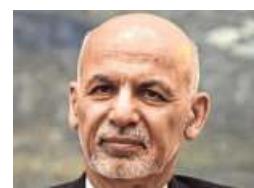




Pragya refuses to move from emergency row, causes flight delay
page 9



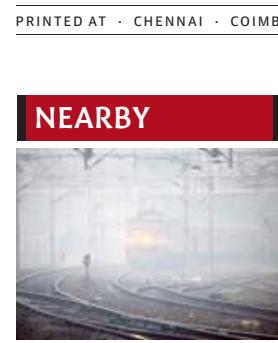
Mixed response to land rights plan in Assam
page 12



President Ashraf Ghani wins a slim majority, on track for second term
page 14



Kohli, Rahul and Rohit power India to ODI series win against WI
page 20



NEARBY

Railway unveils new signalling system
NEW DELHI
The Railways will roll out its new signalling system from April 2020 onwards. It is expected to make train travel faster and safer, a senior official said. The implementation will begin with four sections of about 640 route kilometres with an estimated cost of around ₹1,810 crore.

NATION ▶ PAGE 9

Jel activist from JK dies in U.P. jail

Srinagar
A Jamaat-e-Islami (Jel) activist from Kashmir's Handwara district died in a jail in Uttar Pradesh on Saturday. A police officer said the family of Bhat, a resident of Handwara's Kulangam village, was informed about his death in a jail located in Allahabad. An official said Bhat was arrested prior to the August 5 move to revoke J&K's autonomy.

NATION ▶ PAGE 9

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EDUCATIONPLUS ▶ PAGES 18 & 19

Pan-India NRC never on the table, says PM

Modi contradicts Amit Shah's statement in LS, accuses Congress and 'urban Naxals' of spreading lies

JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI

In a twist to the raging controversy over the National Register of Citizens, Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared on Sunday that there had been no discussion, no talk on an NRC for India since his government had taken power in 2014.

Mr. Modi's comments fly in the face of Union Home Minister Amit Shah's statement in the Lok Sabha on December 9: "We are very clear that NRC will happen in this country."

Mr. Shah also said in the House, "Magar maan ke chaliye ki NRC aane wala hai" [but accept that there will be an NRC].

In line with SC order
Addressing a rally at Delhi's Ramlila Maidan to kick off the BJP's campaign for the Delhi Assembly election, Mr. Modi, however, said the NRC was conducted only in Assam in line with the Supreme Court's order.

He attacked the Congress and "urban Naxals" for spreading "lies and rumours" about the NRC, the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and detention centres for Muslims, and followed it up with an appeal to the youth to both read and read up on the NRC and the CAA.

"The NRC – what lies are being spread about it... this [the NRC] was made during



In campaign mode: PM Modi, along with BJP leaders Harsh Vardhan, Manoj Tiwari and Vijay Goel, at a rally in New Delhi on Sunday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

the Congress era. Were you asleep then? We didn't make it; it didn't come to Parliament, nor did it come to the [Union] Cabinet. Nor have its rules and regulations been formulated. A bogey is being created," he said, towards the middle of his one hour-and-forty-minute address.

'Childish criticism'
Terming statements by the Congress and its allies "childish", the Prime Minister argued how a government which had succeeded in conferring land and ownership rights on the urban poor "without considering" either the religion or caste of the beneficiaries could make

another law in the same session to expel them.

"These are childish statements. The Congress, parties like it and their allies... you're continuing to peddle lies? After the formation of my government, from 2014 till this day, I want to tell the 130 crore citizens of the country, there has been no discussion on the word NRC. There hasn't even been any talk [about it]. Only, after the Supreme Court said so, it [the NRC] had to be done for Assam. What are you talking about? Lies are being spread," Mr. Modi said further.

The CAA, Mr. Modi said,

was not for any Indian citi-

zen, whether Hindu or Muslim.

"This has been said in Parliament... This law has no connection to the 130 crore citizens of this country... The Congress, its allies and some literate naxals living in urban areas – Urban Naxals – are spreading the rumour that all Muslims will be sent to detention centres. I am amazed that this rumour is leading even well-educated people to ask what detention centres are," he said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

CONG. REJECTS CHARGE ▶ PAGE 12

HUGE TURNOUT ▶ PAGE 12

SEE ALSO ▶ PAGE 3

UNDOING HARMS ▶ EDITORIAL

Police turned arsonists in U.P.: Akhilesh

The Samajwadi Party chief says innocent persons lost their lives

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

Holding the BJP government led by Yogi Adityanath responsible for the violence and loss of lives in Uttar Pradesh over protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Sunday alleged that the police deliberately damaged public property, engaged in stone-throwing and set fire to many places, turning a peaceful protest violent.

At least 15 persons have died so far in the State.

Talking to *The Hindu* here, the SP chief, who has strongly spoken out against the CAA, said the State government and the officials vitiated the atmosphere, "as a result of which innocent persons lost their lives".

"The police deliberately damaged things and set



Who will compensate for the damage done by the police?"

He said Mr. Adityanath's "language" and his call for "revenge" was to blame for the escalation in violence and tense law and order situation.

Soon after the protests against the CAA turned violent in Lucknow on December 19, in which one protester died of gunshot wounds, Mr. Adityanath said "revenge" would be exacted from those involved in the arson by seizing their property and auctioning it.

He also accused the Congress, SP and Left outfits of providing patronage to the arsonists.

'Who will compensate?
Referring to the State government's decision to seize the property of those allegedly involved in arson and vandalism at various places, Mr. Yadav asked:

Mr. Yadav asked: "Is this the language one speaks in a democracy? *Thok do, Baddlo lo. U.P. chhor do.* (Shoot them. Take revenge. Leave U.P.) Whose language is

this?"

"The more he speaks improperly, the more the officials act in a wrong manner," Mr. Yadav said.

SP not involved

He also dismissed the State government's allegations that his party members were involved in the violence. "No SP members were involved in violence anywhere. They have CCTV cameras everywhere and other things available. If they correctly look at CCTV footage of the people (during protests), they will find what their police were doing. You lathi-charge those who were protesting peacefully," Mr. Yadav said.

The SP chief said his party was trying to reach out to the families of the "innocent" persons arrested over the violence and provide them legal help.

Trinamool team detained at U.P. airport

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

In high drama at the Lucknow airport on Sunday, a Trinamool delegation, led by former Union Minister Dinesh Trivedi was whisked away from the aircraft and detained for hours at an undisclosed location at the airport.

The team had to return by an 8.30 p.m. flight without fulfilling its plan to visit the families of those killed in the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in U.P.

Mr. Trivedi drew parallels with the treatment of Indians during British rule. He said they were detained without any provocation. The delegation included Rajya Sabha members Nadiul Haque and Abir Ranjan Biswas and Lok Sabha member Pratima Mondal.

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 13

With 2 more deaths, U.P. toll climbs to 18

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Two more persons, who were injured in firing during protests in Meerut on Friday against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, died on Sunday. Inspector-General of Police Alok Singh identified them as Aalim, of Meerut, and Asif, of Delhi.



Police and RAF personnel on a patrol in Lucknow. ■ PTI

on those involved in the incidents of violence, in which over two dozen vehicles were torched, and seize and auction their property for compensation.

The Rampur district administration said it was taking steps to attach the assets of 25 people, identified as those who had vandalised public property.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra visited Bijnor, where two protesters were killed in violence last week.

In Jaipur, close to two lakh people, led by Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, took to the streets. Reports of protests and rallies have also come in from Tamil Nadu and Bengal.

This comes after Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's statement that the government would "take revenge"

OIC VOICES 'CONCERN' ▶ PAGE 12

DEATHS CAUSED BY ARMS OF PROTESTERS, SAYS DGP ▶ PAGE 13

Food inflation spike transient: RBI Governor

RAGHUVIR SRINIVASAN
VIKAS DHOOT
MANOJIT SAHA
MUMBAI

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said the recent spike in food inflation looks transient but added that the central bank needed to wait for a confirmation of this. The comments come after the RBI decided to hold interest rates during the monetary policy review earlier this month.

Stating that food inflation is monitored, he told *The Hindu*, "At this point in time, it [food inflation] also looks transient. And going forward, it should come down, but we need some time to watch..."

On the slowdown, he said there are structural issues which need to be addressed. "We have said in our annual report that it would appear the current slowdown is cyclical.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra visited Bijnor, where two protesters were killed in violence last week.

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OIC VOICES 'CONCERN' ▶ PAGE 12

DEATHS CAUSED BY ARMS OF PROTESTERS, SAYS DGP ▶ PAGE 13

will also be counted.

The overall voter turnout in this Assembly poll was estimated at 65.23% compared to 66.53% in 2014. The counting will decide victors among 1,216 candidates, including 127 women.

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 12

Jharkhand election verdict today

SATYASUNDAR BARIK
RANCHI

Results of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha-led Opposition alliance in a close contest, counting will take place across 24 districts. The postal ballots will be counted first and then the EVMs will be brought in. Paper slips generated by the VVPATs

polls giving marginal advantage to the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha-led Opposition alliance in a close contest, counting will take place across 24 districts. The postal ballots will be counted first and then the EVMs will be brought in. Paper slips generated by the VVPATs



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IN BRIEF



DU invites suggestions for admission process

The Delhi University has invited suggestions for strengthening its admission process and also to make it more student-friendly on the institute's website. The university approved the formation of an admission branch to focus on admissions-related issues earlier this year. Among areas for suggestions, the university officials have asked for inputs regarding rationalising the cut-off for merit-based admissions to control over or under admissions.

MBA graduate arrested for stalking women

A 31-year-old MBA graduate has been arrested for allegedly stalking and sexually harassing women, the police said on Sunday. A resident of Gurugram's Acharya Purpi, the accused works as a facility manager at ABW Tower here, they said.

Air quality of Delhi-NCR			
Delhi	322	Gurugram	190
Ghaziabad	352	Faridabad	335
Noida	352	Greater Noida	360
Good 0-50	Satisfactory 51-100	Moderate 101-200	
Poor 201-300	Very poor 301-400	Severe >401	
AIR QUALITY INDEX AT 4 P.M. YESTERDAY (AVERAGE OF PAST 24 HOURS) SOURCE: CPCB			

DELHI TODAY

Talk: Mani Kaul Memorial Lecture on the topic "The Multiple Faces of India's Cinema", will be delivered by Aruna Vasudev at Gulmohar Hall, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 7 p.m.

Talk: Lecture on "Human Origin, Health and Disease: Contemporary and Ancient DNA Perspectives" by Prof. K. Thangaraj, Senior Principal Scientist, CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad at Seminar Rooms I, II & III, Kamaladevi Complex, India International Centre (IIC), 6.30 p.m.

Dance: "Navatsav" will feature a saree recital by Amaan and Ayaan Ali Bangash. This will be followed by a Kathak performance by Pt. Rajendra Gangani at The Stein Auditorium, India Habitat Centre (IHC), 7 p.m.

Exhibition: "Alchemy of Porcelain", an exhibition of contemporary ceramics by Ted Secombe from Australia at Shridhar Art Gallery, Triveni Kala Sangam, 205, Tansen Marg, 11 a.m.- 7 p.m.

Exhibition: 92nd Annual All India Art Exhibition at All India Fine Arts & Craft Society (AIFACS), 1 Rafi Marg, 11 a.m.- 7 p.m.

(Mail your listings for this column at cityeditor@delhi@thehindu.co.in)

Country facing 'three-pronged attack' from Modi govt.: Brinda

She laments lack of NHRC intervention in 'open violation' of rights during clampdown

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH
NEW DELHI

CPI(M) Politburo Member Brinda Karat on Sunday said the country is facing a "three-pronged Trishul attack" – amended Citizenship Act (CAA), National Population Register (NPR) and National Register of Citizens (NRC) – from the Narendra Modi-led government.

Speaking at a peaceful assembly of anti-CAA protesters at Central Park in Connaught Place here, Ms. Karat said that the ruling government at the Centre does not respect the Constitution.

"You [Centre] are attacking at the heart of the India," Ms. Karat said, while lamenting the lack of intervention of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in "open violation" of human rights during the police clampdown of anti-CAA protesters, especially in Uttar Pradesh.

Peaceful assembly

The assembly, held under the humongous national flag installed at the park, was called by various civil society groups through social media. It saw the participation of a large number of people from



CPI(M) leader Brinda Karat along with members from various civil society groups staging a peaceful protest at Central Park in Connaught Place on Sunday. • PTI

all walks of life, including activists, teachers, college students and children.

Rajesh, a social activist and ex-Jamia Millia Islamia student, who came to the gathering with his child said, "We don't want anyone to touch the Constitution at all. NRC and CAA are a few symptoms of systematic dismantling of the Constitution."

Nodding towards his son, Mr. Rajesh said, "He seems rather disappointed. He was expecting people to shout slogans. But this gathering is all about peaceful protest. Something different."

Second year law student Asees, who was at the afternoon assembly holding a placard that read 'Disperse CAA, not Crowds' said, "I hope the government realises the country does not want this [CAA]."

She questioned the government's decision to select neighbouring countries under the CAA and leaving out prosecuted minorities from Sri Lanka and Myanmar. She said this will not pass the test of reasonable classification under Article 14 of the Constitution.

A student at the National University of Juridical Sciences (NUJS) Kolkata, Ms. Asses said she had also participated in the anti-CAA protest in Kolkata. Despite thousands of people joining it, no one was detained, she added.

es (NUJS) Kolkata, Ms. Asses said she had also participated in the anti-CAA protest in Kolkata. Despite thousands of people joining it, no one was detained, she added.

Protests getting bigger'
Bharat Kumar, a second year law student at Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, said there was a protest at his college a few days ago which was interrupted by hooligans. However, the protests are getting bigger day by day and could escalate to a level similar to that of the freedom struggle, he added.

Voices from Northeast being ignored, claim protesters

They said their fight is for the rights of indigenous people

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A large group of people from the Northeast gathered at Jantar Mantar on Sunday claiming that the protests against the amended Citizenship Act have been given a Hindu-Muslim colour and that the voices from their region, "which were fighting for the rights of indigenous people", were being ignored.

The protesters, including students and civil society members, said they were deeply hurt and distressed by the police 'brutality' against those protesting against the CAA, but said that "their protest is about their rights".



People from Northeast staging a protest against the amended Citizenship Act at Jantar Mantar on Sunday. • R.V. MOORTHY

University... we respect protest is also about the demographic challenges confronting the Northeast," he added.

For the people from Northeastern States, the issue of CAA goes beyond Hindu and Muslim, said Dennis, 25. "In Tripura, indigenous people account for only 30% of the population. People from other regions and neighbouring countries are migrating to the State," he added.

The protesters also demanded that the police release RTI activist Akhil Gogoi and others who were arrested for demonstrating against the Act.

Hundreds gather at Nizamuddin to protest against citizenship law

Most important fight is to save the country: Umar Khalid

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Holding a placard saying, "when injustice becomes law, resistance becomes a duty", 22-year-old Khalida heard the speakers at a public meeting here explain the implications of the amended citizenship law and the proposed all-India NRC.

Khalida was among the hundreds of people who gathered at the Musafir Khana Park in Nizamuddin Basti on Sunday to hear what could be the impact of the CAA and the NRC.

"We will follow the path of Mahatma Gandhi. We will never use violence but will peacefully oppose the CAA and NRC," the student said.



Demanding withdrawal of CAA, protesters staging a demonstration at Nizamuddin on Sunday. • PTI

Among those explaining the implications of the CAA was former JNU student Umar Khalid, who said the most important fight right now was to save the country. "No one can scare the people of India. I salute all the people out on the streets,"

Mr. Khalid said, adding: "How do we prove our loyalty to our own country? The Indian Muslims are not accidental Muslims but are Indian Muslims by choice. It is the attempt of the government to distract people from economic issues."

Gurugram sees demonstrations in support of Act

Around half-a-dozen such programmes were held across the Millennium City

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GURUGRAM

Demonstrations and seminars were held at many places across the city on Sunday in support of the amended Citizenship Act and the National Register of Citizens.

Leading a march in Old Gurugram in support of CAA and NRC, Manav Nav Nirman Sena convener Sumit Sharma said the Opposition was misleading the nation on the issues. He said that CAA was not aimed at taking away anyone's citizenship, but it was a law to grant citizenship. He also supported the need to implement NRC to identify the infiltrators and throw them out.

Taking a dig at those opposing the law, Mr. Sharma



Manav Nav Nirman Sena workers taking out a march in support of CAA and NRC at Sadar Bazar in Gurugram on Sunday afternoon. • ASHOK KUMAR

said that most of them did not even know what CAA is. Holding placards expressing support for CAA and NRC, the demonstrators, amid chants of "Bharat Mata Ki Jai", took out a march

starting from Agarwal Dharmshala Chowk passing through the congested Sadar Bazar and the busy Old Railway Road. Accompanied by a posse of policemen, the demonstrators

dispersed after reaching the starting point.

Similarly, Shankhnad Foundation, a non-government organisation, organised a march in support of CAA and NRC from Palam Vihar Vyapar Kendra to Rezang La War Memorial. The march saw participation of several local residents, including children.

Seminar on CAA

Similarly, Sanyukt Hindu Sangharsh Samiti held a seminar to create awareness on CAA and discuss the current situation in the country. The seminar was held at Vivekanand Global School in Sector 7 Extension.

Around half-a-dozen such programmes were held across the city, CID sources said.

Jamia remains the cradle of Gandhi's ideals

True to the dream of its founding fathers, the institution has raised its voice at all critical junctures

NISHAT ZAIDI

As the image of a hijab-clad student pointing her finger at a baton-wielding policeman emerged out of Jamia to shake the conscience of the youth across the country and the world, the institution's bond with its history was rejuvenated. Halide Edip Adivar, a Turkish intellectual who attended the foundation ceremony of Jamia's building after the university shifted its campus from Karol Bagh to Okhla in 1935, recorded her impressions thus:

"The last I saw of Jamia was when its members assembled outside Delhi to lay the foundation stone of their new building. [The students] behaved well...but after a while they became fidgety and began to talk... A little girl of seven restored order. She was a puny creature with sharp black eyes. Her eyes glared and certain ribs felt her sharp elbows stuck into them. She seemed to me a symbol of the modern Indian woman, asserting her rights by proving her ability to make her men behave."

Centenary year

Having celebrated 150 years of Mahatma Gandhi in 2019, Jamia Millia Islamia or the National Muslim University, "the lusty child of Gandhian non-cooperation movement" as Jawaharlal Nehru termed it, has been preparing to celebrate its centenary year in a grand way in 2020. It was exactly a century ago when disenchanted by the pro-British, loyalist stance of Aligarh intellectuals, a handful of its teachers and students responded to Gandhi's call for Khila-



Women students shield their male colleagues from the police during protests against the amended Citizenship Act at Jamia Millia Islamia on December 15. • REUTERS

COMMENT

underscored the necessity of keeping Muslim education free from external control. This, he believed, was a prerequisite for insulating the institution from the "pernicious alien influences in our ideas and beliefs, our morals and action, our character and conduct".

Setting aside the lure of office, power or authority, Jamia's benefactors like M.A. Ansari, Zakir Husain, M. Mujeeb and Abid Hussain chartered a course for the institution that was consistent with Gandhi's vision. Gandhi continued to offer unstinted support to Jamia saying, "The Jamia has to

run. If you are worried about its finances, I will go about with a begging bowl." He said, "When I come to Jamia, I feel I have come home."

In these hundred years, the institution has seen a glorious journey of forbearance, camaraderie, enlightenment and an unflinching commitment to the ideals of pluralism, nationhood and composite culture. Built "stone by stone and sacrifice by sacrifice" (Sarojini Naidu), the raison d'être of Jamia Millia Islamia is best summed up by Professor Mohammad Mujeeb: "We agreed that Muslim or non-Muslim, our student should learn to represent the values of his religion, of his moral and cultural tradition, that he should make him

to speak for the nation." True to the dream of its founding fathers, Jamia Millia Islamia has raised its voice at all critical junctures. During the British Raj, it participated in anti-colonial struggles like Bardoli Satyagraha, popularised Gandhian ideals, and in the chaos that preceded and succeeded the Partition of the nation, the institution remained committed to peace, organising relief for victims. Not surprisingly, the institution has always been in the eye of the storm. Jamia's nationalist stance alienated radical Muslims who time and again castigated its intellectual leadership for being prejudicial to Islam and turning the institution into a Hindu stronghold.

Conversely, the political leadership of Congress regimes too has not been very kind towards Jamia as is evident from the financial crisis that Jamia continues to suffer in Independent India. While Aligarh Muslim University was recognised as one of the first three Central Universities in independent India in 1951, Jamia's struggles continued till 1988 when it became a Central University by an Act of Parliament.

The university has withstood all financial, political and social challenges in the past, braved all assaults on its existence and upheld the ideals of peace and truth. Today, Jamia is one of the premier Central Universities. Its highly reputed centres like Nelson Mandela Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution, Dr. K.R. Narayanan Centre for Dalit and Minority Studies, Centre for Comparative Religions and Civilizations, Centre for the Study of Social Ex-

clusion and Inclusive Policy, AJK Mass Communication Research Centre and a large number of departments and faculties offer a range of curricular programmes. It is currently counted among the top universities in India; its artists, writers, poets and scholars have consistently contributed to the intellectual life of the nation. Jamia's Dr. Zakir Husain Library boasts state-of-art facilities.

The Jamia campus, which expanded under the leadership of Professor Mushirul Hasan, bears signs of its progressive ethos and its intellectual commitment with gates, buildings, gardens, and even benches bearing names like Qurratulain Hyder, Noam Chomsky, Edward Said, Rabindranath Tagore, Mir Anis among others.

On the fateful night of December 15, when the police barged into the Jamia library and brutally thrashed the students studying there, maiming some of them, the shocked Jamia biradari was once again reminded of Gandhi's words from the speech he gave when he first visited the Okhla campus: "I believe that those who gave up their studies at the government institutions did a great service to the country... I am happy that you are trying your utmost to keep the flag flying. You number is small, but the world never overflowed with good and true men. I ask you not to worry yourselves about the smallness of the number, but to remember that however few you may be, the freedom of the country depends on you..."

Nishat Zaidi is professor and Head, Department of English, Jamia Millia Islamia.

Modi accuses Opposition of 'selfishness, politics' over CAA

PM pulls up AAP govt. for water woes; advises youth to read up on citizenship law

JATIN ANAND

NEW DELHI
Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed India's unity in diversity at a rally here on Sunday to kick-start the BJP's campaign for the upcoming Delhi Assembly elections.

At the 'Dhanyawad Rally' in Ramlila Maidan, which is located at the intersection of Lutyens' Delhi and the Walled City – just a few kilometres from Daryaganj where a violent confrontation between anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act protesters and the police had erupted on Friday – Mr. Modi attacked both the Aam Aadmi Party and the Congress on Delhi-related issues without naming either.

He also spoke in favour of the police and said that the force had suffered the brunt of protest-related violence across the country. He, however, did not make any direct reference either to the student-led protests or any incident related to a particular university.

