of her job as a Coimbatore Corporation conservancy worker and she was not quite prepared for the task that awaited her. "I did not expect to sweep the road. Initially it was very difficult. I felt as if all eyes were on me. But I managed to pull through."

Despite holding a post-graduate qualification in microbiology, she took up

the appointment because she always wanted a government job.

"I convinced myself – let me take it, for life does not have to end with me being a conservancy worker. I'll use this as a stepping stone to find better avenues."

For 35-year-old N. Padmavathy too, Monday was the first day of work as a municipal conservancy worker. She also took up the assignment because it was a government job and the salary was better than that at her last employer.



ILLUSTRATION: DEEPAK HARICHANDAN

The working hours were another reason for Ms. Padmavathy quitting her job as an accountant at a private firm near Town Hall.

"Here I'm happy that I can finish my work early in the evening to return home to my children," says the mother of two.

The women are among dozens of men and women with under-graduate and post-graduate qualifications who applied for and were appointed for conservancy work. The new staff include those from the Backward Classes and the Most Backward Classes.

R. Naveen, a civil engineering diploma holder,

says family circumstances forced him to take up the job. "I'm the breadwinner and support my mother and younger sister. That is why I left my job at a private company to take up this government job."

Welcoming the fact that qualified candidates and persons from outside the SC communities were taking up conservancy work, S. Selvakumar, member, State Level SC Welfare Committee, said it was a step towards ensuring social equality.

A senior Corporation official said the civic body followed the roster system in appointing qualified candidates but did not share details on the exact number of appointees with a college qualification.