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**NEARBY**  
**Police presence stepped up at Shaheen Bagh**  
NEW DELHI  
Heavy police presence and barricading were seen in Shaheen Bagh on Sunday after a right-wing group, Hindu Sena, gave a call to clear the road where anti-CAA protesters have been staging a sit-in since December 16. The Delhi police said they stepped up deployment around the protest site as a "precautionary measure".  
CITY PAGE 2

**Polish student in Kolkata told to leave India**  
KOLKATA  
Kamil Siedcynski, a student of Masters in Comparative Literature at Jadavpur University in Kolkata, has been asked to leave India for "anti-government activities". The Foreign Regional Registration Office, under the Union Home Ministry, handed the notice to Mr. Siedcynski asking him to leave India within 15 days for violating the terms of his visa.  
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EDUCATION PLUS PAGES 17 & 18

## No minority in Bengal will lose citizenship due to CAA: Shah

Provocative slogans raised by BJP supporters in Kolkata ahead of public rally

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT KOLKATA**  
Kolkata witnessed hectic political activity on Sunday, with Home Minister Amit Shah assuring a public rally that "no minority will have to leave" the country owing to the new Citizenship Act, while a march of BJP supporters set off shock waves as they raised the incendiary 'Goli Maro Salon Ko' (Shoot the traitors) slogan in the heart of the city.  
Speaking at a public rally at the Shaheed Minar Ground, Mr. Shah emphasised that fear was being spread among sections of the population over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA). He added that "no minority from Kolkata or West Bengal will lose citizenship because of the CAA".  
The Minister reiterated that the CAA is a law to give citizenship, not to take it away. "The refugees are being made to fear that they will have to produce documents. Nothing of this sort will happen. Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains do not need any documents," he said.  
He added that by opposing a law passed in Parliament, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee was disrespecting the founding fathers of the Constitution.  
Speaking about the upcoming Assembly election in



**Strong assurances:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah addressing a pro-CAA rally in Kolkata on Sunday. ■ AFP

West Bengal in 2021, Mr. Shah claimed that the BJP would form the next government in the State with a two-thirds majority.  
Mr. Shah also launched a campaign targeted at the alleged "misrule" of the Trinamool Congress government. The campaign titled 'Aar Noy Anyay' (No more injustice) is aimed at countering the Trinamool's 'Didi ke Bolo' (Tell Didi) campaign launched last year.  
**CPI(M) blames Mamata**  
The provocative slogans at the BJP rally, held before Mr. Shah's public meeting, sparked a storm of condemnation from parties across the political spectrum, including the Trinamool, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the Congress.  
The CPI(M) also blamed Ms. Banerjee for the incident and called for "a march" of all democratic forces on Monday.  
CPI-M's leader of the Left parties in the Assembly Sujan Chakravarty, said, "The slogan has now been imported to Bengal, courtesy Mamata Banerjee. We don't have the government of Jyoti Basu and Buddhadeb Bhattacharya and Shah could easily introduce the slogan."  
Demanding the arrest of BJP supporters participating in the rally, CPI(M) leader Md. Salim appealed to "all democratic forces" to join Mon-

## Fears rise as COVID-19 cases, deaths hit new high

Number of infections in Italy rises by 40% to 1,576 in 24 hours

**ASSOCIATED PRESS PARIS**  
The number of countries hit by the COVID-19 outbreak climbed past 60 on Sunday, as infections and deaths continued to mount around the globe, emptying streets of tourists and workers, shaking economies and rewriting the realities of daily life.  
Australia and Thailand reported their first deaths on Sunday, while the Dominican Republic and the Czech Republic recorded their first cases.  
Italian authorities announced that the number of people infected in the country had surged 40% to 1,576 in 24 hours, and five more people had died, bringing the death toll there to 34.  
Iran, Iraq, Italy and South Korea, among other places, saw the number of infections rise.  
More than 87,000 people worldwide have been infected, and nearly 3,000 have died.  
Cases in the U.S. climbed to at least 72, with the first death inside the country reported on Saturday — a man in his 50s in Washington who had underlying health problems but hadn't travelled to any affected areas.  
"Additional cases in the United States are likely, but healthy individuals should be able to fully recover," Pre-