The PM also chose to make an appeal to the youth of the country to read the CAA and the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

PM Modi accused both the Congress and AAP of going "to any extent for their selfishness and politics" in relation to CAA protests.

Unauthorised colonies

"This venue has borne witness to many significant developments in its history... here I am happy that I and the BJP are able to get an opportunity to better the lives of over 40 lakh people in Delhi. Words such as 'unauthorised, bulldozer, slums', which are often associated with these colonies, need to end," Mr. Modi said, terming the residents of 1,731 unauthorised colonies "VIPs".



A man wears a mask of Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a BJP rally at Ramlila Maidan in New Delhi on Sunday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

"Today, you have gotten complete ownership of your homes, which are the biggest assets you have. Those who attempted to put stumbling blocks in our way [for this project] should bear this in mind... Elections came and went but the promise remained the same," he said.

Those who wanted to "mislead" the residents of unauthorised colonies had "shamelessly" talked about fixing boundaries at properties in such settlements by 2021, he said, adding that this was the time when he decided "this farce cannot be allowed to continue".

With the help of technology, within a short period of time, the boundaries of over 1,700 colonies were delineated and the maps of more than 1,200 of these have been put up on the web, the Prime Minister said.

"Letting problems linger on is not our nature; it is not our training nor is it our habit. The people whom you had turned to for help were helping their rich industrial friends construct 2,000 bungalows in the posh parts of

your city... Previous governments gave the residents of rich colonies concessions but did nothing for your houses," he said.

Blocks in my way: PM

"They tried to create stumbling blocks in my way whenever I tried to seek a solution; they thought we would succeed but this is Modi. Their VIPs may be different but for me, you, the poor are the real VIPs," he said further.

Mr. Modi then blamed "highly placed" individuals in AAP of spreading "rumours" during the recent anti-CAA protests.

"You must have heard the statements that were made, the way people were instigated, the provocative things said. These people have conspired to push not only Delhi but many cities across the country into an atmosphere of chaos and fear. There have been attacks on school-buses, passenger buses, trains, people's vehicles have been burnt, government properties have been damaged... their politics tells

the truth," he said
"I want to tell such people that if you want to pelt stones then pelt them at Modi, if you want to burn something, burn an effigy of Modi... do not harm any poor person's property. What will you get by beating a poor auto driver or a bus driver? What will you get by injuring the policemen on whom you are pelting stones?" he added.

Mr. Modi also demanded to know why the Delhi government had not implemented Centre-sponsored schemes. He also attacked the AAP government for the quality of potable water in the Capital. "The people who were making excuses in the name of buses have paralysed public transport in Delhi... The Delhi government is not even concerned about the biggest problem – the problem of water. The government claims that clean water is available everywhere, but the truth is that today the maximum numbers of water purifiers i.e. water purifying machine is sold in the country," he said.

Chants of "shoot the traitors" were heard among

Thousands of armed officers keep tight vigil at Prime Minister's rally

People wearing black mufflers barred from entering venue

SAURABH TRIVEDI

NEW DELHI

Central Delhi was brought under ground-to-air security cover with thousands of armed personnel keeping a tight vigil for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rally at Ramlila Maidan on Sunday.

Fearing untoward incidents or entry of protesters, all roads leading to Old Delhi were blocked. Security personnel did not allow anyone wearing a black muffler or scarf to enter the rally.

Even the entry passes issued to journalists and BJP workers with 'All-Area Access' were withdrawn at the last moment and new passes with restricted access were issued.

"We have strict instructions from our superiors to be vigilant and thoroughly check every visitor entering the ground. Policemen in plainclothes were deployed among the crowd to keep watch on miscreants," said a police officer. Minutes be-



Minutes before PM's arrival, a helicopter making rounds over the venue. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

fore the Prime Minister's arrival at the rally ground, a helicopter made several rounds over the venue and adjoining areas. Policemen were deployed in all high-rises near the maidan and windows facing the venue.

An officer said due to ongoing protests across the city against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, security had to be further increased. On Friday, Delhi Gate, which is located near Ramlila Maidan had witnessed violence during a protest against the Act.

"All roads towards Daryaganj from Ramlila Maidan remained blocked till the time visitors left the rally venue. We took all precautions to prevent any confrontation of locals with visitors. The rally ended peacefully," said the officer.

Even the shops located on the road taken by Mr. Modi to reach Ramlila Maidan were shut by the police for security reasons. A senior officer said 20 companies of outside force were deployed across the city. Each company has 70-80 personnel.

"Twenty DCP-rank officials were handling security. As many as 1,000 personnel from the local police, anti-drone teams and NSG commandos were also deployed," the official said.

The buses ferrying visitors to the rally from across Delhi-NCR caused major traffic congestion on DDU Marg. Normal traffic resumed by 4 p.m., said a traffic police personnel.

People were expecting registry to start today

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

Reacting to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speech at Ramlila Maidan on Sunday, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said the BJP has cheated 40 lakh people living in unauthorised colonies as they were hoping to get registry today "but nothing happened".

"The rally was to mark the passing of the Bill to ensure the regularisation of unauthorised colonies. For the past several weeks, the BJP had been talking about giving permanent registry to at least 100 residents of such colonies at Sunday's rally, but not a single person was given a permanent registry," Mr. Sisodia said.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal tweeted: "What happened to the registry? People living in unauthorised colonies have been cheated again... they expected the registry to start today."

"Earlier, the Congress used to make false promises, now the BJP is doing the same. But don't worry. We got the development works done in unauthorised colonies, now we will also get the registry done," he added.

Talking about Mr. Modi's comments on the quality of water in the city, Mr. Sisodia said: "We are happy that the PM is concerned about the people of Delhi. He said before the formation of the AAP government in Delhi, only 53% of the colonies used to get water through pipelines, but today [after five years], 93% of the colonies have piped water connections, and clean drinking water has reached across the city."

The Act itself received widespread support among the attendees. "Where else will Hindus go if not come back to their country?" said Mr. Mishra, echoing the view of several others.

People protesting Act misled

Muslim residents need not worry, say those present at rally

SIDHARTH RAVI

NEW DELHI

Not everyone at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rally at Ramlila Maidan on Sunday knew what the amended Citizenship Act entailed but everyone *The Hindu* spoke to believed that people participating in the ongoing protests against the law had been misled and falsely instigated.

"It is all a conspiracy," said Prem Prijapati, who hails from Mathura. "The protests are being orchestrated by jihadis and will be resolved quickly. And if they don't, we are not afraid."

BJP supporters at the rally said Muslim residents of the country had nothing to worry about. "All those who are

small groups at the rally along with versions of 'Azadi' slogan, which came into the spotlight at the Jawaharlal Nehru University protests in 2016. Sixty-four-year-old Lal Sahib Misra dismissed concerns of a nationwide NRC, being opposed by the protesters, stating that the proposal had come to Parliament yet. "It will not matter if you do not have a birth certificate. My details in the village register will be enough. Those who are citizens are already in the NRC," he believed.

The Act itself received widespread support among the attendees. "Where else will Hindus go if not come back to their country?" said Mr. Mishra, echoing the view of several others.

citizens of the country, who have been here from before, they have no reason to fear. This Act is not even for Muslims living here," claimed Ramesh Chand, a resident of Janakpuri. Others stressed that the protests against the Act should not have turned violent. "Whatever your concern is, place it before your local MP, let the case be heard. What is the sense in rioting?" said Nehal Kumar, a resident of Rohini.

The Act itself received widespread support among the attendees. "Where else will Hindus go if not come back to their country?" said Mr. Mishra, echoing the view of several others.

PM lead a 'betrayal rally', says Congress

BJP, AAP governments are anti-people: Subhash Chopra

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Delhi Congress chief Subhash Chopra called Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rally at Ramlila Maidan on Sunday a "betrayal rally" as thousands gathered at the venue were told only lies.

"The BJP was supposed to give ownership rights to those living in unauthorised colonies but it has cheated over 40 lakh people as it did not give registry to any of them," he said.

Addressing a rally at north-west Delhi's Narela

and south Delhi's Jaitpur against the BJP and the AAP governments' "anti-people and destructive policies", Mr. Chopra said both the governments have made only hollow promises people.

'Shops will face sealing'

"The BJP government's notification regarding regularisation has created fear among the people. If Section 7A in the notification is enforced, over 700 unauthorised colonies will go out of the purview of regularisation and small shops and

commercial establishments will face sealing," he said.

The Congress said a majority of those living in unauthorised colonies hail from Poornchanchal and that the BJP and the AAP governments were conspiring to uproot these people through a "calculated deception".

The Centre has given a blanket licence to the DDA to take lakhs of rupees from those living in these colonies, the party said, adding that people should not believe the government until they get registry papers.

When push comes to shove

Promise of granting ownership rights to residents of unauthorised colonies and rehabilitation of slum clusters are on the BJP's bucket list before Assembly polls. But what transpires need to be looked into

SHINJINI GHOSH

NEW DELHI

Housing, mainly for the urban poor, has emerged as a major poll plank in the Capital with Assembly elections round the corner. Beginning with the promise of granting ownership rights to lakhs of residents of 1,731 unauthorised colonies in November and later connected to the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Centre's project related to the in situ rehabilitation of slum clusters in Delhi, both projects are a part of a large push towards the government's "housing for all" goal.

According to the BJP insiders, both schemes are symbolic of the party's localised poll slogan 'Ek Vote, Teen Sarkar' (One Vote, Three Governments) for the upcoming Delhi Assembly polls during which it will seek to garner the electorate's support in the name of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ability for governance to return to power in the Capital after a gap of close to three decades.

At public meetings, the party has already begun propagating the benefits of welfare schemes that the citizens are likely to get – in a comparatively shorter period of time – if the same party is in power at the Centre, the State and municipal levels of governance and in-charge of administration.

Housing and Urban Affairs Minister of State (independent charge) Hardeep Singh Puri has said the Centre took up the project of delineating boundaries of the 1,731 colonies after the Delhi government delayed the work for 11 years. Mr. Puri has said in several public appearances and in media interviews, including to *The Hindu*, that the Delhi government had asked for two more years to complete the process.

Speaking to reporters earlier this month, Mr. Puri said the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) is expected to fulfil Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "vision" of providing housing to all

TRACKING THE OUTCOME

Unauthorised colonies

Number of colonies **1,731**

Projected number of people to get ownership rights **50 lakh**

Total number of registrations (till Dec. 20) **Over 18,000**

In situ rehabilitation

Number of clusters **32**

Number of projects **18**

Survey for another 160 clusters is under way



SOURCE: DDA

under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) by 2020 - well in advance of its initial deadline of the year 2022.

Process begins

While the application portal for grant of ownership rights was launched on December 16, the Delhi Development Authority (DDA), the designated nodal agency for the project in Delhi, has received over 18,000 registrations as of Friday.

Senior DDA officials said that after registration on the portal, the applicants are required to obtain their respective geo coordinates. "Once applicants log into the system after filling up the basic details, they are required to provide the respective geo-coordinates. Agencies engaged by the DDA for the purpose of GIS mapping can be contacted by stakeholders.

Once the GIS mapping is done, the ID will be sent to the applicant, who can then continue with the rest of the procedure," a senior

DDA official explained.

DDA Vice-Chairman Tarun Kapoor said: "We are ready with everything and now it is up to the people to come forth and register. The main challenge is to get the system in place which is now running. Completing the entire application form can be time consuming as people have to upload relevant documents apart from the coordinate maps."

"Once we start receiving complete applications, we will process the same immediately. We are hopeful that the process of granting ownership rights will begin very soon," Mr. Kapoor added.

The urban body has also completed delineation of boundaries in all 1,731 unauthorised colonies and maps for around 1,300 are available in the public domain. Residents of unauthorised colonies who register for ownership rights are likely to be granted rights within 180 days pending relevant verification processes by the land owning agency.

"A PPP model will be followed where 60% of the land has to be kept for the in situ rehabilitation while the remaining 40% will be the remunerative component, which means that the developer can utilise the area as per the land use norms," explained Mr. Kapoor. (With inputs from Damini Nath)

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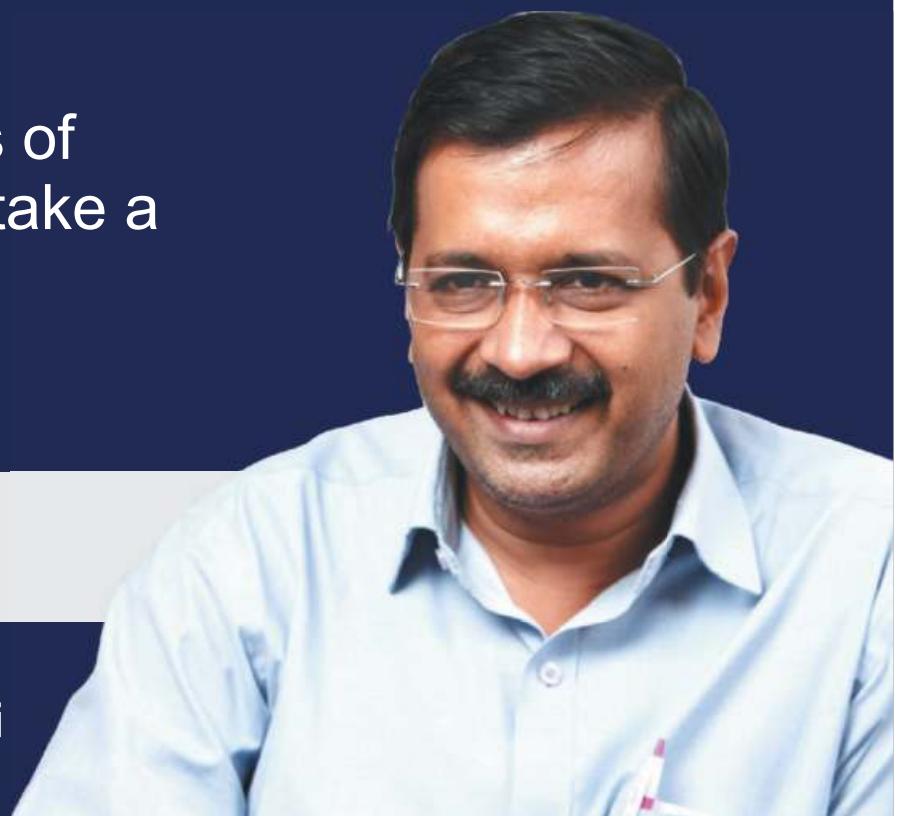
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CHIEF MINISTER ARVIND KEJRIWAL IN A DIALOGUE WITH STUDENTS OF CLASSES 6-12 OF ALL DELHI SCHOOLS, ON WOMEN'S SAFETY

The progress of any nation can be judged by how women are treated in that nation. Rising number of cases of sexual violence, misbehaviour and crimes against women is a source of great worry for our country. In light of these concerns, a dialogue on women's safety is being organised for all students of classes 6-12 in Delhi schools, where all boys will take a pledge to respect girls and women.

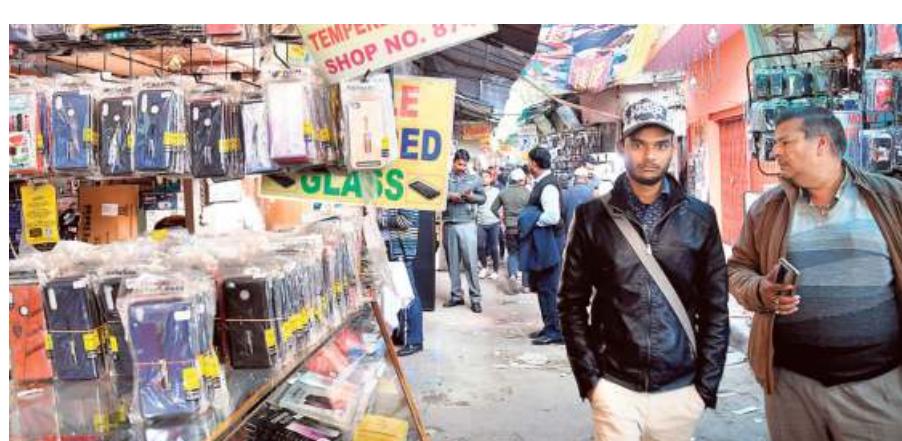


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SHOPPING FRENZY

Markets across the city are packed with consumers braving the winter in the hunt for bargains



1,2 and 3: Shoppers in Sarojini Nagar Market
4 and 5: Sadar Bazar
6 and 7: Lajpat Rai Market
8: Bhagirath Palace Market in Chandni Chowk

• PHOTOS BY: SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Timings	
MONDAY, DEC. 23	
RISE 07:10	SET 17:30
RISE 04:00	SET 15:17
TUESDAY, DEC. 24	
RISE 07:11	SET 17:31
RISE 05:04	SET 16:01
WEDNESDAY, DEC. 25	
RISE 07:11	SET 17:31
RISE 06:07	SET 16:50

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	15	07
Safdarjung	15	07
Palam	14	09

Delhi Palam Today
16°C Moderate fog will prevail.
Dense fog will prevail in pockets. A partly cloudy sky lies ahead.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
17°C Moderate fog will prevail during chilly morning. Day will be cool with a partly cloudy sky.

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IN BRIEF

Man wanted in 15 cases of ATM theft arrested

NEW DELHI

A 27-year-old man, who was wanted in 15 cases of looting ATMs in different States, has been arrested from south Delhi, the police said on Sunday. Wakil, a resident of Palwal district in Haryana, was absconding for the past one-and-a-half years, they said, adding that he was carrying a reward of ₹50,000 – ₹25,000 from U.P. Police and ₹25,000 from M.P. Police – on his arrest. He was held on Friday following a tip-off, said DCP (Special Cell).

THE HINDU
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When a celebration could easily turn into a tragedy

Delhi Fire Service officials say they do not know how many banquet halls are operating illegally in the city and whether the establishments have taken adequate fire safety measures

**SAURABH TRIVEDI
SIDHARTH RAVI**
NEW DELHI

Banquet halls in Delhi are openly flouting fire safety norms and seem to have not learnt any lessons from the massive fire in Anaj Mandi that claimed 44 lives earlier this month.

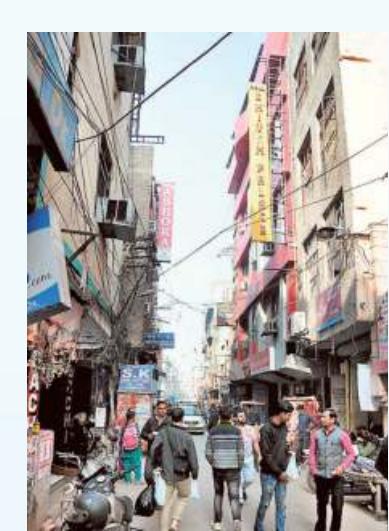
An official with the Delhi Fire Service (DFS) said they do not have an estimate of the number of unauthorised banquet halls operating in the city as it is not their job to check. We only issue No Objection Certificates (NOC) in cases that are referred to us by the civic agencies, which have the power to issue licences, said the officer, adding that banquets halls operating without an NOC are only detected when a fire incident happens.

"All assembly buildings, which include banquet halls, require an NOC from the fire department. There is a list of buildings that are covered under Rule 27 of DFS, 2010," said Atul Garg, DFS director.

Long checklist

The checklist for fire safety clearance for banquet halls is a long one. All fire safety equipment must be in working condition. Any deviation in construction has to be verified by the sanctioned agency. An automatic sprinkler system and a smoke management system has to be installed. A public address system is mandatory in the lifts, which should also have a speaker/telephone. There are many more rules that have to be followed before an NOC is issued.

"After going through the long checklist, the NOC is issued for a period of three years. We always respond to the concerns raised by the civic agencies in terms of violation of fire safety norms in any building," said another fire official.



Officials say many banquet halls are flouting licence norms by concealing their operations.



CITY MATTERS

While some had arranged valet facilities to ensure adequate parking, others used the MCD's parking facilities to meet their requirements and paid the civic body a fees for the same. Despite this, parking in the area becomes difficult with several banquet halls on the road, and not everyone sticking to the prescribed norms.

in "industrial and commercial areas, including notified commercial streets under mixed-use regulations." A municipal official said that such facilities require an NOC from the fire department only if they have an area of over 50 square metres.

The halls also have to ensure space for adequate parking. While some have arranged for valet facilities, others are using civic parking facilities and paying a fee to the municipality. The MPD-2021 calls for parking space for three cars for every 100 square metres.

Such facilities also have to follow various other building norms and ensure proper waste disposal.

Staff of banquet halls in Mayapuri said that the establishments have taken various fire safety precautions.

At Grand Dreams Nouveau, the employees pointed to the separate entry and fire exit gates in every hall, and the availability of fire fighting equipment such as extinguishers. At the Clay Grand, which stands between factories, the staff said that a water sprinkler system had been installed throughout the building, and an NOC had been received. Most of them argued that tent houses were at greater risk of fire due to excessive use of synthetic material.

While some had arranged valet facilities to ensure adequate parking, others used the MCD's parking facilities to meet their requirements and paid the civic body a fees for the same. Despite this, parking in the area becomes difficult with several banquet halls on the road, and not everyone sticking to the prescribed norms.

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THE HINDU GROUP

Lakhs join Congress rally in Jaipur

Markets remain closed, public transport grounded, mobile Internet suspended

MOHAMMED IQBAL
JAIPUR

A large number of people, led by Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, took out a massive march on the roads of Jaipur on Sunday with the demand for withdrawal of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and pledged to oppose the National Register of Citizens. Members of the Congress and several political parties as well as activists and common people of all communities participated in the march, called the 'Samvidhan Bachao Rally'.

Markets remained closed, mobile Internet services were suspended, public transport was grounded, traffic was diverted to alternative routes and elaborate security arrangements were made in the capital city. The participants, including women, carried the national Tricolour and banners and placards with slogans against CAA and NRC.

Mr. Gehlot affirmed that the amended citizenship law was not only against the Constitution, but it also formed part of an agenda of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh to make India a 'Hindu Rashtra'. "The Rajasthan government will neither implement the CAA, nor will it comply with the Centre's directive to initiate the process for NRC," he said.

Besides Mr. Gehlot, leaders of the CPI, the CPI(M), the



Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot leads a march against CAA in Jaipur on Sunday. ■ ROHIT JAIN PARAS

Aam Aadmi Party, the Samajwadi Party, the Janata Dal (Secular) and the Rashtriya Lok Dal also addressed the rally. The speakers included Loktantrik Janata Dal leader Sharad Yadav, RLD leader Jayant Chaudhary and Jamaat-e-Islami Hind State president Mohammed Nazimuddin.

According to police sources, nearly 3 lakh people attended the march, which covered a distance of about three kilometres between the iconic Albert Hall and Mahatma Gandhi Circle.

'Undeclared emergency'
While demanding an immediate repeal of CAA, Mr. Gehlot said the violence during the agitation against the amended legislation had taken place only in the BJP-

ruled States. "Lakhs of people gathered at places like Mumbai, Pune and Hyderabad, but nothing untoward happened there. What does it indicate?" he asked.

Separately, Mr. Gehlot took strong exception to Prime Minister Narendra Modi taking his name at a rally at Delhi's Ramlila Maidan while claiming that he had written to the Home Ministry during his previous term for giving citizenship to Hindus and Sikhs from Pakistan. "What was wrong in writing a letter? Why is Mr. Modi misleading the country in my name?" Mr. Gehlot asked.

While Deputy CM Sachin Pilot said the BJP-led government at the Centre was not interested in addressing the real challenges of economic slump, Mr. Sharad Yadav said

the nation was passing through a difficult phase and there was an undeclared emergency. Social activist Aruna Roy said the people's struggle would not stop until the law was withdrawn.

'CM created fear'
Later, Rajasthan BJP president Satish Poonia alleged in a statement that Mr. Gehlot had created fear among the people of the State by leading a crowd belonging to a particular community". "Mr. Gehlot wants to create anarchy in Rajasthan by showing an ugly side of democracy. As a responsible CM, he should have explained to the people that the CAA gives citizenship to the persecuted people rather than taking away anyone's nationality," he said.

Curfew relaxed for seven hours in Jabalpur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JABALPUR (M.P.)

Curfew imposed in some parts of Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh after violence during Friday protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act was on Sunday relaxed for seven hours from 1 p.m., police said.

Curfew was imposed on Friday at four police station areas in Jabalpur after protesters pelted stones, clashed with the police and indulged in destruction of property, an officer said. These areas are part of Gohalpur, Hanumantal, Kotwali and Adhartal police stations.

'Internet restored'

"Curfew was relaxed for seven hours on Sunday from 1 p.m. in four police station limits. Mobile internet service has also resumed in the city. Curfew was relaxed so that people could buy essential items," said Additional Superintendent of Police Rajesh Kumar Tripathi.

Curfew was relaxed for one-and-a-half hours on Saturday.

Meanwhile, BJP vice-president Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Sunday told Mr. Kamal Nath to resign as Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister before leading a CAA protest march scheduled in Bhopal on December 25.

Congress starts padayatra in Assam against CAA

Assam will never accept it, says party's State chief

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
GUWAHATI

Protest against the contentious Citizenship (Amendment) Act continued on Sunday with the Opposition, the Congress, kicking off an 800-km-long padayatra from Sadiya to Dhubri.

Sadiya is a far east town of Assam and Dhubri is the headquarters of the western-most district, which is located along the India-Bangladesh border.

'Anti-Assam Act'

"We have been stating it very clearly that Assam will never accept this Act. It is anti-Assam and anti-North-east. The Congress is with the people of Assam," Assam Pradesh Congress Committee president Ripun Bora said.

Addressing a huge crowd, the Rajya Sabha MP said that the agitation will be further intensified till the Act is repealed.

Meanwhile, a public funeral service in memory of teenager Sam Stafford, who was killed in the firing by the security forces, was organised in Guwahati on Sunday.

Hundreds of people, including All Assam Students' Union leaders, celebrities, writers, artistes and general



Protesters holding placards and raising slogans against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in Sonitpur on Sunday. ■ PTI

public, attended the service and condemned the government's brutality".

"The Chief Minister and his forces are engaged in killing innocent children. Sam is the first martyr of the anti-CAA movement. We will not forget him and we will not sit down until the Act is repealed," AASU president Dipanka Kumar Nath said.

Protests in tea gardens

Protest marches were organised at several tea gardens in upper Assam, while a huge gathering took place in Rowta of Udaguri dis-

trict. People and artistes came out in large numbers in Guwahati and other places during the day.

Assam has witnessed one of the worst violent protests by the public in its history with three railway stations, a post office, a bank, a bus terminus, shops, dozens of vehicles and many other public properties being set ablaze or totally damaged.

Already five persons, including four in firing by security forces, have lost their lives since December 11 when the Rajya Sabha passed the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill.

Four held for beating youth to death

STAFF REPORTER
BERHAMPUR

Over the past few days, prohibitory orders were relaxed during the day, but night curfew was still in force to avoid break-down of law and order.

East Khasi Hills District Magistrate M.W. Nongbri said the curfew was completely lifted from 4 a.m. on Sunday. Mobile Internet and messaging services, which were withdrawn as a precautionary measure to prevent circulation of fake news, were also restored on Friday night.

Shillong curfew lifted, Internet restored

People flock to buy essential items

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SHILLONG

Curfew was on Sunday morning lifted in Shillong, as no report of violence or arson over the amended Citizenship Act was reported from any part of the city, officials said.

Streets decked-up

People were seen flocking to local shops to buy essential items and Christmas goodies and gifts. Streets in the State capital were being decked up in Christmas lights and festoons since morning.

Inner Line Permit
Curfew was imposed in areas under Sadar and Lumdiengiri police stations in the city since December 12 as anti-citizenship law protests turned violent, leaving several injured and properties vandalised.

According to Kalimela police sources, four persons were arrested in this connection on Sunday. Investigation is on to find out other persons involved in the case. The deceased was identified as Irma Kartami (25). The accused alleged that the deceased had used black magic to cause the death of Jaga Madhi (23) at Intaguda on Saturday.

The villagers attacked Kartami with lathis and he died on the spot.

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CM YK

CAA, NRC not against Muslim community: Athawale

RPI(A) leader says protests are being triggered by a great deal of misapprehension

SHOUMOJIT BANERJEE

The nationwide protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) are unfortunate, Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Ramdas Athawale said on Sunday and urged the minority community not to be perturbed as the CAA and the NRC are not directed against them.

"These protests [against the CAA and the NRC] are being triggered by a great deal of misapprehension...the vandalism and loss of life in these protests is truly unfortunate. I urge the Muslim community to remain calm and maintain peace as the CAA and the NRC are not against them at all," said Mr. Athawale, Republican Party of India (A) president, while backing Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Mr. Athawale, whose party is an ally of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) at the Centre and in the State, was speaking to reporters at VVIP Circuit House following a meeting of his party's executive committee and



Taking pot shots at the CM, Ramdas Athawale asked when the Cabinet expansion and portfolio allocation of the new government would take place. ■ FILE PHOTO

workers. His press conference was briefly interrupted by the sudden appearance of BJP leader and former chief minister Devendra Fadnavis, who exchanged pleasantries with the RPI (A) chief.

Declining to answer questions, Mr. Fadnavis merely said he was in the city to attend some programmes and

Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government led by Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, saying the alliance partners – the Shiv Sena, the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and the Congress – make strange bedfellows and that ideological schisms are already apparent in this coalition.

"The Sena and the Congress are already at odds over the issue of according respect to Vinayak Damodar 'Veer' Savarkar...the two parties ought to part ways right now instead of remaining partners in an uneasy coalition," he said.

Taking pot shots at Mr. Thackeray, Mr. Athawale asked when the impending cabinet expansion and much-anticipated portfolio allocation of the new government would take place.

"While Mr. Thackeray has announced an ambitious farm loan waiver scheme, it remains to be seen from where he will get the funds to implement it," said the RPI (A) chief.

Commenting on the expansion of his party, Mr. Athawale said his objective in the coming year will be to increase his party's membership to one crore.

Meanwhile, Mr. Athawale hit out at the Maharashtra

Gadkari hits out at Cong. for vote bank politics

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NAGPUR

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Sunday said the Citizenship Amendment Act is not against the Muslim community in India. He said by bringing the new law, the NDA government is not doing any injustice to Muslims in the country. Mr. Gadkari also accused the Congress of spreading misinformation over the issue for vote bank politics.

He was addressing a rally in support of the NDA government's decision to enact a new law, which seeks to provide citizenship to persecuted minorities from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh.

The rally was organised by a local body and supported by the BJP and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

done only by the BJP and not the Congress."

"The decision taken by the government to give justice to religious minorities from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh is not against the Muslim community of India. We are not talking about sending Muslims out of the country," Mr. Gadkari said.

"We all are one, our legacy is one. You go to masjid, we don't oppose it. We all will live together and work according to the Constitution framed by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. This is what we have been saying, not anything new," the minister said.

He said the government's only concern is foreign intruders living in the country. The minister said Muslims should understand that the Congress cannot help in the development of the community. "What has it (Congress) done for you? I request the Muslim community of the country to understand the conspiracy. Your development can be



Allaying concerns: Union Minister Nitin Gadkari addresses a rally in support of the Citizenship Amendment Act in Nagpur on Sunday. ■ PTI

the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, it was accepted that our nation would not be a 'Hindu Rashtra', but a 'secular nation' for all communities." But, when this was decided, Mahatma Gandhi was asked that Pakistan is an Muslim country and there were 22% Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Parsis and Christians there, and where would they go if they faced injustice and persecution, he said. "Gandhi replied that minorities in Pakistan and Afghanistan, whenever they will require support, India will help them."

"You used to ride cycle-rickshaw, we gave you cycle-rickshaw and helped you stand. The Congress considers you as a vote machine so that it can rule afterwards. Don't fall for this misinformation," he said.

"We all are one, our legacy is one. You go to masjid, we don't oppose it. We all will live together and work according to the Constitution framed by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. This is what we have been saying, not anything new," the minister said.

Mr. Gadkari said before 1947, there was an "Akhand Bharat". After partition, Muhammad Ali Jinnah declared Pakistan as a Muslim nation. "But, in our country, under

gees', the BJP leader said. "You will ask why Muslim community members are not called 'refugees'. Dr. Ambedkar has clarified that in the Constitution."

Pakistan and Bangladesh are Islamic nations and there are over 100 to 150 countries which have declared themselves as Islamic or Muslim nations, he pointed out.

Dr. Ambedkar said in the Constitution that Muslims of these countries, if they want to leave their country, they have 100 to 150 alternatives and they can get shelter in any Muslim country of the world, he said. "But, Hindus, Sikhs, Indian Buddhists, Christians, and Jains have no nation to go," the minister said, adding "our country accepts all".

Ex-CM blames some parties for spreading falsehood

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NAGPUR

Former chief minister Devendra Fadnavis on Sunday said the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) is not against any community or religion, and alleged that some political parties are spreading falsehood about the new law to create unrest in the country.

Addressing a pro-CAA rally organised in Nagpur by a local body Lokadhikar Manch, he said people are now coming out on streets in support of the amended citizenship law.

There have been anti-CAA protests across the country with several of them turning violent, leading to arson and damage to property. Under the new law, non-Muslim refugees who came to India before December 31, 2014, to escape religious persecution in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, will be granted Indian citizenship.



Dispelling the myth: BJP supporters taking out a rally organised by Lokadhikar Manch in support of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in Nagpur on Sunday. ■ S. SUDARSHAN

"People are supporting the amended citizenship law in huge numbers. The Act is in the interest of the country and it is not against any com-

munity or religion," Mr. Fadnavis said.

"But some political parties are knowingly misleading people and trying to

create unrest in the country," he said. People have now come out on streets to show their support for the CAA, the BJP leader said.

Shinde to take stock of law and order situation in Gadchiroli

TANVI DESHPANDE

MUMBAI

State Home Minister Eknath Shinde will be touring sensitive areas in Gadchiroli to take stock of the security situation in the Naxal-affected district. The government under Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has been reviewing several projects in Vidarbha.

During the winter session of the Assembly, the CM first started with a review of Amravati district in the backdrop of crop losses due to unseasonal rains. He reviewed various water management schemes and other projects. He directed officials to take measures to supply pure drinking water



Eknath Shinde

to Bhandara city as it suffered from water contamination, ordered that the Dhamewada irrigation project in Gondia district be completed soon, and announced a steel project in eastern Vidarbha and ₹253 crore for an irrigation project in Yavat-

mal among others.

At a review meeting of Gadchiroli district, the CM directed an iron ore mining project to be expedited. Assembly Speaker Nana Patole has too been reviewing projects in Vidarbha also because he is a former Member of Parliament from the region.

Even as the Assembly session is now over, Mr. Shinde will be touring Gadchiroli district to assess the law and order situation.

The naxal-affected district saw an IED blast earlier this year which killed 15 jawans. He will hold discussions with law enforcement officials especially in remote areas.

Ready for crushing: Farm labourers busy in harvesting sugarcane at Karad in Maharashtra on Saturday. ■ RAJU SANADI

More plastic pollution on Maharashtra beaches than Karnataka, Goa: study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PANAJI

Beaches in Maharashtra are more polluted with microplastics and macroplastics than those in Goa and Karnataka, according to a study conducted by a research institute. The study has blamed plastic industries located near the shore and increased tourism activities for the pollution.

"The highest abundance of macro and micro plastic contaminants is found on beaches in Maharashtra along the west coast of India: abundance, distribution, polymer type and

toxicity", was published in Netherlands-based journal 'Chemosphere' last week.

The researchers conducted the assessment of macro and micro plastic contamination for two years on 10 beaches along the western coast of India and their toxic effects on marine organisms.

The plastic contaminants on these beaches were found in various colours like white, pale yellow, dark brown, green, blue and red, said the study, led by NIO scientists Mahua Saha and Dushmanta Maharanan.

Sweet harvest



Ready for crushing: Farm labourers busy in harvesting sugarcane at Karad in Maharashtra on Saturday. ■ RAJU SANADI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PORBANDAR

Six fishermen stranded on a flooded boat in the Arabian Sea off Gujarat coast were rescued in the early hours of Sunday, the Indian Coast Guard said.

The Coast Guard operations centre received a distress call on Saturday evening following which its team, which was on a routine patrol on a ship in the waters,

rushed to provide assistance to the fishermen, a release issued by the Coast Guard said. The boat, named 'Vismita', with six fishermen on board, got flooded in the waters following which its engines stopped working. The fishermen were stranded about 24 nautical miles in the sea from Porbandar.

"The Coast Guard ship C-445, which was on a routine patrol, was immediately diverted to render assistance to the distressed boat," the release said.

Technical personnel of the rescue team stopped flooding by plugging the crack in the boat hull and then carried out de-flooding.

"The boat was then safely towed to the Porbandar harbour by another fishing vessel under escort of the Coast Guard ship around 3 a.m. on Sunday," the release said.

Hunar Haat inaugurated by Koshyari, Naqvi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI

Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari and Union Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi on Sunday inaugurated a Hunar Haat at Bandra Kurla Complex in Mumbai.

The Haat, a platform made available by the Union Minority Affairs Ministry led by Mr. Naqvi to promote works of artists and craftsmen from minority communities, is being held at the MMRDA Ground in BKC.

It began on December 20 and will go on till December 31.

More than 180 stalls have been set up, where some 400 master artisans, including a substantial number of women, and craftsmen from across the country are participating, a statement issued by Mr. Naqvi's office said.

ries at a hospital.

The incident occurred at Taleti locality of Palitana town in Bhavnagar district when an old compound wall was being demolished. Eight labourers were engaged in the task of pulling down the wall, while the Deoras were overseeing the work," a police official said.

"At least five people were trapped under the wall," he said.

Three killed as wall collapses

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
GUJARAT

Three people, including a father-son duo, were killed and two others injured after a compound wall fell on them during its demolition at Palitana town in Gujarat on Sunday.

Faroog Deraia and his son Toufiq, both contractors, died on the spot, while the third victim, a labourer, succumbed to inju-

IN BRIEF



Pejawar seer continues to be critical

MANGALURU
The condition of the 88-year-old Vishwesha Tirtha Swami of Pejawar Mutt, who is being treated for pneumonia at Kasturba Hospital in Manipal, "continues to be critical". "He is on ventilator support," a statement from the hospital said on Sunday. Speaker Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri visited the hospital.

Sahitya Akademi winner Nanjundan found dead

BENGALURU
Eminent translator and Sahitya Akademi award winner G. Nanjundan, 58, was found dead at his residence here on Saturday. The police suspect Dr. Nanjundan died of cardiac arrest around four days ago. He earned recognition for translating more than a dozen books from Kannada to Tamil and was working as a lecturer. PTI

Shashi Tharoor to appear in court today

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
Congress MP Shashi Tharoor will approach a court here on Monday to clarify his non-appearance in a defamation case filed against him by a lawyer in connection with his 1989 novel *The Great Indian Novel*. The additional chief judicial magistrate had issued an arrest warrant against Mr. Tharoor for not heeding a summons, which he claimed did not specify a date.

Man kills neighbour's dog with air gun

HYDERABAD
Irrked by the barking of his neighbour's dog, Avinash Karan, 38, a branch manager of a private bank, allegedly killed the animal with his air gun at Babu Nagar here on Sunday. On a complaint by its owner, Seemala Raju Yadav, a case was registered against Mr. Karan. He was arrested and sent to judicial custody.

CAA supporter stabbed in Bengaluru

The BJP member, who was attacked while returning from a rally, is out of danger, say police

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

A BJP member was stabbed while he was returning home after participating in a pro-Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) rally at Town Hall on Sunday.

Varun Bopala, 31, a resident of J.P. Nagar, was riding a two-wheeler when he was attacked with "sharp objects" near the Bamboo Bazaar area around 12.25 p.m., the police said.

He was taken to Victoria Hospital for treatment. Later, he was shifted to a private hospital in J.P. Nagar. He was said to be out of danger, the police said.

According to the police, Varun was alone when one of the attackers followed him before knocking down his bike. Varun fell on the road when two more men on another two-wheeler stabbed him multiple times before fleeing from the spot.

Passers-by alerted the police, who took him to hospital.



In favour: Supporters of the Citizenship Act gathering near the Town Hall in Bengaluru on Sunday ■ SAMPATH KUMAR G P

tal. The Kalasipalyam police have registered a case of attempt to murder and a search is on for the accused.

Speaking at a press conference in the evening, Police

Commissioner Bhaskar Rao said he had directed the police to investigate the incident. "The investigation is in the preliminary stages and it is premature to comment on

this," he added.

Tejasvi Surya, Bengaluru South MP, and Ramesh Baithon, Deputy Commissioner of Police (West), visited Varun at Victoria Hospital.

Curfew relaxed in Mangaluru

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MANGALURU

After three days of curfew following violent incidents which claimed two lives in police firing on December 19, Mangaluru is limping back to normality.

Day curfew was lifted from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday and was re-imposed at night.

There will be no curfew under the jurisdiction of Mangaluru Police Commissioner on Monday. However, prohibitory orders will be in force till 6 a.m. till December 24.

Educational institutions will function as usual from Monday.

Mobile Internet data services were restored late on Saturday evening.

Court had ordered the second autopsy. The bodies have been kept at the Gandhi Hospital as per an earlier order of the court on petitions alleging extra-judicial killing of the men.

A Division Bench directed that the autopsy be conducted before December 23 and the report submitted to the Registrar-General of the High Court. The doctors were advised to express an independent view on the basis of their finding.

The charred body of the 25-year-old woman was found on November 28. The four accused were arrested the next day and gunned down on December 6. The police said its personnel resorted to "retaliatory" firing when two of the accused snatched their weapons and fired at them. Their first post-mortem was conducted on December 6 in a Mahabubnagar hospital.

AIIMS team to conduct second autopsy today

Bodies kept at Hyderabad hospital

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) has formed a team of three forensic doctors to conduct the second autopsy on the bodies of four men accused of the gang-rape and murder of a veterinarian near Hyderabad. They were killed by the police on December 6.

The team will conduct the autopsy at the mortuary of the government-run Gandhi Hospital in Hyderabad at 9 a.m. on Monday, a source said.

The medical board is led by Sudhir Gupta, head of forensic at the AIIMS. Dr. Adarsh Kumar and Dr. Abhishek Yadav are members. Dr. Varun Chandra will assist the team in the post-mortem, said an AIIMS communiqué to the Telangana Special Chief Secretary.

The Telangana High

Kerala govt. playing to the gallery, says Minister

'CM, Opposition leader behaving like anarchists'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

he said, would serve only to deprive the citizens of benefits that were based on such records.

Mr. Muraleedharan, who was here to inaugurate the 27th State conference of the Kerala PSC Employees' Sangh, said neither Mr. Vijayan nor Mr. Chennithala, in their positions as Chief Minister and Leader of the Opposition respectively, had the right to protest in the streets.

"It's a call for revolt"

"I'm not saying that you should not air your opinions. But the Chief Minister and the Leader of the Opposition hitting the streets and exhorting the people to agitate

V. Muraleedharan

is a call for revolt. Every position has also its limitations. The democratic mechanism moves ahead by respecting those limitations. Otherwise, there will be anarchy."

In a rare show of solidarity, Mr. Vijayan and Mr. Chennithala had led a joint LDF-

UDF protest against CAA on December 15 in Thiruvananthapuram.

The Kerala government was playing to the gallery in declaring that it would not enforce CAA, Mr. Muraleedharan said. "Everyone is aware that the State government has no role in enforcing the CAA," he said.

The Act did not apply to any Indian citizen nor did it seek to deprive anyone of their citizenship, he said. In protesting against it, the Congress and the Left were, in fact, contradicting the positions taken by their own leaders in the past, he said.

We should differentiate between people who come to India seeking refuge and

people driven by economic reasons such as employment, he said. "Despite their high literacy level, Keralites have proved themselves vulnerable to deceptions such as fake currency frauds. The ruling and Opposition fronts are using the gullibility of the common people of Kerala to sell them fake impressions about the CAA," he said.

Freezing NPR-related activities would serve only to deprive the citizens of benefits, he said. The people should not be used as "bar-gaining tools" for the petty benefits of political leaders. Mr. Muraleedharan alleged that the media also was being taken for a ride on the issue of the CAA.

Youth arrested for rape, murder of girl in Hassan

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HASSEN

A nine-year-old girl who was found dead in a tank in Hassan district of Karnataka on December 16 was allegedly raped and murdered, Superintendent of Police Ram Nivas Sepat said on Sunday.

Suresh, 21, of Madaba village has been arrested in the case, Mr. Sepat said. The accused allegedly raped the girl, killed her, and threw the body in the tank.

The preliminary report of the post-mortem conducted at the Hassan Institute of Medical Sciences stated that the death was due to "asphyxia as a result of smothering.

ering with signs of recent sexual assault," he said in a press release.

The girl, a Class 4 student, went missing after she went to take part in a festival near Channarayapatna with her brother and friends on December 14. As she did not return, her mother and relatives searched for the girl and later filed a police complaint on December 16. The same day she was found dead in a tank at Madaba village.

After the post-mortem report, the police registered a case under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act and the IPC.

Curry leaf farmers in A.P. gear up to produce oil

G.V.R. SUBBA RAO
VIJAYAWADA

Two years ago, a few farmers joined hands to form the Prakruthi Udyana Utpattidarsh Sangham, a farmer producer organisation (FPO), in Agiripalli of Andhra Pradesh's Krishna district.

The association, which has been exploring options available for export of horticultural products, is now eyeing curry leaf oil extraction.

The FPO, with about 100 members now, came forward with the idea after suffering losses owing to the recent heavy rainfall and poor sales during the slack season - March to July - when prices dip to as low as ₹3 to ₹5 a kg.

Crop surplus

The farmers associated with the organisation are cultivating curry leaves on about 100 acres. As the production touched 20 tonnes per acre, they had to look for alternatives, apart from supplying dried leaves to companies that make herbal medicines. "Hence we are planning curry leaf oil," says sangham president M. Sridevi.