**Safety measures:** A Chinese boy undergoing screening at an ITBP quarantine facility in New Delhi on Sunday. ■ PTI

sident Donald Trump said at a Saturday briefing.  
**Uptick in China**  
China, where the outbreak began two months ago, on Sunday reported a slight uptick in new cases over the past 24 hours to 573, the first time in five days that the number exceeded 500. They remain almost entirely confined to the hardest-hit province of Hubei and its capital, Wuhan.  
South Korea reported 210 additional cases and two more deaths from the virus, raising its total to 3,736 cases and 20 fatalities. South Korea has the second-largest number of infections outside mainland China, with most of the cases in Daegu and nearby areas.  
Iran's death toll from CO-

VID-19 climbed to 54, as the number of confirmed cases jumped overnight by more than half, to 978 people. The new figures represent 11 more deaths than reported on Saturday and 385 new cases.  
Pakistan's Interior Ministry said it was closing its Chaman border with Afghanistan for a week amid the virus outbreak. Pakistan has confirmed four cases, while Afghanistan has confirmed one case.  
British health authorities said the number of people confirmed as infected rose by 12, bringing the country's tally to 35, with one death. Most of the new cases involved people who had been in Italy or Iran.

GLOBAL EMERGENCY ▶ OPED

## Situation eases in city; police quell rumours

False alarm of fresh violence briefly created panic in some areas in the evening

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI**  
No fresh cases of violence were reported in the national capital on Sunday, a week after clashes erupted in the northeastern areas.  
Rumours of fresh violence briefly created panic in some areas in the evening but the Delhi police quickly quelled them.  
Stating that unsubstantiated reports of tension in the south-east and west district were being circulated on social media, police said: "It is to reiterate that these are all rumours. Don't pay attention to such rumours. Delhi Police is closely monitoring accounts spreading rumours and taking action."  
The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation, which announced the closure of entry and exit gates of seven Metro stations due to "security reasons", reopened them within 45 minutes.



**Violence aftermath:** A burnt house after the riots at Khajoori Khas, in Delhi on Sunday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

The police said a total of 254 FIRs have been registered in various police stations of the north-east district so far with all cases related to the riots that started on February 23.  
Delhi Police PRO M.S. Randhawa said 41 cases had been registered under the Arms Act and a total of 903 persons had been detained,

week, reopened in the riot-hit north-east district of the capital.  
With a reduced deployment of security personnel, many residents ventured out of their homes for the first time. Shop owners reported that goods for sale were in short supply and some stores had reportedly hiked up prices.  
The crowd outside GTB Hospital's mortuary, however, showed no sign of thinning with families still desperately trying to locate "missing" relatives.  
Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal tweeted: "We're putting best efforts. I am personally trying to ensure that relief reaches each person in need. Our aim is to bring their life back on track. We want people to return to their homes and be welcome by their neighbours [sic]."  
**NO rioting calls**  
"We have received no PCR calls of rioting in the last four days. Situation is normal and under control in all violence-affected areas," said Mr. Randhawa.  
During the day, traffic was plying and several stores, which had been shut for a

MORE REPORTS ON PAGES 2, 3 & 13

## Pope expels convicted Kerala priest

**STAFF REPORTER KANNUR**  
Pope Francis invoked special powers to expel Kerala priest Robin Vadakkanchery, who was sentenced to 20 years rigorous imprisonment in the Kottiyoor rape case, from all priestly duties and rights.  
The Thalassery POCISO court had sentenced the priest to rigorous imprisonment in three cases in February 2019, which set off the process of removing him from the priesthood.  
The diocese of Mananthavady in Wayanad submitted a detailed report to the Vatican on the trial and conviction in April last year and initiated action against the priest in June.

## Four more bodies pulled out from drains in north-east Delhi

None identified yet; no information on five missing persons  
**SAURABH TRIVEDI NEW DELHI**  
A week after riots broke out in the city, the police on Sunday pulled out four more bodies from drains in north-east Delhi. Despite the recovery of the bodies, the death toll that stood at 42 on Saturday has not been officially revised.  
The police received a PCR call at 8.20 a.m. about a body in the Bhagirath drain. Later in the afternoon, a second body was fished out from the same drain, the police said, adding that the third body was recovered from a drain near the Gokalpur police station. The fourth body was pulled out from a drain in Shiv Vihar.  
"The bodies have been shifted to GTB Hospital for post-mortem. The nature of injuries are not clear. None of the recovered bodies have been identified so far," said a senior police officer.  
Another police officer said between February 23 and 25, a total of 44 people were reported missing from the riot-affected areas of north-east Delhi. Of them, five are still untraceable while the rest have either returned home or are reported among the injured or killed in the riots.  
**Missing complaint**  
Ankita Ramgopal, a lawyer, said she is assisting the family of Aftab, who is missing since Monday, with the help of authorities concerned. "Aftab, 20, had come to Del-

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