The Department of Horticulture has come forward to provide financial assistance to the FPO to set up the infrastructure. The society members will be sent to the CFTRI for training, officials say. It is expected that three to five litres of oil can be extracted from a tonne of curry leaves, says Ms. Sridevi.

Essential oils like curry leaf oil are primarily used in cosmetics and toiletries, food items and beverages. There is a demand for the oil in European countries, the Middle East and Asian countries, Horticulture Commissioner Chiranjiv Chowdary said.

Support pours in for protesting A.P. farmers

Agitation against plan to shift capital enters fifth day

STAFF REPORTER
VIJAYAWADA



Villagers protesting at Uddandarayunipalem on Sunday. ■ V. RAJU

date. They held placards and banners with pictures of Mr. Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

Meanwhile, doctors belonging to various 'capital villages' joined the relay hunger strike by the farmers who gave land for the capital, Mr. Ravindra said.

Some of the protesters sought the intervention of Mr. Modi as the State government did not respond to their pleas for justice till

now.

A large number of protesters, including families from various villages, reached the area where the foundation stone had been laid for Amaravati by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and staged protests against the Jagan Reddy government's plan to shift the capital.

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IN BRIEF



Five rescued from massive fire in Mumbai

MUMBAI

Five persons trapped in a major fire in Mumbai were rescued on Sunday night. The fire broke out on two floors of a residential building in Vile Parle and raged for almost two hours. Nobody was injured in the incident, said rescue personnel. PTI

Odisha man tied to tree, beaten, urinated upon

BHUBANESWAR

A youth was tied to a tree and brutally thrashed by two men who also urinated in his mouth in Odisha's Khurda district, said police. The incident came to light after the video of the incident went viral on social media. The police have arrested the two accused — Rajendra Bhuyan and Gaita Paltasingh — of Kaipadar village and a case has been lodged. IANS

Panchayat promises gold to taxpayers

MUMBAI

In a move aimed at increasing tax collection, the gram panchayat of Wangi village in Sangli district of Maharashtra has announced a lucky draw scheme, under which three taxpayers can win gold items like rings and coins. Villagers who clear their tax dues by March 15 next year will be short-listed for the lucky draw. PTI

Woman injured as guard shoots arrow

DEHRADUN

A security guard in Uttarakhand's Pauri district injured a woman Rajni Devi, 35, by firing an arrow at her for allegedly drying clothes on the boundary wall of a plot he was manning, police said on Sunday. Ms. Devi was rushed to a hospital as the iron arrowhead hit her in the chest, police said. The guard, identified as Ramlal, has been arrested. PTI

Railway unveils new signalling system

Project will be tested on four of the busiest routes

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA
NEW DELHI

The Railways will roll out its new signalling system from April 2020 onwards. It is expected to make train travel faster and safer, a senior official said.

The implementation will begin with four sections of about 640 route kilometres with an estimated cost of around ₹1,810 crore.

This is expected to be a pilot project for pan-India implementation of the nearly ₹78,000 crore project to modernise the signalling sys-



Tech upgrade: The new systems will reduce congestion and improve safety, line capacity and punctuality. ■ PTI

tem, which was included in the works programme of 2018-19.

"We are yet to get approval for this [entire project] from

NITI Aayog, the extended Railway Board and the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA)," Pradeep Kumar, member (Signal & Tele-

com), Railway Board, said. The four sections where the plan will be implemented first are the Renigunta-Yerraguntla section of the South Central Railways, the Vizianagram-Palas section of East Coast Railway, the Jhasi-Bina on North Central Railway and the Nagpur-Badnera on Central Railway.

Modern technologies

"These four sections are some of the busiest routes on Railways, with heavy traffic. These will act as a pilot for signal modernisation across the 70,000 km network of the Railways," Mr. Kumar said.

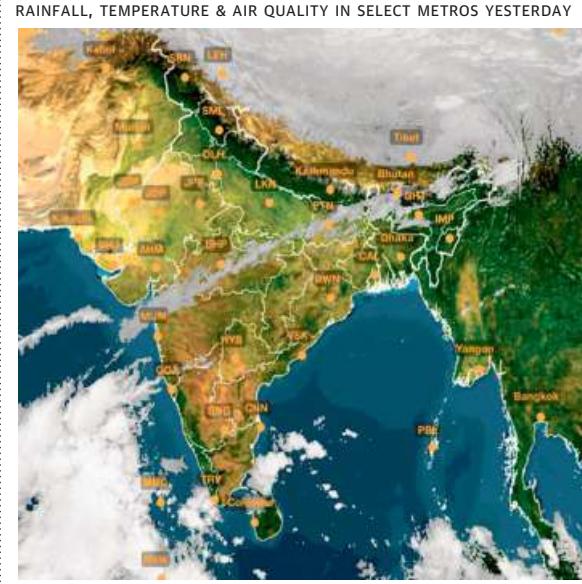
The modernisation of the signalling system will in-

clude implementation of technologies such as the automatic train protection system that helps in adhering to permissible speed limits without driver intervention and the 4G-based mobile train radio communication system, which can be used for emergency communications.

The implementation of these new systems will improve safety, reduce congestion, increase line capacity and improve punctuality, Mr. Kumar said.

Besides a centralised traffic control system similar to the air traffic control system, a remote diagnostic and predictive maintenance system will be implemented.

WEATHER WATCH



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD; RAINFALL DATA: CPCB; MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 16.00 HRS)
Forecast for Monday: Cold day conditions likely in isolated pockets over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh. Dense fog in some pockets likely over Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Bihar, West Bengal, Sikkim, south Assam and Meghalaya. Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning likely over West Madhya Pradesh and Vidarbha.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	...23.0	11.0	...	Kozhikode	...35.0	24.0	...
Ahmedabad	...29.0	16.0	...	Kurnool	...32.0	20.0	...
Aizawl	...19.0	8.0	...	Lucknow	...23.0	10.0	...
Allahabad	...23.0	10.0	...	Madurai	...31.0	23.0	...
Bengaluru	...28.0	18.0	...	Mangalore	...37.0	23.0	...
Bhopal	...25.0	12.0	...	Mumbai	...32.0	22.0	...
Bhubaneswar	...28.0	15.0	...	Mysuru	...28.0	18.0	...
Chandigarh	...14.0	10.0	...	New Delhi	...15.0	7.0	...
Chennai	...30.0	22.0	...	Patna	...21.0	9.0	...
Coimbatore	...28.0	21.0	...	Port Blair	...31.0	25.0	...
Dehradun	...23.0	7.0	...	Puducherry	...30.0	21.0	...
Gangtok	...11.0	5.0	...	Pune	...28.0	19.0	...
Goa	...34.0	23.0	...	Raipur	...30.0	18.0	...
Guwahati	...21.0	13.0	...	Ranchi	...24.0	12.0	...
Hubballi	...29.0	19.0	...	Shillong	...15.0	5.0	...
Hyderabad	...28.0	18.0	...	Shimla	...15.0	3.0	...
Imphal	...23.0	4.0	...	Srinagar	...8.0	1.0	...
Jaipur	...24.0	9.0	...	Thiruvananthapuram	...35.0	23.0	...
Kochi	...32.0	23.0	...	Tiruchi	...31.0	22.0	...
Kohima	...16.0	6.0	...	Vijayawada	...31.0	21.0	...
Kolkata	...21.0	13.0	...	Visakhapatnam	...29.0	21.0	...

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	NO _x	CO	PM _{2.5}	PM ₁₀	CODE
Ahmedabad	.56	.31	.21	.111	.105	■■■■■
Bengaluru	.9	.28	.15	.101	...	■■■■■
Chennai	.71	.36	.48	.142	...	■■■■■
Delhi	.8	.184	.89	.391	.283	■■■■■
Hyderabad	.15	.46	.46	.232	...	■■■■■
Kolkata	.7	.72	.46	.313	.196	■■■■■
Lucknow	.7	.74	.80	.407	...	■■■■■
Mumbai	.87	.32	.243	.192	...	■■■■■
Pune	.65	.17	.50	.212	.149	■■■■■
Visakhapatnam	.9	.38	.50	.133	...	■■■■■

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Patna, Bihar recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 447, indicating a severe level of pollution. In contrast, Elor, Kerala recorded a healthy AQI score of 33.

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■■ Moderate ■■■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_x: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM_{2.5} & PM₁₀: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease.

Officers Training Academy in Gaya to shut down

Sikh Light Infantry Regimental Centre will relocate there

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Officers Training Academy (OTA) in Gaya is being shut down as it is not used to its full potential and the Sikh Light Infantry Regimental Centre, which is strapped for space at Fatehpur in Uttar Pradesh, will shift there, Army sources said.

"It is not closure. It is relocation," a senior source said. The OTAs in Chennai and Gaya are under-utilised now because the intake has increased through other schemes like the Technical Entry Scheme (TES).

The OTA, Gaya, was set up in 2011. The officer cadets there will be trained at the Indian Military Academy, Dehradun.

Earlier, the Centre was supposed to build a new regimental Centre for the Sikh Light Infantry. The move is

expected to save expenses and enable utilization of readily available infrastructure.

mental Centre.

"Instead of spending ₹1,000 crore, why not move to Gaya?" the source said.

Regimental Centres require a large parade ground for training and other facilities, which are readily available in Gaya. Once the Sikh Light Infantry Regimental Centre moves to Gaya, the Rajput regiment can take over for a new Sikh Light Regi-



Lot of room: The OTAs are under-utilised because the intake has increased through other schemes. ■ R.RAGHU

Arunachal to mark schools as 'hard' and 'soft'

The Education Department has been facing difficulties in posting teachers in remote areas

RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI

Arunachal Pradesh will soon have schools marked 'hard', 'soft' and 'medium'. Geography, lack of infrastructure and reluctance of teachers to work beyond their comfort zones are the reasons for this categorisation, officials said.

Teacher absenteeism has been a major issue across 3,513 government schools, including 211 community schools, in the State. The student-teacher ratio has conse-

quently been skewed in favour of urban centres with better connectivity.

A government spokesperson said that under the new policy, all government schools will be divided into three categories — hard, medium and soft — based on topography, accessibility and degrees of difficulty in staying at the place of posting.

"All new recruits will be given a hard posting for a mandatory three years, inclusive of their probation period.



The teacher-student ratio is skewed in favour of urban centres in the State.

The next five years will be in schools with levels of medi-

um difficulty, followed by posting in soft schools," the spokesperson said.

The Education Department has been facing difficulties in posting 16,594 regular teachers in remote areas where schools have adequate students, but hardly anyone to teach them.

Last week, a meeting of the Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Pema Khandu, approved the Arunachal Pradesh Teachers' Transfer & Posting Policy, 2020, for en-

suring "need-based distribution of teachers to protect the academic interest of students and optimise job satisfaction among the teachers in a free and transparent manner." The policy also entails transfer of teachers through online requests.

"We are taking steps to revitalise the sector through a policy that will ensure each school, no matter how remotely situated, has adequate teachers," Mr. Khandu said.

Jel activist from J&K dies in jail

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

A Jamaat-e-Islami (Jel) activist from Kashmir's Handwara district died in a jail in Uttar Pradesh on Saturday.

A police official said the family of Bhat, a resident of Handwara's Kulangam village, was informed about his

death in a jail located in Allahabad.

An official said Bhat was arrested prior to the August 5 move to revoke J&K's autonomy. He was a basic member of the socio-religious organisation, which was banned by the Centre on March 1 this year.

It was followed by rounding up of its leaders and members.

The police said it was in touch with the Uttar Pradesh police to initiate the process of handing over the body of Bhat to the relatives. There was no official word on the cause of the death.

Contraband worth ₹150 cr. seized near the Andamans

Coast guard nabs 6 from Myanmar

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Undoing harms

Making the CAA non-discriminatory is the only way to dispel fears

As the Centre tries to fend off criticism that its Citizenship (Amendment) Act excludes Muslims from its beneficial provisions and quell strident protests, it must look for ways to undo the incalculable harm caused by fears set off by the law. Indications that it is open to suggestions on the rules to implement the CAA are welcome. However, these should not be confined to the proposed rules. The government must heed the call for meaningful changes that would dispel fears gripping the country, especially minorities. The stated objective is the fast-tracking of applications from minorities from three Muslim-majority neighbourhood countries for citizenship by naturalisation. Can't this be achieved without violating the Constitution or its secular ideals? A first step would be to further amend the Act, even by an ordinance, to drop its religion-specific wording, and make it explicit that the benefit would be open to all undocumented migrants who can prove persecution in their home countries. For allowing a Hindu, Sikh, Christian, Jain, Buddhist or Parsi to apply for citizenship after staying in the country for six years, there is no need to bar Muslims from making a similar claim. It is only an enabling law and does not oblige the government to grant citizenship to anyone. And Muslims and atheists have been persecuted in these and other countries by authorities and dominant sections.

Regarding others such as Sri Lankan refugees, the legal bar on their applying for citizenship stands out. A 2004 amendment to the citizenship law introduced a clause that 'illegal migrants' will not be eligible to apply for citizenship. The definition of 'illegal migrants' as those who arrived without valid travel documents includes refugees. A provision of the present CAA is to remove this 'illegal' tag from non-Muslim minorities from Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Dropping the reference to 'illegal migrants' will automatically enable any refugee to apply for citizenship, subject to the residential requirement. Therefore, a general enabling provision to allow a relaxation of the minimum residency requirement will serve the purpose of considering citizenship to any persecuted people. This would be non-discriminatory, without obligation to grant citizenship. Finally, India should enact a refugee law wherein the right to live a life without fear or confinement can be protected. If the fear is that people may seek permanent asylum, the UNHCR can work with them officially for their voluntary repatriation, and without rendering long-term refugees ineligible for applying for citizenship. Finally, the government must end the process once the National Population Register is updated. It must give up the notion of a citizenship register. No good will come out of setting off a clamour for inclusion and panic over possible exclusion. That is a pain Indians of all persuasions can do without.

Significant reversal

NCLAT decision to reverse the removal of Mr. Mistry is a setback to Tata Sons

Three years after Tata Sons Limited voted to remove Cyrus P. Mistry from his post as the Executive Chairman of the Tata Group's main holding company, the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) last week declared his removal "illegal" and ordered his reinstatement. The appellate body's decision to reverse the National Company Law Tribunal's ruling dismissing Mr. Mistry's challenge to his ouster, in October 2016, has far-reaching implications. For a start, the NCLAT has in no uncertain terms held that Tata Sons' "affairs have been or are being conducted in a manner 'prejudicial' and 'oppressive' to members" including Mr. Mistry as also 'prejudicial' to the interests of the company and its group companies. By upholding the appellants' contention that the minority group of shareholders – the 'Shapoorji Pallonji (SP) Group' – had been a victim of 'prejudicial' and 'oppressive' actions undertaken by the majority shareholders of Tata Sons, the NCLAT has struck a blow on behalf of the rights of all minority shareholders. Terming the company effectively a "quasi-partnership-company" – the Tata Group through the Tata Trusts and other Tata entities and family members holds 81% of 'Tata Sons' effective shareholding while the SP Group owns 18% – the appellate body stressed the need for the Tata holding firm to operate as a "two-group company" that could provide checks and balances in the running of the businesses.

The NCLAT's findings lay emphasis on greater transparency and adherence to governance norms especially in the conduct of affairs at the controlling company of a large diversified conglomerate. Throughout its 172-page ruling, the appellate body has relied extensively on the correspondence between Mr. Mistry and the respondents including his predecessor and interim replacement Ratan Tata, and its findings are hard to fault on facts. That the NCLAT had in its ruling dismissing Mr. Mistry's plea made several "disparaging" and "wholly unsubstantiated" remarks against him also attracted censure from the appellate body, which expunged them entirely. The tribunal's language reflecting a predisposition to view the Tata Group in a favourable light points to the pressing need for a more dispassionate judiciary while dealing with corporate misdemeanours. With the Tata Group clear that it plans to challenge the NCLAT verdict, it will be left to the Supreme Court to have the final say on the conclusions of the NCLAT, particularly on the question of whether Tata Sons is in effect a "quasi-partnership". This construct was, after all, the basis for the NCLAT's reasoning that the company had always been run on mutual trust and understanding between the Tata and SP groups – a trust that the appellate body would like to see restored post its ruling.

The three-step communal game plan

Through the NRC-NPR process, the Modi government aims to create a category of second-class citizens



PRAKASH KARAT

The Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019, and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) are interconnected and twin measures. The Home Minister, Amit Shah, had repeatedly made this clear both in Parliament and outside. First, the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill would be adopted by Parliament following which the NRC would be taken up.

In the wake of widespread protests against the CAA, the Central Government is trying to obfuscate the issue of implementing the NRC. It is taking advantage of the lack of clarity and the inadequate information available on how the NRC is going to be implemented in the whole country. The Minister of State for Home Affairs, G. Kishan Reddy, has said: "A countrywide NRC had not been notified so far and no one should fear." The Government has put out advertisements in Hindi and Urdu newspapers stating that "The NRC has not been announced yet and if it is done so in future, then rules and regulations should be such that no Indian citizen is troubled."

The NRC-NPR link

These and other such pronouncements are an exercise in disinformation. A crucial fact is that the NRC process begins with the compilation of the National Population Register (NPR). This is the first stage of the NRC. The notification for preparing and updating the NPR (<https://goaprinting.com/>

press.gov.in/downloads/1920/1920-19-SI-EOG-1.pdf) was issued by the Registrar General of Citizen Registration, on July 31, 2019. For this, house to house enumeration will be conducted throughout the country (except in Assam) for "collection of information relating to all persons who are usually residing within the jurisdiction of the Local Registrar". This enumeration will be undertaken between the first day of April 2020 and September 30, 2020.

The compilation of the NPR is a preliminary step towards preparing the NRC. On the basis of the NPR, the local register of Indian citizens will be finalised after due verification. This is the procedure set out under the "Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules 2003".

So, from April 1, 2020 onwards, the National Register of Citizens process will begin with house to house enumeration for the National Population Register.

It is important to note that, as per these Rules (<http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-Act&Rules/notifications/citizen-ship-rules2003.pdf>), during the verification process, particulars of such individuals whose citizenship is deemed to be "doubtful" shall be entered by the local Registrar with appropriate remarks in the Population Register for further enquiry; and in case of "doubtful" citizenship, the individual or the family shall be informed in a specified proforma immediately after the verification process is over.

Another clause of these Rules, 4(5)(a) states that: "Every person or family specified in sub-rule (4), shall be given an opportunity of being heard by the Sub-district or



Taluk Registrar of Citizen Registration, before a final decision is taken to include or to exclude their particulars in the National Register of Indian Citizens" [emphasis added].

Use of biometric data

Fifteen questions will be asked in the survey, including questions on the place of birth, the date of birth, and the name of the father and mother. The new addition will be eliciting the details of Aadhaar, which will then be crosschecked with the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) for verification of biometrics of the individual. So, the NPR compilation will also have the biometric data of those listed, which raises troubling questions.

It is at the verification stage that communal profiling will take place in line with what the Home Minister had declared – the purpose of the NRC is to eliminate "infiltrators" as against the Hindu refugees who will become eligible for citizenship under the CAA. Those summoned as "doubtful citizens" will have to go through the tortuous process of submitting proof of their citizenship.

The NRC does not require any new law or amendment. It is already

part of the Citizenship Act of 1955 through an amendment made during the Atal Bihari Vajpeyi government in 2003. For the first time, the concept of a National Register of Citizens was introduced by making it compulsory to register every citizen of India and to issue a national identity card. Based on this, the rules for registration for citizenship were issued subsequently in which provision was made for a National Population Register.

Further, there is confusion created by the fact that the update of the NPR is being done along with the Census enumeration for 2021. It is the Census authorities who undertake both these processes, but they are two separate things. The NPR is directly linked to the NRC.

That the game plan of the BJP is to create a communal division in States such as West Bengal is absolutely clear. On the one hand, it claims that the NRC process will eliminate all those who are "Muslim infiltrators" from Bangladesh. On the other hand, by amending the Citizenship Act, Hindu migrants who have come from across the border over the decades will be given citizenship.

Superfluous and expensive

The NRC process is being undertaken at a time when the Aadhaar identity card has already covered most of the population. There is also the Electors Photo Identity Card issued by the Election Commission of India. The necessity for another citizenship register and identity card is superfluous. Moreover, it will entail a huge amount of expenditure. The NRC process is weighted against the poorest sections of the population – migrant labour, Adivasis living in remote

areas, and other marginalised communities.

The movement against the CAA has correctly linked it to the NRC. The CAA and the NRC must be seen in tandem. While the former would legitimise non-Muslim migrants as citizens, the NRC would target the so-called "Muslim infiltrators". What the Narendra Modi government is aiming to do is to create a category of second-class citizens whose rights would be severely circumscribed.

Prerogative of States

It is imperative that the communal agenda of the BJP and the Central Government is foiled. This requires stoppage of the NRC. An important step in this direction will be to halt the NRC process in the States. Several Chief Ministers have gone on record that they are opposed to the NRC. Even Nitish Kumar, Chief Minister of Bihar, and Naveen Patnaik, Chief Minister of Odisha, whose parties supported the CAA in Parliament, have said that they do not want the NRC.

Already Pinarayi Vijayan, Chief Minister of Kerala, and Mamata Banerjee, Chief Minister of West Bengal, have announced that they are suspending the NRC process in their States. The work in the NRC gets halted since it is the State government which provides personnel for the enumeration and verification process. Other State Governments should also do so. If the Central Government stands by the announcement that the NRC process has not begun, then it should withdraw the July 31, 2019 notification for the updation of the NRC.

Prakash Karat is a Politburo member of the Communist Party of India (Marxist)

Ironing out the wrinkles in trade disputes adjudication

The fall of the World Trade Organization Appellate Body is an opportunity to rectify issues with the present system



JAY MANOJ SANKLECHA

Mark Twain famously quipped that "the reports of my death are greatly exaggerated". With the retirement of two of the remaining three members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Appellate Body on December 10, and a veto by the United States on fresh appointments, the "crown jewel" of the WTO been rendered dysfunctional. Although the demise of the Appellate Body has struck a blow to the rule of law, those drawing up the obituary of the WTO in the aftermath of its demise may have greatly exaggerated its consequences.

The consequences of the Appellate Body's fall are overstated for a number of reasons. First, because this effectively marks a return to the dispute settlement system under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) which, on the whole, proved surprisingly successful in resolving disputes. Second, most of the disputes at the WTO concern rules that are actually "self-enforcing", with the Appellate Body only policing its

enforcement by domestic authorities. Finally, many States have conceived "alternative" strategies to overcome difficulties arising out of the absence of a functioning Appellate Body.

The Appellate Body was set up in 1995 as a "safety valve" against erroneous panel reports in return for the membership agreeing to adopt reports using the "reverse consensus" rule. Under the erstwhile positive consensus rule, reports issued by panels composed to hear disputes under GATT, could be adopted only if each of the contracting states favoured its adoption. This effectively handed a veto to the losing state.

However under the reverse consensus rule, the report would be automatically adopted, unless each member objected to the adoption of a report. To eliminate the likelihood of erroneous panel reports, the membership proposed the establishment of an Appellate Body, and the adoption of the report was postponed till after such appeal was adjudicated by the Appellate Body.

Return to GATT

The fall of the Appellate Body effectively marks a return to the previous system as it hands states an opportunity to appeal an adverse panel ruling and effectively indefinitely delay its adoption. While one would be forgiven to think that states under the GATT regime would almost always veto unfavourable reports, a remarkable 71% of panel reports were adopted using the positive consensus rule. Even where panel reports were not adopted by states they served as a basis for the parties to "bilaterally" resolve their disputes in a mutually satisfactory manner. In a vastly changed global economic landscape, the re-emphasis on diplomatic solutions in lieu of judicialised solutions to resolve interstate trade disputes may not be an entirely bad outcome.

Trade remedy matters

The majority of the disputes at the WTO concern trade remedy matters.

In such matters, if a state violates the rules, for example those concerning dumping of goods or grant of subsidies, affected states can without recourse to the WTO, adopt countermeasures such as imposition of anti-dumping and countervailing duties. The dispute resolution mechanism primarily

aims to police the adoption of such countermeasures, namely whether they were warranted and otherwise imposed consistently with the rules. As trade scholar Pauwelyn notes, the mechanism is geared to address "over-enforcement" rather than "under-enforcement" of WTO rules. While the fall of the Appellate Body may see the adoption of more unilateral sanctions by states, possibly leading to increased trade wars, it will not render the WTO rules unenforceable. The threat of reciprocal sanctions may in fact serve to encourage states to remain compliant with the rules even in the absence of a functional Appellate Body at the helm of the dispute mechanism.

Alternative pathways

Finally, although the membership could not prevent the fall of the Appellate Body as we know it; several states have adopted ad hoc solutions.

States such as Indonesia and Vietnam have, through a no appeal pact, agreed in advance not to appeal the ruling of the panel in the dispute between them, effectively waiving their right of appeal. The European Union (EU), Norway and Canada have agreed on an interim appeal system for resolving any disputes through arbitration using Article 25 of the dispute settlement understanding in a process mirroring that of the Ap-

pellate Body with former Appellate Body members appointed as arbitrators. The EU has even threatened to launch countermeasures under general international law for countries that lose at the panel stage but refuse recourse to the interim appeal system under Article 25 of the dispute settlement understanding and instead appeal the report "in limbo" with a view to avoid the adoption of the report altogether. Although the overall effectiveness of such alternative strategies to overcome the demise of the WTO Appellate Body is uncertain, they do represent good faith efforts by some members at resolving future trade disputes.

In sum although the fall of the WTO Appellate Body represents a turbulent period in the history of trade disputes adjudication, it by no means spells the end of the WTO. On the contrary it presents an opportunity to the members to rethink and "iron out some of the creases" with the present system. The ongoing negotiations between the United States and India in relation to the Panel report in US-Carbon Steel, where the U.S. has appealed an adverse report to a dysfunctional body, may offer an insight into how the dispute settlement system evolves.

Jay Manoj Sanklecha is a lawyer specialising in international law. The views expressed are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

Exclusionary combo

The Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and National Register of Citizens (NRC) are a single entity and not separate entities. The enactment of the CAA has become a necessity to give citizenship to non-Muslims excluded from the Assam NRC. Thanks to them, all except Muslims can acquire citizenship by virtue of their religious identity – except Muslims' being the operative words. As a mutually complementary mechanism, the CAA-NRC combo sifts out Muslims. It amounts to legalisation of religious discrimination and segregation, pure and simple. It is a betrayal of our common humanity that Muslims are being singled out for denial of citizenship because of their religious faith. It is wrong that masses of people should be pigeon-holed as 'us-and-them' on the basis of the present

government's policy on citizenship hastens India's retreat from secularism. Hence it must be opposed with all the strength we can summon up. Secularism is the legacy of the freedom movement and the talisman that keeps our multi-religious country united and its repudiation will be a recipe for balkanisation and disintegration. Making select religions the gateway to citizenship hammers the nail into the Constitution and India's pluralist democracy. As Yogenra Yadav has so admirably put it, what India now needs is not a National Register of Citizens, but a National Register of the Unemployed.

G. DAVID MILTON,
Maruthancode, Tamil Nadu

Hitting the streets
The CAA has shocked the entire country. Consequently, students and educated people from different backgrounds and

platforms are coming to the streets staging protests and raising slogans against this discriminatory and unconstitutional law. On the other hand, the government seems too stubborn to accept the public demand to withdraw or amend the act. Further, steps like shutting down the Internet and using excessive force on protesters are adding fuel to the fire ("Toll touches 16 in U.P. as protests continue," Dec. 22).

MUSHAHID RAZA,
Sitanarhi, Bihar

Disruptive exercise
The government's analysis on illegal immigrants is not misplaced. People have indeed sneaked in through India's porous borders with countries like Bangladesh and Nepal. However, their numbers are not enormous enough to justify a nationwide NRC, which seems to have been designed with the same

logic as demonetisation – to weed out a few corrupt elements, put to inconvenience the whole population. This can lead to unintended consequences, just like in the case of demonetisation. Rather than spending huge amounts on such a disruptive exercise, the government should take measures to prevent illegal immigration in the future by investing on steps like better border protection, technological surveillance and agreements with neighbouring countries.

BALAJEE SUMANT CHEMOTRE,
Ranchi

Bad black money law
Misinformation regarding the quantum of black money in the economy, which is sometimes blown out of proportion by people with vested

interests, has resulted in the legislature making bad laws on the same issue (Editorial page, "Inaccurate

SUMPREET K.,
Bengaluru

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:
India's foreign reserves stood at \$454.49 billion as of December 13, and not \$554 billion as the Business page report titled "Import cover rises to 10 months: RBI" (Dec. 21, 2019) said. A Sports page report titled "Taking it week by week" (Dec. 21, 2019, some editions) erroneously said that Sumit Nagal took a set off Roger Federer at the Australian Open. It was at the U.S. Open that Nagal took a set off Federer in the first round.

In the "Corrections and Clarifications" column (Dec. 21, 2019), Ishan Porel's name was wrongly listed under additions to the Rajasthan Royals squad. Actually, he is under the Kings XI Punjab squad.

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and an assurance that there will be no harassment by the tax officials. Further, through mutual legal assistance treaties, the government can expose the black money hoarders and confiscate their assets. It should be remembered that every law made must act as an enabler for the law-abiding citizen and as a deterrent to the law-breaking citizen. Bad laws help no one.

A Hindu critique of Hindutva

We need to rescue religion from zealots and rediscover the spirit of religiosity



AVIJIT PATHAK

The question I ask myself as we witness the assertion of the ideology of Hindutva and its resultant fear among minorities is this: Is it possible to have yet another reading of my religion or the experience of religiosity and take part in a collective movement for creating a society filled with love, empathy and pluralism? This is both a sociopolitical and an ethico-existential question. At a time when the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 2019 has caused fear and existential insecurity among the minorities, there is a danger of the movement against the discriminatory nature of the CAA degenerating into violent communal politics. Therefore, it is important to introspect and redefine one's politics, culture and religiosity for a collective struggle.

Transcending limiting identities
Yes, there is a Left-Arabekarite version of secularism, and many of us – university-educated/metropolitan intellectuals and civil society activists – are reasonably free from the burden of the conditioned mind that religious orthodoxy causes. Yet, a careful look at India's culture and society would indicate that religion is all-pervasive: it can be seen in beliefs, rituals as well as in the dangerous stereotypes we nurture about others. Hence, the mere act of debunking religion will not help. We need to rescue religion from zealots and rediscover the spirit of religiosity as, to use Rabindranath Tagore's language, our 'surplus'. It is in this context that as someone born in a Hindu family, I would like to critique Hindutva or, for that matter, any deterministic/one-dimensional doctrine of religion. This critique emanates not from scientism or soulless secularism, but from deep religiosity, the urge to transcend limiting identities.

The kind of Hindutva we see today is against some of the finest aspects of my religiosity that I learned as a Hindu. While the discourse of Hindutva with its hypermasculine nationalism is essentially monolithic



"Even though it may appear impossible to imagine a world where Kabir and Rumi, Gandhi and Maulana Azad, and Tagore and Nizamuddin Auliya work with us, it is a task we ought to strive for." Gandhi and Azad in Bombay. ■ GETTY IMAGES

and centralising, I have learned about the beauty of the elasticity of human consciousness and merger of multiple faiths and paths from the likes of Ramakrishna Paramahansa. While the doctrine of militant Hindutva is recklessly engaged in an act of 'othering' and stigmatising Muslims, I have learned about love, empathy and listening from M.K. Gandhi's remarkably nuanced engagement with Hinduism. Likewise, while Hindutva intensifies aggression, Mirza's bhajans teach me that love and religiosity are not separate. The character of 'Anandamayee' that Tagore created in his classic novel *Gora* makes me see the enchanting power of maternity, the current that absorbs everything. And hence, I begin to see the hollowness in the assertion of brute masculinity seen in instances of mob lynching by zealots, which ruthlessly denies the possibility of an evolutionary journey towards what Sri Aurobindo regarded as the 'divine consciousness'.

Yajnavalkya's conversation with Maitreyi in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad helps me conceive the depths of spirituality, the quest for the Eternal, and also helps me see the ugliness in a doctrine that reduces religion into mere identity politics, or a weapon for intensifying the narcissistic ego of the 'Hindu nation'. Engagement with the Bhagavad Gita acquires a different meaning. I see the *ethos of niskam karma* (or the spirit of work as an offering without selfish interests) in Gandhi's politico-

spiritual pilgrimage to Noakhali in 1946, not in the calculative Machiavellian urge to build a temple at Ayodhya at the demolished site of the Babri Masjid. Moreover, there is a culture of conversation and argumentation in the broad tradition of Hinduism. While Nachiketa dared to converse with Yama, the proponents of Lokayata did argue with the followers of Vedanta. In a way, it is possible to be a Hindu with the spirit of pluralism and dialogue in our consciousness. Paradoxically, it is possible to be a Hindu, yet be a non-Hindu. This is why the ideology of Hindutva is not in conformity with religiosity as people's inner quest for moving towards a world of love and togetherness.

We are passing through difficult times. First, as the CAA and the National Register of Citizens together indicate, the minority community has further been stigmatised. And in a society with a long history of the tension-ridden relationship between the two communities, the ghettoisation of space and mind has further erected a huge wall of separation. Hence, the danger is that the anger against the CAA might take a communal turn, and it is not impossible for the 'nationalist' media to project it as a conflict between 'patriotic' Hindus and 'problematic' Muslims. From Seelampur in Delhi to Aligarh Muslim University in Uttar Pradesh, these 'Muslim sites' might be immediately projected as 'war zones'. And in a vicious cycle of humiliation and

provocation, the minorities could feel more and more lonely.

A culture of communion

Majoritarian Hindutva is not merely against Muslims; it is no less hostile to those Hindus who think and live differently – while some would be castigated as 'leftists', 'pseudo secularists' and 'urban Naxals', the rest would be regarded as 'effeminate idealists' or 'Gandhian fools'. Therefore, in such a situation, it is important to try to evolve a culture of communion between the two communities, and fight together for a better world. However, the discourse of communalism or a politics based on exclusivist religious identity (and even though majority communalism is immensely destructive, minority communalism is no answer to it) is essentially against this spirit of communion. Likewise, a soulless secularism which fails to deal with the religious/spiritual quest doesn't succeed much in touching people's hearts for inspiring them to create a new moral politics for collective redemption.

In troubled and directionless times, Gandhi could tap the therapeutic power of religiosity and move towards this communion. He could be a Hindu; yet, dialogic, experimental and elastic. In a way, as Nathuram Godse might have thought, he was also a non-Hindu. Likewise, I would imagine that a Muslim with true religiosity is equally eager to resist the attempt by the orthodox clergy or the fundamentalist elements to hijack the religious sphere. He/she ought to be inherently against the Talibanisation of consciousness. Because true religiosity is the art of using the 'form' in order to be formless. Imagine a world where Kabir and Rumi, Gandhi and Maulana Azad, and Tagore and Nizamuddin Auliya work with us, become our educators, and inspire us to head the world through the power of love and understanding. Even though in the age of dystopia it may appear to be impossible, it is a challenging task we ought to strive for. This is precisely the most important *sadhana*, or the meaning of being a 'Hindu' – a seeker who seeks to break the iron cage of Hindutva or, for that matter, any other fundamentalist doctrine.

Avijit Pathak is Professor of Sociology at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

FACTWISE

Mixed signals on NRC

PM Modi's remarks on the National Register of Citizens contradict the Home Minister's claims

SUMANT SEN & HARI NARAYAN

Addressing a rally at Delhi's Ramlila Maidan on Sunday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that there have been no discussions on an all-India National Register of Citizens (NRC) since the BJP-led government assumed power in 2014. He said that the NRC was implemented in Assam alone following the Supreme Court's orders. Is this statement accurate?

Claims and counterclaims

On November 20, 2019, in a reply to a question by Rajya Sabha MP Swapnil Dasgupta, Home Minister Amit Shah said that the NRC exercise would be carried out across India. He said that the gazette notification of September 7, 2015, which was made in the case of Assam, would be applicable to the rest of India as well. The Prime Minister's remarks on the "nationwide NRC" therefore contradict what the Home Minister has been saying on the issue.

"Nationwide NRC" also finds a mention in the BJP's 2019 election manifesto. Under the section 'Combating Infiltration', the manifesto clearly mentions that NRC will be implemented across the country. The manifesto says, "There has been a huge change in the cultural and linguistic identity of some areas due to illegal immigration, resulting in an adverse impact on local people's livelihood and employment. We will expeditiously complete the National Register of Citizens process in these areas on priority. In future we will implement the NRC in a phased manner in other parts of the country".

The Prime Minister also denied the existence of detention centres in India. In response to a question by Md. Nadimul Haque in the Rajya Sabha on December 11, 2019, the Minister of State for Home Affairs, Nitaynand Rai, said that the Central government had circulated a document titled Model Detention/Holding Centre Manual to all State and Union Territories on January 9, 2019. He also revealed in another answer in the House that, as on November 22, 2019, Assam already had six functioning detention centres with 988 foreign

ers lodged in them.

In response to Mr. Haque, Mr. Rai also said that "detention centres are set up by State Governments/Union Territory Administration (UTs) as per requirement to detain illegal migrants or convicted foreigners pending deportation to their native country. Instructions have been issued to all State Governments/UTs from time to time for setting up the detention centres... and [States/UTs] will not require any specific approval from the [MHA] for setting up of such detention centres". He also said that the government has approved a detention centre at Goalpara in Assam at a budget of ₹46.5 crore.

While referring to opposition among a section of the political class to the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, Mr. Modi said, "The very people opposing citizenship rights to refugees had supported in 2004 a move to deprive Jammu and Kashmir's women of rights if they married someone outside the State." His reference was perhaps to the Jammu and Kashmir Permanent Residents (Disqualification) Bill, 2004. This contentious issue was adjudicated upon by the J&K High Court in 2002 in *State and others v. Dr Susheela Sawhney*. In that judgment the court said that "a daughter of a permanent resident marrying a non permanent resident will not lose the status of permanent resident of the state of Jammu and Kashmir".

The Peoples Democratic Party, which was in a coalition government with the Congress in 2004, brought the said Bill to overturn the decision. The Bill passed 47-34 in the Lower House in the then State of J&K. However, partly due to opposition by the Congress, it lapsed in the Upper House. Peerzada Muhammad Sayeed, the Congress chief for J&K, was reported to have said: "There are thousands of students studying in various States and some have married there. If we enact this law it would create problems for them. Legally and morally, the Congress will not be part of any Bill which is anti-women".

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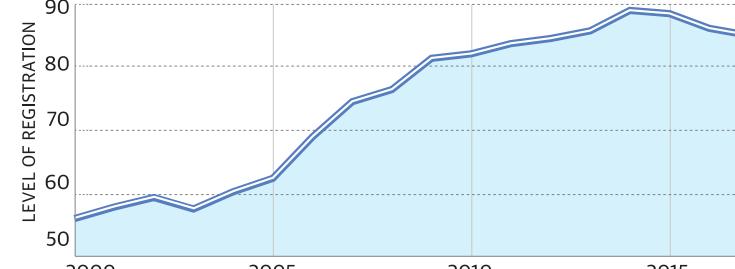


DATA POINT

Burden of proof

According to an official Q and A*, "citizenship can be proved by any documents related to date & place of birth." Documents are "likely to include voter cards, passports, Aadhaar, birth certificates, school leaving certificates, etc." An analysis of the coverage levels of these documents shows that not everyone who is eligible for a particular document possesses it. By Vignesh Radhakrishnan

Birth certificate | In 2000, only 56% of newborns were registered. In the years prior to that, the share of registered births was much lower. While it has gone up since, even as of 2017 at least 15% births were unregistered



Passport | As on December 2018, only 7.96 crore citizens held valid passports (only 5.8% of the population at that time). Aadhaar is accepted as proof of address and photo identity for passport applications

Bank account | As of 2017, 80% of the adult population had access to bank accounts. Aadhaar can be used to open a bank account

* Q & A ON NRC (NATIONAL REGISTER OF CITIZENS) RELEASED BY PIB.
SOURCE: CIVIL REGISTRATION SYSTEM, MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, UIDAI, RESERVE BANK OF INDIA, ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA, MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

FROM THE READERS' EDITOR

Towards a non-toxic news environment

Readers are invited to give their views on the changes in the news industry over the last two decades



A.S. PANNEERSELVAN

numerous reports titled "Journalism is not a crime" published by different organisations such as UNESCO, Amnesty International, and Reporters without Borders. How I wish those in the executive, the judiciary and the legislature would read these reports!

Changes in a digital world

Readers are an integral part of the news media's struggle for its independence, autonomy and sustainability. Credible information remains not only the bedrock of a vibrant democracy but also helps it differentiate itself from a mobocracy that is fed by shrill rhetoric. News organisations need to come up with viable strategies to deal with the digital environment. One of the finest news design experts in the world, Mario Garcia, has spelt out what 2020 holds for the news industry. The crucial four points of his reading are: "It's a mobile-first world for the audience. It's an opportune time to become more aggressive about monetizing content. It's time to stop romanticizing the print product – give it its place, but not at the head of the table. It's not too late to become serious about the impact of audio. Start that podcast now!"

It is evident that journalistic values, principles and best practices should guide the information landscape. We cannot permit trend-driven algorithms to shape the generation and the dissemination of information. Former publisher of *The Wall Street Journal*, L. Gordon Crovitz, rightly says that even to fight disinformation and misinformation we need journalism, not secret algorithms. "Watching Silicon Valley exercise news judgment has been like watching Walter Cronkite try to write code in Python," he writes.

I would like to know what readers think about the changes in the news industry over the first two decades of this century. What are the changes you like? What are the changes you want this newspaper to discard? Craig Newmark, whose charities fund trustworthy journalism and the information ecosystem, drew our attention to the spread of the 'truth sandwich' in American journalism. This means that a lie is sandwiched between the truth and a fact-check, as a means to confront disinformation. Do we need such a system in India? Over the next two weeks, I will collate readers' reflections in order to devise a method to keep our news environment free from toxicity.

readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

The Hindu

FROM THE ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO DECEMBER 23, 1969

Condemnation of Stalin

The Soviet Communist Party to-day [December 27, Moscow] marked the 90th birth anniversary of Stalin by formally reiterating condemnation of him originally made under the leadership of ousted party chief Nikita Khrushchev. It was the first time the late dictator's birthday had been marked since the 80th anniversary in 1959, when Mr. Khrushchev was in power. A 750-word unsigned editorial today in the main party newspaper Pravda bearing all the stamps of an official party statement, was virtually identical in its assessment of Stalin to a similar editorial in 1959, which was twice the length. Though Stalin had made a great contribution in the ideological-political battle with the enemies of Leninism he had made "theoretical and political mistakes which took on a serious character in the last period of his life", the editorial said.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO DEC. 23, 1919.

Ireland and Home Rule.
(From an Editorial)

It is not without reason that the London Times has achieved an unrivalled position in the newspaper press of England. The Times never fails to speak out boldly and convincingly on the abuses and blunders of the Government when dealing with great questions of policy or procedure. It is no respecter of persons or powers when injustice, evasion, force or partiality characterize the powers that be in their action towards public matters, and domestic or foreign relations; and this policy of fearless and just criticism has never been more evident than in regard to the English Government actions in Ireland, India, and Egypt - the three countries that are making a gallant, if so far ineffectual, struggle for political emancipation. Only the other day we cited the opinion of the Times on the Dyer atrocities in the Punjab, and Egypt and its concerns have been generously treated; but with regard to Ireland the "Thunderer" has recently condemned in most emphatic language, the shilly-shallying, the delay, the evasions the general policy with regard to the treatment of Irish claims and aspirations. Lord French, however capable as a military officer, is certainly no statesman, and his drastic action in trying to suppress and eradicate Sinn Fein on the eve of an announcement granting a substantial measure of home rule to Ireland, the Times declares to be not only futile but irreconcilable.

FROM PAGE ONE

Pan-India NRC was never on the table: PM

"...lies are being peddled...if not anything else, at least value the education you've received. At least read what this CAA and NRC are once. You are educated people. I appeal to the youth of the country: please read these. And I want to tell those who still have any doubts that these rumours of detention centres being spread by the Congress and Urban Naxals are completely false, malicious and full of unholly intentions to destroy this country. *Yeh jhooth hai, jhooth hai, jhooth hai* (This a lie, a lie, a lie)," he said.

The Muslims who belong to the soil of India, the Prime Minister added, had "nothing to do" with either the CAA or the NRC; nor, he said, were these anti-poor.

"The Muslims...whose an-



Prime Minister Modi at Ramlila Maidan in New Delhi on Sunday.

cestors are the children of *Maa Bharti* (Mother India) have nothing to do with both the CAA and the NRC. The Muslims of the country are neither being sent to detention centres nor is there a detention centre in India...this is a white lie. This is a bad-intentioned game. This is an unholy game," he said.

The overall voter turnout in this Assembly election was estimated at 65.23% as against 66.53% in 2014. The counting will decide victors among 1,216 candidates including 127 women for the

Tense wait for Jharkhand result

BJP set 65-seat target, but exit polls give marginal edge to JMM-Congress alliance

SATYASUNDAR BARIK
RANCHI

Results of the Jharkhand Assembly election, held in five phases, will be declared on Monday with the ruling BJP finding itself in a spot of bother to retain power in the mineral-rich State.

Against the backdrop of the exit polls giving a marginal advantage to the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha-led Opposition alliance in a close contest, counting will take place across 24 districts. The postal ballots will be counted first and then the EVMs will be brought in. Paper slips generated by the VVPATs will also be counted.

The overall voter turnout in this Assembly election was estimated at 65.23% as against 66.53% in 2014. The counting will decide victors among 1,216 candidates including 127 women for the



Long process: The Jharkhand Assembly election was held in five phases. ■ BISWARANJAN ROUT

81-member House.

The stakes are high for the BJP in Jharkhand, especially after the Maharashtra setback, where the saffron party could not form the government. The party had launched the campaign with the tag line *Abki bar, 65 par*, aspiring to win 65 seats. But going by the exit poll results, the target looks improbable.

The BJP had won 37 seats in the outgoing Assembly.

The India Today-Axis My India survey, which has been

close to the final figures in the last few exit polls, has even predicted the return of the JMM-Congress alliance to power whereas others have forecast a close finish.

Chief Minister Raghubar Das, who is the first to com-

plete the five-year term in the State, is keeping his fingers crossed for his own win from Jamshedpur (East) and the party's victory in the State. It is believed that his former Cabinet colleague, Saryu Rai, and Congress candidate Gourav Vallabh have given a tough fight.

All eyes will be on the poll outcome in two constituencies, Dumka and Barhait, from where Hemant Soren, the alliance's chief ministerial candidate, has fought.

The JMM-Congress alliance has pinned hopes in 18 seats in Santhal Pargana, a traditional stronghold of the regional party.

In the event of a hung Assembly, smaller regional parties like the All Jharkhand Students Union and Jharkhand Vikas Morcha (Prajatantrik) are likely to play crucial roles.

Shah announced NRC in Parliament: Congress PM contradicting HM, says Surjewala

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A.K. Antony accused the government of coming up with the CAA and the NRC to divert attention from his government's abject failure, unprecedented unemployment and collapse of economy.

"It's Modi who is telling lies," he said.

Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala too targeted the government on Twitter by asking: "Two things need to be answered: Is the Prime Minister and Home Minister not on same page? Is there a rift between the party and the government? Or is that both together are making a fool of people?"

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee too said the Prime Minister was contradicting his Home Minister.

Senior Congress leader

Cong. hopes to ride the youth wave

Priyanka, Rahul try to connect with protesters; party CMs show no such intent

SANDEEP PHUKAN
NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi took to Twitter on Sunday to reach out to the youth and accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of "destroying their future".

"Dear Youth of India, Modi and Shah have destroyed your future. They can't face your anger over the lack of jobs and damage they've done to the economy. That's why they are dividing our beloved India and hiding behind hate. We can only defeat them by responding with love towards every Indian," Mr. Gandhi tweeted.

The spontaneous protests by students against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the proposed National Register of Citizens (NRC) across the country has offered an opportunity for the Opposition to reach out to the youth who have decisively voted in favour of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his party in the past two Lok Sabha elections.

Youth voter base

In the 2014 Lok Sabha election, Election Commission data showed that of 81.5 crore voters, 2.3 crore were in the 18-19 age group. And this constituency of first-time voters is believed to have played a crucial role in powering the BJP to the Centre.

Congress leaders seem to have started a calibrated campaign to reclaim this segment. Last Friday, party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, along with her teenage daughter, joined a group of student protesters at Delhi's India Gate.

Congress president Sonia Gandhi, too, has taken up the issue of action against students of Jamia Millia Islamia by the Delhi Police and petitioned President Ram Nath Kovind on December 17 to intervene. "We are anguished at the manner in which the police have dealt



Catch 'em young: Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi joined a group of student protesters at India Gate last Friday. ■ PTI

with peaceful demonstrations across India. We have the example in Delhi where the police entered the Jamia Women's Hostel and dragged women students out," Ms. Gandhi had said after meeting the President.

But many have questioned if the Congress's response has been somewhat muted and why Chief Ministers of the party-ruled States such as Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan or Punjab have not taken to the streets to mobilise people as done by Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

Former party chief Rahul Gandhi too was missing from the action as he was away in

South Korea for a programme of the Overseas Congress.

Veterans said the student and youth wing of the Congress failed to give leadership to the current protests as they did during the Mandal Commission agitation against the V.P. Singh government in 1990-91.

"It is the Congress that was at the forefront against the CAA in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. The Congress is also part of the people's protests but we don't want to hijack them. It's not about politics but about saving the Constitution," former Union Minister Manish Tewari told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Tewari said the current protests were a manifestation of the latent anger against the Modi government for not fulfilling election promises such as creating 10 crore jobs in five years and economic progress. And that is a development his party is mindful of as it prepares to take on the Union government.

"The CAA protests have provided the students a platform to articulate this larger anger under the banner of Save the Constitution campaign," he said.

Days after his visit to Washington, External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar met with Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif for a meeting of the 19th India-Iran joint commission, including talks on the Chabahar port, during a visit that could see him dealing with concerns of Indian expatriates over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act as well.

In a tweet after the meeting on Sunday, Mr. Zarif said they had "excellent discussions on closer bilateral relations and regional and global issues affecting our respective countries," adding that India-Iran ties are "ancient, historic and unbreakable".

Productive meeting

Mr. Jaishankar said the meeting with Mr. Zarif and the Iranian delegation had been "very productive". "[We] reviewed the entire gamut of our cooperation [and] agreed on accelerating our Chabahar project," he said in a tweet.



Iran Foreign Minister Javad Zarif welcoming his Indian counterpart S. Jaishankar in Tehran on Sunday.

The meeting of the two ministers was the first since last month, when Mr. Zarif had told a group of visiting Indian journalists that he was "disappointed" that India had allowed itself to be "bullied" by the United States and stopped all oil imports from Iran. Speaking in Delhi, Iran's Ambassador Ali Cheghemi had earlier suggested that India's adherence to U.S. sanctions was also affecting Chabahar port development plans.

In Washington last week, however, a senior U.S. official made it clear that it would continue its "narrow exemption" to India to develop the Chabahar port, re-

cognising its role as "as a lifeline to Afghanistan in terms for India to be able to export humanitarian supplies and potentially helping Afghanistan diversify its export opportunities."

Subsequently, diplomats from India, Iran and Afghanistan met in Delhi on Friday and discussed several new initiatives for the trilateral project at Chabahar.

Citizenship Act flagged

Meanwhile, the *Mehr* news agency reported that a "number of Indian businesspersons, professionals, university and seminary students and scholars living in Iran" sought a meeting with Mr. Jaishankar to discuss protests in India.

MEA officials did not respond to a query about whether the groups had been granted a meeting with Mr. Jaishankar, or if the CAA had come up during his talks with the Iranian leadership. Mr. Jaishankar is expected to meet with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani before he leaves Tehran on Monday and travel next to Oman for bilateral talks.

OIC voices concern, flags impact of CAA

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The 57-member Organisation for Islamic Cooperation (OIC) issued a statement of "concern" on Sunday, criticising the government over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, and the Babri Masjid verdict of the Supreme Court.

In a statement, the general secretariat of the Jeddah-based OIC, which is led by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates, said it was closely following "recent developments affecting [the] Muslim minority in India."

"[The OIC] reiterates its call to ensure the safety of the Muslim minority and the protection of Islamic holy places in India," the statement said, invoking the United Nations charter

against discrimination. "In this regard, any action, contrary to these principles and obligations, may lead to further tensions and may have serious implications on peace and security across the region," it read. The statement comes close on the heels of criticism from another grouping of Islamic nations at the "Kuala Lumpur summit".

Mixed response to Assam land plan

It is aimed at indigenous groups

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

A bid by the Assam government to assuage tensions over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) with a proposed legislation to protect the land rights of indigenous communities, has been received with caution.

The move to "safeguard" Assamese culture and land rights is seen as a ploy to put an end to the anti-CAA protests.

Tribal and other indigenous groups perceived to benefit from the slew of sops, such as upgraded councils and financial packages, have welcomed the decisions but said the government needs to first clarify how it plans to implement the plan in view of demographic complications.

"The plan for creating a council for us is appreciated. But we are unaware of the concept and the area to be covered," said Hitesh Barman, leader of the All Assam Koch-Rajbongshi Students' Union.

AASU response

"We would have been happier had the government decided to ask the Centre to repeal CAA and grant ST status to six communities," said Lurinjyoti Gogoi, general secretary of the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) that has been spearheading the movement against the new

CAA, NRC are India's internal issues: Dhaka

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DHAKA

The Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) are India's internal issues, Bangladesh Foreign Minister A.K. Abdul Momen has said. But he is worried that any "uncertainty" in India is likely to affect its neighbours.

As the protests continue nationwide against the CAA, Mr. Momen hopes the situation will "cool down".

"The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill [which has become an Act] and the NRC are India's internal issues. The Indian government has assured us again and again that these are the domestic issues. They are doing it because of legal and other reasons," he told PTI here. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had told his counterpart Sheikh Hasina that under no circumstances would it affect Bangladesh, he said.

Mr. Momen said his country trusted India. However, he said, "We are the no.1 friend of India. So, if there is uncertainty in India, it is likely to affect its neighbours. When there was an economic downturn in the U.S., it affected many countries... That is worrisome. We hope the situation will cool down and India can get out of it... It is their internal issue. They should deal with it."



A sea of protest: Thousands taking out a rally through Dharavi on Sunday. ■ AADESH CHOWDHARY

Huge turnout at anti-CAA protests across Mumbai

Rallies were taken out in various localities and Thane

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

Several thousand people on Sunday marched through Dharavi in Mumbai in protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the December 15 police action against Jamia Millia Islamia students.

The protest was held on 90-foot road in Dharavi and saw participants holding placards against the CAA and the proposed National Register of Citizens exercise that some BJP leaders have been claiming would be held nationwide.

Similar protests were held at Malvani in the northern suburb of Malad where

some protesters shouted slogans in favour of the Mumbai police whose efficiency ensured that a massive rally on Thursday at August Kranti Maidan went off without a hitch.

On the other hand, in Ghatkopar, a BJP stronghold, several people joined a pro-CAA rally, with participants hailing the Narendra Modi government for the Act.

In the suburb of Thane, young and old alike from all communities came together against the CAA, the proposed NRC and police brutality against protesters.

As many as 250 people gathered at the Hazuri Darwaza

gah in Thane (West) to take part in the peaceful protest. College students, working professionals and residents, along with local leaders and religious elders raised slogans and displayed placards. The Wagle Estate police had imposed strict restrictions as protesters thronged the narrow lanes outside the dargah.

"Those who had no part in building the country are now trying to divide it. But it is in the very character of this country to stand united. I must applaud all the students gathered here," Dalit leader and activist Sambhaji Bhagat said.

(With inputs from PTI)

Priyanka demands release of party leader

Sadaf Jafar was arrested by U.P. police

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Sunday demanded the immediate release of party spokesperson Sadaf Jafar, the only woman activist arrested by the Uttar Pradesh police following the Lucknow violence over the Citizenship Amendment Act.

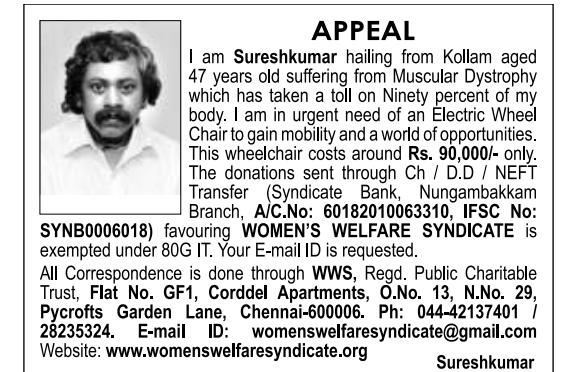
"Our female activist Sadaf Zafar was asking the police to catch the miscreants. Instead, the U.P. police beat her up and arrested her. She is the mother of two young children. This is sheer excess. Such repression is unacceptable," tweeted Ms. Vadra in Hindi, and added, "Immediately release our woman party worker."

Ms. Jafar was arrested on December 19 along with 150 others when the protests against the CAA in Lucknow turned violent. At that moment, she was streaming a live video on Facebook Live,

and could be heard asking the police to act against stone pelters. The Uttar Pradesh police have charged her with serious offences under the Indian Penal Code, including inciting violence and damaging public property.

Ms. Jafar's arrest came to light after her sister Naheed Varma wrote a Facebook post. "My sister Sadaf has been arrested yesterday from Parivartan Chowk. Totally uncalled for and cowardly action of the police! They have slapped charges like sabotage and attempt to murder on her while she was reporting live on how police was complicit in sabotage at the dharna!" she wrote on Friday.

U.P. Congress leader Rajiv Tyagi told *The Hindu* that the party would offer all possible assistance to Ms. Jafar.



APPEAL
I am Sureshkumar hailing from Kollam aged 47 years old suffering from Muscular Dystrophy which has taken a toll on Ninety percent of my body. I am in urgent need of an Electric Wheel Chair to gain mobility and a world of

INTERVIEW | SHAKTIKANTA DAS

'Counter-cyclical steps, structural reforms needed to tackle slowdown'

We are watchful of the evolving food inflation situation — at this point it looks transient. But we need some time to confirm that, says RBI Governor

RAGHUVIR SRINIVASAN
VIKAS DHOOT
MANOJIT SAHA

As he steps into his second year as Reserve Bank of India Governor, Shaktikanta Das says the inflation targeting process is working well, and stresses that his priority will be to boost growth and resolve financial sector issues.

It is over three years now since the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) was first constituted. The term of the present committee will end in 2021. How has been the experience with it?

■ On the whole, the inflation targeting has worked well, in many senses. Number one, it is a committee-based approach, so more minds are going into decision-making. There are three external experts which bring in outside perspective. This definitely improves the quality of decision-making and the outcome or final decision itself.

Since the time the MPC has been in place, by and large, inflation has remained within the target. Of course, one can argue that headline inflation is impacted by so many factors to which RBI has no influence. But at the end of the day, inflation has remained around 4% over the last three years so that the targets have been maintained. Without a target, we had a situation about five or six years ago when CPI [consumer price index] inflation was 10%.

Also the minutes of the MPC meeting are also published which brings in a greater transparency to the process of decision-making. The minutes also reflect the thinking of each member.

That brings in lot of transparency. So looking back, I think the inflation targeting framework has worked well.

But has inflation targeting turned out to be detrimental for growth?

■ The provision in the RBI Act is very clear. It is to maintain price stability, keeping in mind the objective of growth. Therefore, the prime target is inflation. You have to suitably factor in the growth aspect also. Therefore, there is scope to give due weightage to growth also.

Do you think the target should be core inflation rather than the headline CPI inflation?

■ We are still about little less than two years away from the five year of current inflation targeting regime. I think it is too early to comment on that. The present scheme is going very well. As we go closer to the date, the government will take a view on the inflation target for next five years. Of course, the RBI will be suitably consulted by the government. So far it looks to have worked quite well.

What matters more for the common man of our country is the food inflation. There-

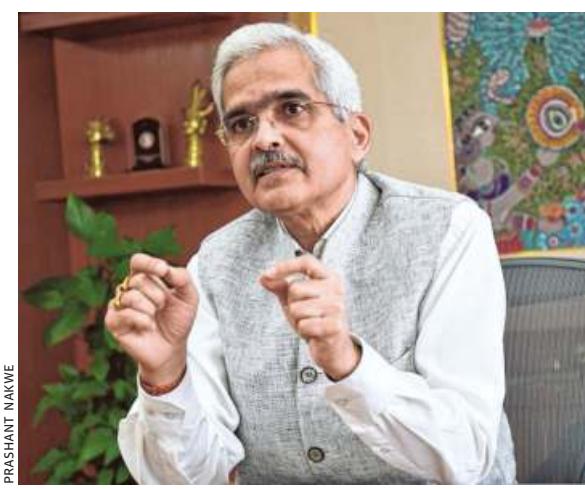
fore, you cannot keep it away; the weightage of which is 47.48% in the overall CPI basket. The headline inflation is something that everybody understands. If you say, core inflation, that is excluding food and fuel, you are entering into complications which will not have the kind of clarity and the straightforwardness of the headline number.

Are you concerned where inflation is going currently, in the immediate short term, especially food inflation?

■ Broadly, we have articulated that it is a matter which needs to be closely monitored, that is, the food inflation. We have to be watchful of the evolving situation and evolving numbers. But at this point in time, it also looks transient. And going forward, it should come down. But we need some time to watch that it is indeed transient.

Despite all that the RBI has done, monetary transmission has been unsatisfactory. What are the options before you now?

■ First thing is transmission does take time. Two, the system liquidity which was in deficit till the end of May, is in surplus from June 1 onwards and hugely surplus. Every day, we are absorbing ₹ two-and-a-half lakh crore. So we have kept the system in comfortable and surplus liquidity. The third thing is that the external benchmark



PRASHANT NAKRA

Without getting into categorisation of the current slowdown, the focus should be on steps needed by fiscal and monetary authorities

[for loan pricing] which we had introduced from October 1. Going forward, the impact of external benchmark will be felt more and more.

Do you think there are structural issues also behind the growth slowdown?

■ We have said in our annual report that it would appear that the slowdown is cyclical. However, there are structural factors also. Without getting into categorisation of the current slowdown, the focus should be on what steps need to be taken by the fiscal and monetary authorities. There has to be some countercyclical steps. There will have to be structural reforms which have been undertaken and the process needs to be continued.

RBI has identified 50 large NBFCs which are closely monitored. Out of the 50, how many are stressed. Are you going to increase the number?



Post the PMC Bank failure and the PNB scam, the question that arises is how did they happen when the regulator does regular

inspections and also has a representative on the board? How did these escape the attention of the regulators?

■ In this case of the urban cooperative bank, there was no RBI representative on the board. Secondly, it is a fraud. What RBI does is supervision. RBI does not do any audit, RBI does not do any investigation. If there is a fraud, that is investigated by the law enforcement agencies. Supervision is done on the basis of certified records by the bank's management. When that is produced before the RBI supervision team, there is no reason why the RBI should doubt its correctness.

Having said that, and not related to the PMC Bank crisis, even well before the PMC Bank crisis, in our central board meeting it was decided to set up a separate department of supervision and a department of regulation.

That was because there was lot of interconnectedness between banks, NBFCs, and the monetisation. So only when we have clarity with regard to the actual realisable value of all these assets which I have referred to, we will be able to decide on a next step.

Along with that, we have said we will also have a college of supervision to provide better skill to our officers. We are creating a separate cadre for supervision officers. We are also going to use technology, data analytics, in a big way. Plus we are also internally setting up a research and analysis wing within the department of supervision which will correlate and correlate all the data, see the interconnectedness and will be able to

comprehensively look at the banking structure.

What is the road ahead for PMC Bank? Is RBI open for merging it with another bank?

■ There is a forensic audit which is under way. We will get the report may be in another fortnight. PMC Bank, with the help of outside valuers, they are assessing the realisable value of the assets which are securitised by the borrower group. The other assets, including land assets, the realisable value of that asset is also been assessed. So with the permission of the court, the effort is to monetise those assets and put that money into the bank.

For that we have formed a coordination mechanism consisting of senior officer from Economic Offences Wing, the Enforcement Directorate, RBI and the administrator of the PMC Bank to quicken the process of the monetisation. So only when we have clarity with regard to the actual realisable value of all these assets which I have referred to, we will be able to decide on a next step.

■ We issued those statements because of unnecessary rumours floating in the market, various names were floating saying this bank is in problem. It was creating unnecessary, unjustified uncertainties in the market. So as the regulator of banks, we thought it was necessary that we give a clear message that the banking system is safe.

Deposit insurance is a matter which the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation will decide. The matter is under review in DICGC.

the government which is under consideration. We have tried to strengthen the regulation.

What will be your immediate priority as you enter the second year?

■ For a central bank, it is a constantly evolving situation. At this point in time our priority would be growth and financial sector issues like the NPA resolution in the banks, and our expectation is that the resolution process become even faster. That is one; second is the NBFC sector which we are monitoring. Third is carrying out necessary changes in the regulation of urban cooperative banks.

In the recent past, couple of times, the RBI has had to publicly state that the health of the banking system is fine post the PMC Bank crisis. Do you find a case to revisit the deposit insurance limit?

■ We issued those statements because of unnecessary rumours floating in the market, various names were floating saying this bank is in problem. It was creating unnecessary, unjustified uncertainties in the market. So as the regulator of banks, we thought it was necessary that we give a clear message that the banking system is safe.

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IN BRIEF



Trinamool team detained at U.P. airport

Police surrounded the aircraft on the tarmac and took them to an undisclosed location in the terminal

SOBHANA K. NAIR
NEW DELHI

In high drama at the Lucknow airport on Sunday, a Trinamool delegation, led by former Union Minister Dinesh Trivedi, was whisked away from the aircraft and detained for hours at an undisclosed location at the airport. The team had to return by an 8.30 p.m. flight without fulfilling its plan to visit the families of those killed in the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in Uttar Pradesh.

Mr. Trivedi drew parallels with the treatment of Indians during British rule. He said the team was detained without any provocation. The delegation included Rajya Sabha members Nadimul Haque and Abir Ranjan Biswas and Lok Sabha member Pratima Mondal.

The Uttar Pradesh police were waiting on the tarmac

for the IndiGo flight carrying the delegation. It surrounded the aircraft the moment it landed around 2 p.m. Mr. Trivedi said the policemen got on the aircraft to detain the four leaders. When they resisted and forced their way to the passenger bus, the police off-loaded the other passengers. The bus carry-



Tight vigil: Security personnel taking out a flag march in Lucknow on Saturday. ■ AP

ing the leaders and policemen then drove off to an undisclosed location within the airport.

They were confined there without even being allowed to step into the terminal building.

"Are we in 1947 or is it 2019? The BJP government led by Yogi Adityanath is

scared of democracy. The U.P. administration has taken lessons from the pages of the British Raj. I am ashamed that our own policemen are behaving in this manner with public representatives," Mr. Trivedi told *The Hindu* over phone from the airport.

He said that Sunday's inci-

dent reminded him of his visit with the rest of the Opposition team on August 24 to Srinagar where they were detained at the airport and asked to return immediately.

He said the Trinamool leaders were not in Lucknow and the deaths were due to gunshot injuries fired by non-prohibited weapons which are not used by the police.

"The way we were manhandled and off-loaded from the aircraft the rest of the passengers would be thinking that we are terrorists," he added. The delegation has not been told under what law or rule they have been detained.

"All the government has to do is to read the Constituent Assembly debate about what Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan said on the citizenship issue. And forget about the Constitution, this kind of behaviour is against the spirit of Hinduism which is an inclusive religion," Mr. Trivedi added.

"All the government has to do is to read the Constituent Assembly debate about what Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan said on the citizenship issue. And forget about the Constitution, this kind of behaviour is against the spirit of Hinduism which is an inclusive religion," Mr. Trivedi added.

He said violence was reported from only "one-fourth of the State comprising 16 or 17 districts".

He said that despite the Internet clampdown and prohibitory orders, a huge mobilisation was seen as people used offline mobile-based applications.

Fifteen people were killed in Uttar Pradesh in the past three days, the highest in the country so far, in clashes with the police as many people came out in protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the proposed National Register of Citizens (NRC).

Post-mortem report

"All these deaths took place due to gunshot injuries from non-prohibited weapons. The police do not use them. The post-mortem report shows that injuries were not inflicted by police weapons but show that country-made pistols were used. It is not like that these agitators were without any weapons, they had illegal weapons and that is how we recovered 647 empty cartridges from these areas," Mr. Singh said, adding that 62 police personnel also received bullet wounds.

He said children as young as 12 and a large number of women joined the agitation despite prohibitory orders. "Despite our instructions and advisory these people assembled and resorted to violence. We did not show any forcible action on our part, we only wanted to chase them away...there

Deaths caused by arms of protesters: U.P. DGP

He denies police hand in killings

VIAJITA SINGH
NEW DELHI

+

Uttar Pradesh Director-General of Police O.P. Singh has said that no one was killed in police firing and the deaths were due to gunshot injuries fired by non-prohibited weapons which are not used by the police.

Mr. Singh said the death toll so far in the State was 15.

Mr. Singh told *The Hindu* that the entire agitation in the State became "spontaneous and leaderless" and was "infiltrated by outsiders and anti-social elements".

He said violence was reported from only "one-fourth of the State comprising 16 or 17 districts".

He said that despite the Internet clampdown and prohibitory orders, a huge mobilisation was seen as people used offline mobile-based applications.

Asked whether the police brutality as alleged by locals and visible on various video clips where policemen were seen firing would be investigated, Mr. Singh said, "In such a situation if there are lapses on the part of the police, we will certainly enquire but keep in mind we also sacrificed with injury to our men. They braved violent agitation, they faced violent mob with stone pelters but stuck to the ground. I compliment my policemen that they showed such restraint."

He said the violence was supported by certain political parties and NGOs and they have evidence against them.

Alleges conspiracy

"The whole show was captured by people who did not believe in the democratic values. They wanted to create problems for the State and the administration; for them violence was important and it smacks of a conspiracy. It was given support by political parties, NGOs we have evidence. They played a prominent role. We are collecting evidence. We have definite information that Popular Front of India (PFI) was involved, we arrested few of their office-bearers," he said.

While defending the police action in Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) on December 15, Mr. Singh said they entered the campus as they were called in by the university authorities.

Songs, slogans and speeches mark anti-CAA stir

Protesters in Chennai accuse BJP-led Centre of drafting laws that would 'destroy' minorities

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Fiery speeches, Bharathiyan songs and rap and folk music by the band Casteless Collective marked the protests held in the city on Sunday by different groups against the controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens. The first protest of the day was by Muslims from 30 mosques in Triplicane and members of a few temples. Chants of *Hindustan Zindabad, Sare Jahan Se Accha, Inquilab Zindabad* and *Allahu Akbar* resonated through the air, as more than 500 protesters carrying Indian flags gathered at Chepauk.

Unmindful of the heat, the young, the old, the visually-challenged, women and even children took part in the protest, which started at 11 a.m. They occupied one side of Wallajah Road leading to the beach, while the other side was open to traffic. Three MTC buses were kept on stand-by to ferry the prot-

esters, in case of arrests. "This is a protest to condemn the CAA and ask the government to scrap it. Instead of introducing welfare schemes or improving the economy, the ruling BJP government [at the Centre] has been enacting laws to destroy Muslims, Dalits and other minorities," said M.H. Peer Mohammed, a protester.

Accusing the AIADMK govern-

ment of not treating the Muslim community properly, he said, "When many other States have refused to implement the Act, it is sad that the Tamil Nadu government is maintaining silence on the issue. Even now, they can withdraw it. The Prime Minister should address the public and give some clarity regarding the Act."

Many of the protesters argued that there was no need for them to prove that they belonged to India. "This is our motherland too. A large number of people from our community have fought for the country's Independence.

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Ghani set for second term in Afghanistan

Incumbent President wins 50.64% of the votes against 39.52% by rival Abdullah, after preliminary results

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

KABUL

Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani appeared to have secured a second term, preliminary polling results showed on Sunday, but his main rival immediately vowed to challenge the tally.

After months of political limbo and allegations of fraud and corruption in the September 28 poll, Afghanistan's Independent Election Commission (IEC) said Mr. Ghani won 50.64% of the votes.

If it holds, the result is enough for Mr. Ghani to avoid a run-off. He easily beat his top challenger, Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, who scored 39.52%.

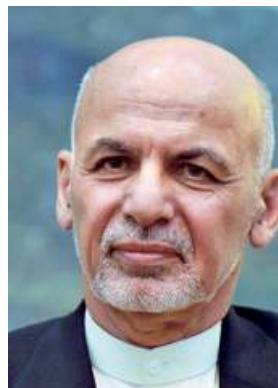
In a televised address, a jubilant Mr. Ghani said the election results were a "victory" for all of Afghanistan. "A government worthy of this great nation will be built," Mr. Ghani said.

Candidates now have three days to file any complaints before final results are announced, probably within weeks. Mr. Abdullah said he would contest the vote.

"The election commission



Making it public: Hawa Alam Nuristani, head of the Independent Election Commission, announcing the preliminary results on Sunday, and, right, incumbent President Ashraf Ghani. • AFP



has unfortunately sided with the fraudsters," Mr. Abdullah said in a televised address, when he also demanded a recount in provinces across Afghanistan. "There is no doubt that we are the winners of the election based on the clean votes of the people," he added.

Mr. Abdullah lost to Mr. Ghani in 2014 in a divisive election that saw the U.S. intervene to broker an awkward power-sharing deal between the two rivals.

US Ambassador to Afghanistan John Bass said it was vital the full electoral process plays out. "It's im-

portant for all Afghans to remember: these results are preliminary. Many steps remain before final election results are certified, to ensure the Afghan people have confidence in the results," Mr. Bass wrote on Twitter.

Observers and candidates have blasted the IEC over its handling of the count and its repeated disregard of the electoral calendar. The Transparent Electoral Foundation of Afghanistan, an independent watchdog, said the IEC needs to share all information about how it reached its numbers and break down data by polling centre.

IEC chairwoman Hawa Alam Nuristani said her agency acted with "honesty, loyalty, responsibility and faithfulness". "We respected every single vote because we wanted democracy to endure," she said.

Low turnout
The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), which provided support to electoral authorities, welcomed the announcement of preliminary results and called on the Electoral Complaints Commission to listen carefully to any grievances.

"The ECC has an obliga-

tion to adjudicate any complaints it receives transparently and thoroughly so the election process may conclude in a credible manner," UNAMA head Tadamichi Yamamoto said.

ECC chairwoman Zuhra Bayan Shinwari said candidates and their supporters should wait for final results to be announced. "We are committed to reviewing all the complaints according to the law," she said.

The election was meant to be the cleanest yet in Afghanistan's young democracy. A German firm supplied biometric machines to stop people from voting more than once. But allegations of vote stuffing, illegal balloting and other fraud came almost as soon as the polls had closed.

Nearly one million of the initial 2.7 million votes were purged owing to irregularities, meaning the election saw by far the lowest turnout of any Afghan poll. Ultimately, only 1.8 million votes were counted, a tiny number considering Afghanistan's estimated population of 37 million and a total of 9.6 million registered voters.

Kim discusses bolstering military as deadline looms

N. Korea has sought U.S. concessions by end of December

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

SEOUL

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un discussed strengthening his country's military capability with top military officials, state media reported on Sunday, with Pyongyang's end-of-year deadline for the U.S. to offer concessions approaching.

The North promised an ominous "Christmas gift" earlier this month if Washington does not give ground by the end of December. The denuclearisation process has been largely deadlocked since the collapse of a summit in Hanoi at the start of the year.

Pyongyang has carried out a series of static tests at its Sohae rocket facility this month, after a number of weapons launches in recent weeks – some of them described as ballistic missiles by Japan and others. North Korea is banned from carrying out such tests under UN sanctions.

Mr. Kim held an enlarged meeting of the ruling Workers' Party's Central Military



Taking stock: North Korean leader Kim Jong-un speaking during a ruling party meeting. • AP

Commission, for which he serves as Chairman.

There, he "gave analysis and briefing on the complicated internal and external situation... to bolster up the overall armed forces of the country," the North's official KCNA news agency reported.

"Referring to merits and demerits in the recent work of the People's Army and matters to be rapidly overcome", KCNA said, "the Supreme Leader indicated in detail the direction and ways to be maintained" to boost the armed forces.

"Important issues for de-

cisive improvement of the overall national defence and core matters for the sustained and accelerated development of military capability for self-defence," were also discussed, it added.

The report came a day after the nuclear-armed state warned Washington it would "pay dearly" over criticism of its human rights record by a U.S. state department official. A North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesperson said the comments were akin to "pouring oil over burning fire" amid heightened tensions in a statement carried by KCNA.

Hong Kong protesters rally for Uighurs

According to UN, at least 1 million Muslims have been detained in Chinese camps

REUTERS

HONG KONG

Hong Kong riot police pepper sprayed protesters to disperse crowds in the heart of the city's financial district on Sunday after a largely peaceful rally in support of China's ethnic Uighurs turned chaotic.

Dozens of police marched across a public square overlooking Hong Kong's harbour to face off with protesters who hurled glass bottles and rocks at them.

Earlier in the afternoon more than 1,000 people had rallied calmly, waving Uighur flags and posters, as they took part in the latest demonstration in over six months of unrest.

A mixed crowd of young



Show of solidarity: Protesters attending a rally in Hong Kong on Sunday to show support for the Uighur minority. • AFP

nic minority in the north-western region of Xinjiang.

"I think basic freedom and independence should exist for all people, not just for Hong Kong," said a 41-year-old woman surnamed Wong who attended the protest with her husband.

UN experts and activists say at least 1 million Uighurs and members of other largely Muslim minority groups have been detained in camps in Xinjiang since 2017 under a campaign that has been condemned by the United States and other countries.

Beijing says it is providing vocational training to help stamp out separatism and to teach new skills. It denies any mistreatment of Uighurs.

China results in genocide".

The protest comes after footballer Mesut Ozil caused a furore in China after he criticised the country's policies toward the Muslim eth-

FATF puts 150 questions to Pak.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ISLAMABAD

A global watchdog for terror financing has sought more clarifications and data from Pakistan on actions taken by it against madrasas belonging to the banned outfits, weeks after Islamabad submitted a report to the Paris-based body detailing steps taken by the country to curb terrorism and money laundering.

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF), which kept Pa-

kistan on the Grey List for an extended period till February 2020, had warned in October that Islamabad would be put on the Black List if it did not comply with the remaining 22 points in a list of 27 questions. Pakistan submitted a report comprising answers to 22 questions to the FATF on December 6.

In response to the report, the FATF's Joint Group has sent 150 questions to Pakistan, seeking some clarifications, updates and actions

taken against the madrasas belonging to the proscribed outfits. "We did receive a response from the FATF on our compliance report through an email in which they raised a set of 150 questions. Some of them are seeking more data, some clarifications, and most importantly questions related to madrasas and actions taken against them having affiliation with proscribed outfits," The News quoted a top official source as saying.

13 people shot at house party in Chicago

CHICAGO

A shooting early on Sunday at a house party held in honour

of someone who was killed in April left 13 people wounded, four of them critically, the police said. Two people were being questioned, they added. • AP

13 people shot at house party in Chicago

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U.S. President slams House of Representatives Speaker Pelosi

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WEST PALM BEACH

President Donald Trump has complained about House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's delayed transmission of the articles of impeachment to the Senate, which may delay a trial in the GOP-controlled chamber.

"It's so unfair," Mr. Trump said, days after he was impeached by the House, as he spoke at a Conservative student conference. "They are violating the Constitution."

Ms. Pelosi has refused so far to send the articles of impeachment to the Senate, in part to provide more leverage to Democrats in that



Chamber as they seek to negotiate the rules for the trial proceedings. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Democratic leader Chuck Schumer remain at an impasse over whether there will be new witnesses and testimony in the trial.

Still, Mr. Trump is expect-

ed to be acquitted of both charges in the Senate, where Republicans have the majority. Proceedings are expected to begin in January.

Mr. Trump lashed out at the Democrats who supported impeachment, accusing them of trying to overthrow the 2016 election. "They call themselves Democrats, but they really don't believe in democracy," he said.

He lauded House Republicans for remaining in lock-step against impeachment as a few Democrats crossed the aisle to oppose it. "We have to say it was a bipartisan vote," he said. "No Republican went to their side."

The findings of the report – written by a commission created in June by the director general of the group, Eduardo Robles-Gil – spans from the group's founding in 1941 until December 16, 2019.

Mexico church priests abused 175 children

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

MEXICO CITY

At least 175 children were sexually assaulted by priests belonging to an ultra-conservative Mexican branch of the Roman Catholic Church, according to an internal report published on Saturday.

The founder of the Legionaries of Christ, Marcial Maciel, abused as many as 60 children, with a total of 33 priests or deacons acknowledged to have committed sexual assaults against minors since 1941, the document says.

"The vast majority of the victims were adolescent boys between 11 and 16 years old," the statement said, published on ce-roabusos.org, which is supported by the Legionaries of Christ. It notes that 18 of the 33 individuals who committed abuses are still part of the organisation, but says they have been removed from tasks connected to the public or minors.

Officials say Iran wants to install Qusay al-Suhail, who served as Higher Education Minister in the government of Mr. Abdel Mahdi.

"This is exactly what we oppose – Iranian control over our country," said 24-year-old student Houaida.

Thousands protest in Iraq

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

BAGHDAD

Thousands took to the streets in Iraq's capital and across the south Sunday to protest against Iran's king-making influence as the latest deadline for choosing a new Prime Minister loomed.

Anti-government rallies have rocked Baghdad and the Shiite-majority south since October 1, with demonstrators calling for a complete overhaul of a regime they deem corrupt, in-

efficient and overly beholden to Tehran.

"The revolution continues!" shouted one demonstrator at a protest encampment in central Diwaniyah.

Sunday marks the latest deadline – already pushed back twice by President Barham Saleh – for Parliament to choose a new premier to replace Adel Abdul Mahdi, who tendered his administration's resignation last month.

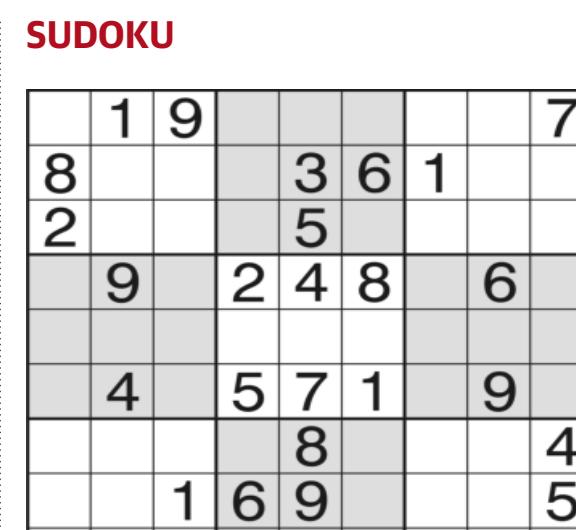
Parliament speaker Mo-

hammed al-Halbussi on Sunday travelled to Arbil, capital of the Kurdish autonomous region in northern Iraq, to discuss who could become the next premier, the presidency there said.

Officials say Iran wants to install Qusay al-Suhail, who served as Higher Education Minister in the government of Mr. Abdel Mahdi.

"This is exactly what we oppose – Iranian control over our country," said 24-year-old student Houaida.

SUDOKU



Solution to puzzle 12812

I	N	A	T	R	I	C	E	B	M	O	V	I	E
N	M	E	O	A	U	O	M						
S	H	A	R	P	E	L	I	N	T	I	C	S	
J	Z	U	T	L	C	C	S						
D	R	O	L	I	R	E	N	T	G	E			
E	N	S	A	A	B	A							
W	I	T	C	H	I	N	G	H	O	R			
A	V	V	E	N	A	X							
F	L	T	T	L	C	F							
R	E	C	O	N	I	L							
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H	I	S	S	A	N	E					</td		

ASK US



VIDYA BALA

Q. I have invested money in an insurance-cum-savings scheme. The payout will be in five years' time. I will be getting a lump sum amount of ₹30 lakh. This money is tax-free, which means that I don't need to pay any tax when I get this money. I am concerned about where to invest it once I get the lump sum. Can it be put in an annuity scheme? Will the income from the same be taxed? Please suggest what else to do with the lump sum and how to save tax on it.

VANDANA SAHAY

A. Your age and whether you need income regularly are the two key inputs we need to know to suggest investment avenues. If you need regular income, you may invest the money in an immediate annuity plan. This will basically provide you deduction of up to ₹1.5 lakh under Section 80CCC (limit clubbed with Section 80C deduction) in the year of investment.

However, the pension/annuity you receive will be fully taxable in your hands in your income slab rate. If you are in the high-tax bracket, this will leave less on the table for you. The returns too are lower than FD options.

If you will be above the age of 60 when you receive this money, then your first option should be the Post Office Senior Citizens' Scheme. This will provide you with a deduction of up to ₹1.5 lakh under Section 80C in the year of investment. The annual interest income (along with all other bank interest income) will be allowed as deduction up to ₹50,000 per annum. The rest of it will all be taxable in your slab rate. But this is the best and safest.

If you are not a senior citizen, then go with a simple Post Office Time Deposit and some bank deposits. Here again, the ₹50,000 per annum deduction for interest income, mentioned earlier, will kick in.

The other option would be for you to go with liquid/short-tenure quality debt funds. If earning income is not a priority and you can let at least a part of the money remain untouched for another five years, then consider investing 20-30% in consistent equity funds and the remaining in the debt options we mentioned above.

Whichever way you look at it, income from an investment will be taxed. It is more efficient in a mutual fund route and less so in a regular deposit route. Do not consider the insurance route simply to avoid tax. Safety, returns (if you are investing for long term) and liquidity should receive priority in investment decisions.

Q. Both my parents are retiring next year from government service and they will be getting about ₹50 lakh (together). Please throw light on some investment plans for a regular monthly income of ₹15,000.

GAGAN

A. The first option for your parents would be the Post Office Senior Citizens' scheme. Together, they can invest up to ₹30 lakh in this option. This will fetch them a comfortable 8.6% per annum.

This will be a quarterly payout, but they can withdraw from the post savings any time after the first quarterly payout. If they are less than 60 years (and more than 55 years), please ensure they invest their retirement proceeds within a month by opening this account.

Such a restriction does not exist if they are 60 years or above. Let them keep around ₹10 lakh in short-term FDs and some amount in savings banks account of large public or private sector banks to meet their emergency needs.

The balance can be invested in LIC's Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana, a pension policy with 8% interest paid out monthly, quarterly, half yearly or annually.

(The author is co-founder, PrimeInvestor.in)

Readers can send in queries on personal finance and investing to moneywise@thehindu.co.in. Our experts who write on personal finance will answer these queries. Moneywise will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund scheme, share or fixed deposit.

LOOSE CHANGE

RAVIKANTH



"Did you buy onions using my card? All day I've been getting calls selling wealth protection plans...!"

Navigating the National Pension System

Do the choices that the NPS offers sound Greek & Latin? With a little help, the system's menu can be used to your advantage

AARATI KRISHNAN

The popularity of the National Pension System (NPS), the market-linked vehicle, has been soaring with investors desperately seeking retirement options. But for a newbie investor, investing in NPS can be very much like visiting a Starbucks outlet for the first time. The scheme offers so many choices that one is unsure where to start. With a little help though, you can use NPS's large menu to your advantage.

Tier I and Tier II

One of the first choices you'll need to make while opening an NPS account is whether you need just a Tier I account or want to add on a Tier II account as well. If retirement savings is your goal, a Tier I account should suffice.

The Tier II account is a voluntary investment vehicle where you can put in and withdraw money at any time. It is only under the Tier I account that your contributions earn tax breaks of up to ₹1.5 lakh a year under section 80C and the additional exemption of ₹50,000 a year under section 80CCD (IB). Tier II contributions do not earn any tax

breaks. While the NPS Tier II does offer advantages such as flexibility and low fees, there are alternative products such as mutual funds that you can consider too, for such voluntary investments.

Which fund manager

The NPS lets you choose who will manage your money.

The scheme currently has 7 pension fund managers (PFMs) on its menu - Birla Sun Life Pension Management, HDFC Pension Management Company, ICICI Prudential Pension Management Company, Kotak Mahindra Pension Fund, LIC Pension Fund, SBI Pension Funds and UTI Retirement Solutions.

Given that the NPS is market-linked, there's no easy way to gauge which fund manager will deliver the best performance in future.

However, their past return record can be a useful guide. The NPS Trust publishes the last 1-3, 5-7 and 10-year returns of all PFMs weekly at <http://www.npstrust.org.in/return-of-nps-scheme>. This table shows performance separately for equities, corporate bonds and government securities.

Corporate bonds can get you to a high fixed return with some

choose only a single PFM, it is best to go for one with a reasonable performance across all three.

In market-linked products, the true performance of a fund manager can be gauged only over a complete market cycle. Of the seven PFMs, only four have a 10-year track record. UTI Retirement Solutions, ICICI Pru Pension and SBI Pension have a good 10-year record.

Which asset classes

The NPS allocates your accumulated contributions into four asset classes - Equity (E), Corporate bonds (C), Government Bonds (G) and Alternative Investment Funds such as private equity funds, REITs, Invits (A). Your allocation among these is critical to your final returns.

These assets carry varying risk profiles. Equities can get you to a double-digit return in the long run with a significant risk of capital losses.

Corporate bonds can get you to a high fixed return with some



mode. The Active choice lets you control how your contributions will be divided.

Earlier, opting for the Auto choice meant sticking to a single asset allocation plan. But today, the Auto choice has three ready-made menus within it. So, there's the Aggressive Lifecycle Fund that starts with a 75% equity allocation, 10% in corporate bonds and 15% in government bonds.

For ordinary investors, allocations to E, C and G are sufficient to build a sound retirement portfolio. How you divide your money should be based on your risk appetite.

Auto or Active choice

To implement an asset allocation, the NPS presents you with two possibilities - an Auto choice and an Active choice. The Auto choice helps you put your allocation in self-driving

steadily trims your equities and raises your bond exposures. The automatic rejigs ensure that, by the time they turn 55, Auto choice subscribers have only 5-15% of their corpus invested in equities, with 85-95% in bonds.

In the Active choice, you get to decide how to mix and match E, C, G and A in any proportion, subject to just two conditions. One, the maximum you can invest in equities is 75% and that too up to 50 years of age. Beyond 50, your maximum equity limit gets reduced by 2.5% for every additional year. Two, you cannot park more than 5% in Alternative Investment Funds.

The Auto choice may certainly look appealing for folks to whom finance is Greek and Latin. But the flip side is that your returns at retirement may be sub-optimal. The Auto choice's propensity to cut back on your equity exposures right from the age of 35 can leave you with a very bond-heavy portfolio in your 40s and 50s, when your earnings are likely to be at their peak.

To maximise the retirement corpus you accumulate, it is desirable to opt for the Active choice. Peg your equity allocations at 60-75% to begin with, park 15% in corporate bonds and the rest in government bonds. You can sit tight on this allocation until you turn 55. That will be a good time to shift allocations to government bonds in order to reduce risks in the home run to retirement.

Finally, one of the most investor-friendly features of NPS is that it allows you to change your choice of PFMs and asset allocations once a year, without any costs or tax implications. Review the performance of your PFM at least twice a year and exercise the switch option if there's a big lag.

purchasing a term plan with a life cover of up to 15-20 times of the annual income. An individual in his/her 40s must consider buying a cover up to 10-20 times of the annual income, while an individual in his/her 50s should opt for a life cover 5-10 times of the annual income.

The average salary considered here is ₹10 lakh per annum.

Apart from income, the expected expenses can also form the basis of an individual's sum assured estimation. Ideally, the sum assured of your term insurance plan should be 12-15 times your dependent family's annual expenses.

+

At the same time, it is important to learn that the financial situation of every individual is distinct and unique, and the one-size-fits-all approach is never recommended when choosing life insurance cover.

It is always better to have a thorough analysis of one's expenses, liabilities, investments and requirement while arriving at the ideal cover amount.

A term insurance plan should always continue till your earning capacity persists.

Also, your life insurance cover should be linked only to your needs, requirements and expenses and not to a figure such as ₹1 crore.

Though the emotional stress cannot be compensated for in case of sudden death of the life assured, adequate sum assured can certainly ensure that dependents do not have to deal with financial stress.

Increasing sum assured

People even have the option of choosing term plans with the feature of increasing sum assured. Under increasing term insurance plans, the sum assured keeps increasing every year by a specific amount. For the first five years, the death benefit remains at the same level. The sum assured then starts to rise by 5-10% for the next 15 years or till end of policy term, whichever is earlier.

All such plans let you increase your term cover by using the increasing sum assured option with the same insurer, thus taking care of the increasing expenses of your family.

(The author is Chief Business Officer, Life Insurance, Policybazaar.com)

RIGHT SIZING: TERM PLAN COVER

One size does not fit all in life insurance

Ideally, sum assured should be 12-15 times of your dependent family's annual expenses

SANTOSH AGARWAL

When Sunil Thakur – a 28-year-old Bengaluru-based IT professional – bought a term insurance cover of ₹1 crore in 2016, he was single and had no dependents.

Now married and father of a one-year-old girl, Sunil strongly feels that his ₹1-crore term plan may not be sufficient to sustain his family's needs and cover his life goals 15-20 years down the line.

He believes that his professional and personal lives were only beginning and both his income and expenses will rise significantly in the next couple of years. And to cover the loss that may include Sunil's sudden death, perhaps a cover with higher sum assured might be required. The sad part is that people who think and calculate like Sunil are very few. To most policyholders, the ₹1 crore amount seems huge. They believe the cover is sufficient to take care of all their financial needs in case something unfortunate happens to them.

With the ₹1 crore cover being a popular term, most people seem to be mentally conforta-

Future Perfect

Life insurance cover should be linked only to one's requirements and expenses and not to a figure such as ₹1 crore

Company	Plan Name	Cover up to	Annual premium (₹)	
			1 crore sum assured	2 crore sum assured
ICICI Prudential Life Insurance	iProtect Smart	70 years	15,457	26,430
HDFC Life Insurance	3D Plus Life Option	70 years	15,421	26,370
Max Life Insurance	Smart Term Plan	70 years	12,862	25,016
Aegon Life Insurance Company	iTerm	70 years	11,444	20,220
PNB MetLife India Insurance Company	Mera Term Plan	70 years	12,862	21,948

TERMINANCE PLANS FOR A NON-SMOKER, 35-YEAR-OLD EARNING ₹7-₹10 LAKH ANNUALLY

*SOURCE: WWW.POLICYBAZAAR.COM

ble with the amount even without doing the basic math.

How most people come to the conclusion that ₹1 crore cover is enough, is by calculating that if the family deposits ₹1 crore in a bank account that earns 7% interest, it will fetch them a monthly income of ₹58,333.

To them, the amount is enough to sustain the expenses of an average middle-class Indian household.

Though this calculation may seem 'legit' on paper, it won't work when you take into consideration many factors such as

outstanding loans in the name of policyholder, one-time expenses like education and marriage of kids, the relentless march of inflation, the everyday financial needs of the family and retirement needs of the spouse.

Calculations of most industry experts suggest that if the policyholder has a loan and is also parent to two kids, the ₹1 crore received on the death of the policyholder will not sustain the family for more than 10-12 years. Unfortunately, most Indians buying life insu-

rance policy are under-insured!

No doubt, despite the demand for pure protection term plans having increased considerably in the last few years, the disparity in life protection in India is still as high as 92%. Attributing low awareness around adequate coverage for this massive disparity would not be wrong.

Technically, an individual's life cover should be strictly based on his/her stage of life.

What the calculations say is that an earning individual up to the age of 40 must consider

the same level. The sum assured then starts to rise by 5-10% for the next 15 years or till end of policy term, whichever is earlier.

All such plans let you increase your term cover by using the increasing sum assured option with the same insurer, thus taking care of the increasing expenses of your family.

(The author is Chief Business Officer, Life Insurance, Policybazaar.com)

Bank fixed deposit rates

Bank Name

Interest Rates (%)

Highest Slab 1-year tenure 3-year tenure 5-year tenure

SMALL FINANCE BANKS

Suryoday Small Finance Bank	9.00	8.25	8.50	9.00
Equitas Small Finance Bank	8.25	8.00	7.80	7.00
ESAF Small Finance Bank	8.00	8.00	7.30	7.30
Jana Small Finance Bank	8.50	8.00	8.40	8.25
Fincare Small Finance Bank	9.00	8.0		

Thanks to social media, artists and musicians are playing a big role in the resistance today

MEGHNA MAJUMDAR

Rachita Taneja sees her popular comic strip, Sanitary Panels, as just "one of the tools in my toolkit to mobilise people."

With over 33,000 followers on Instagram and a column with *Forbes* magazine, Sanitary Panels – which began during Rachita's years as a Greenpeace campaigner – has been scathingly vocal about social and environmental causes.

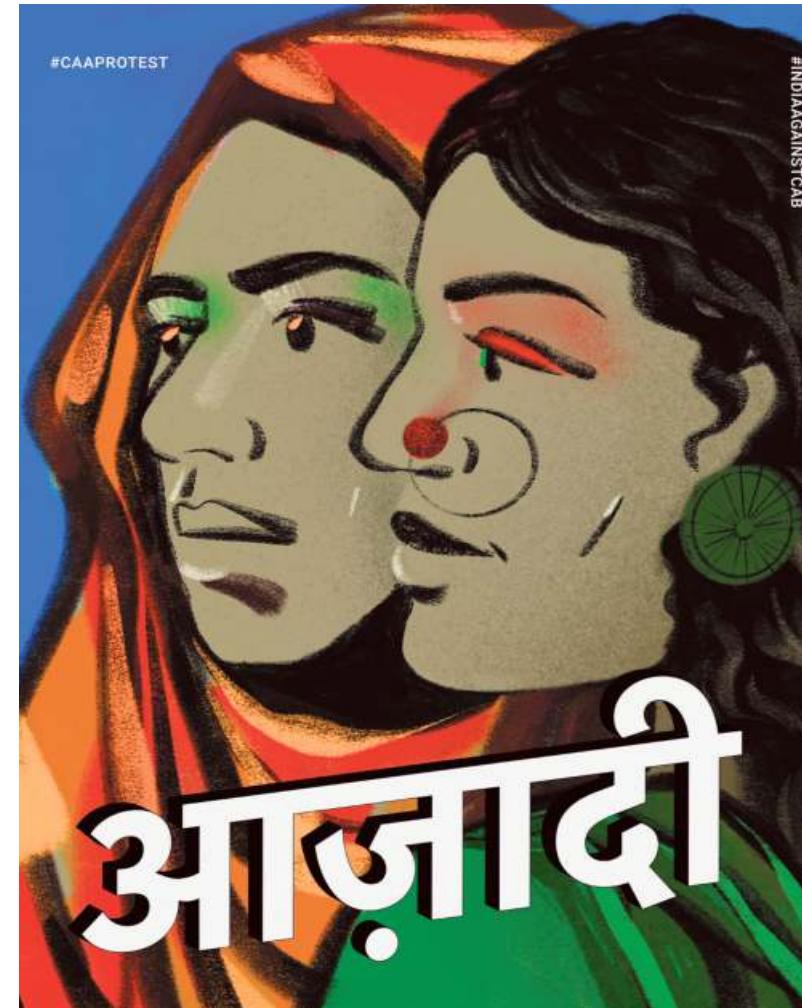
Now, as protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and National Register of Citizens (NRC) have taken hold of the country, it is more active than ever. The images have been taken out of phone screens into real life. Rachita's identifiable stick figures – as well as sketches she made from converting powerful press photographs – are among the most common visuals seen on protest posters in city after city. For she is among a host of cartoonists to have made their work open and available for the cause.

Another such artist is Kruttika Susrala, who has not only put up a Google drive of some of her work for the public, but also had posters translated into Tamil and Marathi for good measure.

But it is not just about posters – artists with followers as large as these women have, also take their role as influencers seriously. Information dissemination is an important part of what Rachita does, be it pie charts of Internet shutdowns or social media posts dispelling rumours. She was also one of the leading people behind the Net Neutrality movement in 2015. "I always try to add some more text for explanation, along with my Sanitary Panels posts," she says.

This is something Bengaluru-based artist and social worker Shilo Shiv Suleman has been doing for about seven years now. Her work We Belong Here has been going viral since the protests picked up, though her influence is not restricted to India alone. Her The Fearless Collective, started during the Nirbhaya protests, used to be centred around art, but "has evolved into a more detailed organisation creating monuments around social issues: we work with sex workers in Pakistan, Syrian refugees and undocumented migrants in Beirut, and indigenous communities in Brazil, among others," she says.

These women are not alone... a number of artists and creative minds are using their talent to spread awareness,



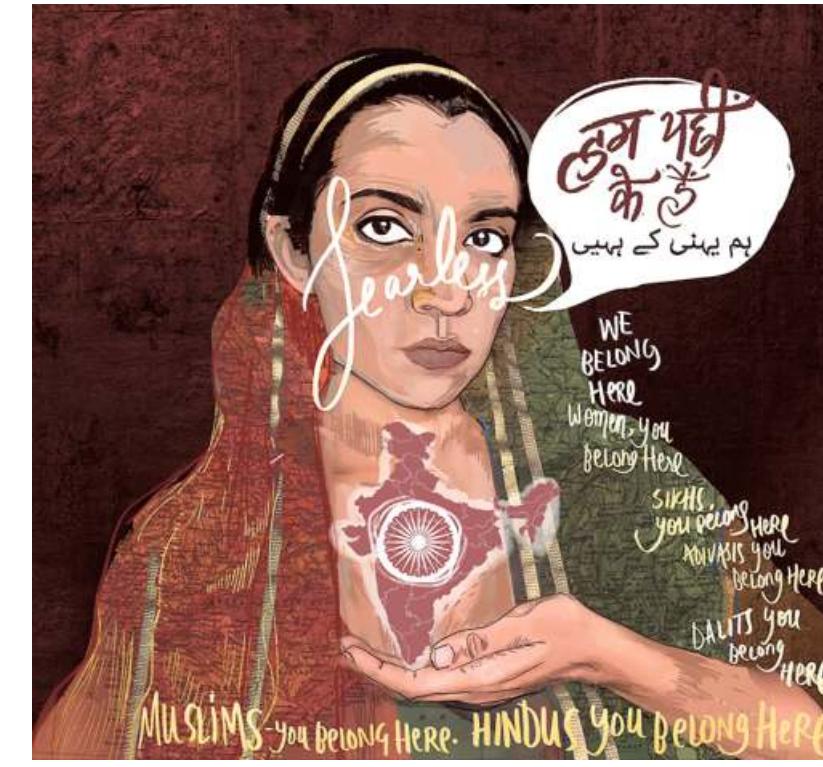
Please don't stop the music

mobilise, and lend the protests some colour. One of the images going viral is that of a tricolour whose saffron strip has grown larger than the other two colours, with a man struggling under its weight. Titled Weighing Us Down, the work is by an anonymous artist who goes by the Instagram handle Smish Designs. "I haven't really made it available, but people have made their own renditions of the piece to carry to the ongoing protests across the country," says the designer.

New York-based Anjali Chandrashekar, meanwhile, is seeing her work re-

flected not only at protests in New York, but also back home in Bengaluru, Delhi and Chennai. The Bengaluru-born, Chennai-raised artist has been based in the US for nearly a decade now. "I wanted to do my bit, not being able to participate in local protests [in India]," she says, "So I got in touch with Creatives Against CAA, who are crowdsourcing content and art and facilitating conversations."

Creatives Against CAA is essentially an Instagram page run by Kadak Collective, a group of South Asian women working in the field of graphic storytelling



ing. The group is curating work from various artists and putting them up to be shared by campaigners, protesters or even vocal Instagrammers.

Anthems galore
While 'Azadi' is the chant of choice for protesters across cities, independent singer-songwriters have also come up with pieces that seem to resonate.

'Bol Kyon', by Kolkata-based Assamese independent filmmaker Ronny Sen, garnered over 9,000 views within a day of it being uploaded on Instagram TV. Delhi-based B Tech student Shahroz Ahmad's 'Kabool Kro' reached almost 50,000 people in three days.

Shahroz, who identifies himself as Rapper Shaz, is all of 18 years old and credits his mother back home in Bihar for his love of writing. "She is a poet, I get my talent from her," he says, "I wrote the lyrics to 'Kabool Kro' in an hour, after a friend and I stayed up all night disturbed by the videos of violence in Jamia [Millia Islamia University]. My friend Akhilesh Saurabh put together the video in four hours."

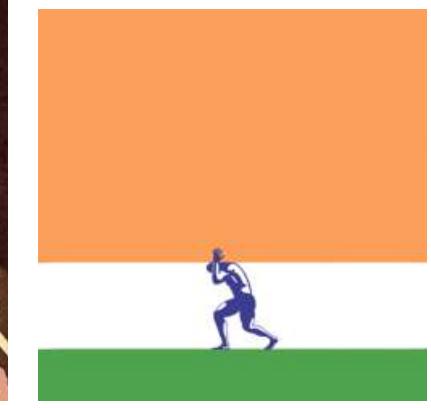
'Kabool Kro', which translates to "admit it", is set against a visual mishmash of news clippings, protest visuals and videos. "I was scared that I would get hate for it, but all I got were requests to sing this at protests. I will, as soon as my exams get done," says Shahroz.

Power of the pen
And then there is the translation project initiated by Delhi-based singer-songwriter Ilina Acharya. The idea is a simple one: pick a media report in English you find informative, translate it into a ver-



Colours of protest (Clockwise from far left) Works by Anjali Chandrashekar, Shilo Shiv Suleman, Creatives Against CAA and Smish Designs; (below) the artists Shilo and Rachita Taneja

■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



nacular language, and get it published in vernacular press.

"Speaking from a musician's point of view, it's our job to speak up," Ilina stresses. She adds, "The power of the stage we are given, I don't think we realise the magnitude of it. No one is saying *naara lagao* (chant slogans), but at least use the stage creatively and respond to what is happening."

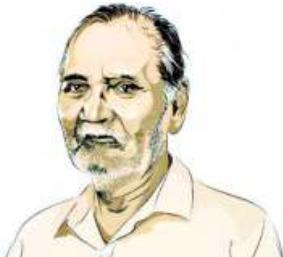
For Ilina, the project came out of a need to engage productively... "A way out of the echo chamber that is our social media. People don't really know the nitty gritties of law, but we need the facts to turn the narrative." She concludes, unwittingly echoing Shahroz's lyrics, "If they have their guns, we have ours."



DOWN MEMORY LANE

70 years ago on Christmas Eve

Little has changed in Agra's *bustee* of Padritola, except that new characters have emerged where the old are no more



R. V. SMITH

Christmas Eve 1949 was as cold as ever. The manger had been set up in the Agra Catholic Cathedral aisle and in the neighbouring Christian *bustee* of Padritola the spirit of Christmas was at its peak. The scene is worth replicating: Jaija Bua sat in front of her house watching the fun as the tipplers were up to their antics. Cyprian had put on a petticoat and went about kneeling in front of everybody saying, "Bua mauf karna" (forgive me sister). Master Sahib had discarded his kameez-pyjama for a serge suit in which he strode up and down with the energy that only a few pegs can impart.

Fog had descended early on the *bustee*, set up by the early missionaries in the 18th century, some say even earlier, when the Apostolic See extended right up to Tibet from Agra during the Mughal period. The residents were Indian Christians but the names Latin. Pachipico, Verencio, Bitus, Linus, Lucas, Bibiana, Veronica, Valentiana, Sanfroza, Fidelis, Fosca, Filgenzia, Bonaventura - and any others that you can think of. If a Roman had visited the place he would have hardly believed that he was thousands of miles away from home. They all knew Latin, at least enough to follow the Mass and give the appropriate responses to the priest, including the Gregorian chant. In such a setting the carols were in



Repository of history Agra Catholic Cathedral • GRENTEIDE/WIKI COMMONS

nounced that Midnight Mass was to start in half an hour. That changed the whole scene. Everybody tried to hurry. Cyprian discarded the petticoat, Jaiji left the harmonium to rush to the church where he was supposed to be the sacristan, Jaija Bua put on her new skirt and jacket, Master Sahib brushed up his hair and suit, Father Daniel used his walking stick – which was more like a lathi – to good effect to reach the sacristy on time, and the girl who was supposed to play the Virgin Mary changed her clothes and make-up to look like Christ's mother.

In another quarter the old priest Father Daniel had been summoned upon to sample the amber stuff in preference to the "tharra" or country brew he had to make do with in his rural Mathura parish of Chanduk-Nagla, some 70 kilometres away from the city. Reluctantly he drank for he never wanted to doze off during Mass and give offence to the Archbishop. "Remember", he said, "the story of the priest who slept during Christmas service. The poor man has to still attend all the midnight Masses down the centuries for the one lapse."

"But Father you are different," they all cooed and Padri Daniel beamed in appreciation. Thus in every house and lane people were in a merry mood until the church bells an-

mented and the evening saw the Nativity play being enacted, with Virginia playing her part well. But there was a big commotion after the play ended. Virginia was nowhere to be found. She had slipped away with her lover.

The *bustee* was in turmoil for

several months until the two re-

turned, but Virginia was never allowed to play the coveted role of Mary again.

Virginia is no more – and so also many of those who enlivened that evening. But the Yuletide scene at Padritola is much the same though the actors are different and a boy with a cherub's face rings the bells at midnight to proclaim the birth of Christ in Bethlehem when Caesar Augustus ruled half the world and Agra was a part of the Braj Mandal of Lord Krishna. He too like Jesus, was born at midnight a thousand or more years before him to Devaki and Vasudeva during the reign of the tyrant Kansa.

The writer is veteran chronicler of Delhi

Opening up language

Satti Khanna talks of the art of translation and his latest work

VIJAY LOKAPALLY

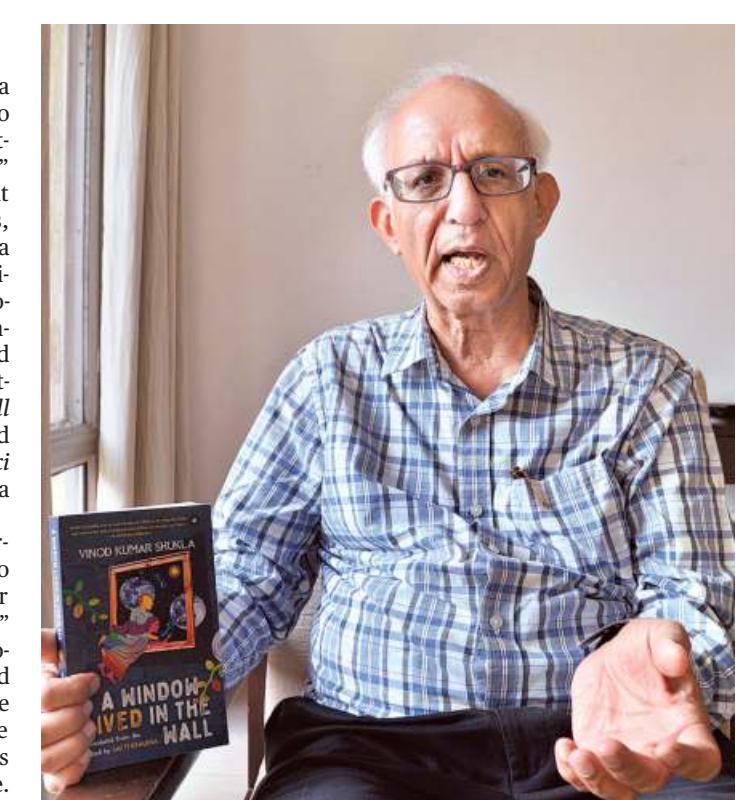
For Satti Khanna, translation is a passion, and he says his style is to "translate fairly closely to the literal movement of the original." He is an associate professor at Duke University, United States, where he teaches Indian Cinema and Modern Hindi Literature. Vinod Kumar Shukla, a poet and novelist from Chhattisgarh, is Khanna's favourite. Having translated four of his works, the fifth and latest is *A Window Lived In The Wall* (originally published in 1997 and titled *Deewar Mein Ek Khidki Rehti Hai*) which won the Sahitya Academy Award in 1999.

The text that explores a marriage, talks of "poor people who manage to be neighbourly or generous in drab circumstances," says the author. It centres on peoples' daily lives, with humour and lyricism. The window in the title forms the point between the sparse interiors of the couple's home and the vast world outside. It is the story of people flourishing despite hardships.

Khanna's family, displaced from Pakistan in 1947, found refuge in north Bihar and he later studied at St. Stephen's, Delhi, and won a scholarship to Harvard. In Delhi, after visiting Shukla in Raipur, he shared his views on his work:

What are the skills you have honed to be a translator?

A lot in my life has been to get on the bus, and then it takes me somewhere. I haven't really planned the journey, but I stay awake. I started translating out of love of the text and a desire to inhabit its space. By now I've translated say 10 books [Mohan Rakesh, Phanishwar Nath 'Renu' and a few more] and not all by the same author. The greatest skill I've learned is to leave the work as open as it is in the origin. The sweetest thing about my work is its music. The next is the possibilities that hover around what is said.



A love for the text Satti Khanna with his book • R. V. MOORTHY

What kind of research is involved in your translations?

Because I'm an amateur, I don't have a reliable method. I don't read the book, unless I have leisure to admire it and savour it. And so the relationship of pleasure in the work is the thread that goes from the original to what I'm calling the estrangement to the music that's possible in the new language. In the course of reading a book, there are allusions, references to other works, and obviously I have to understand them. I ask some specialists to respond. So the words I'm usually translating are poetic, they create their own coherence.

Do you agree that translators don't get their due?

I agree. There are two kinds of translators. One that seeks to be seriously faithful to the surface of the work we are translating. Then

the perfect one, a translator for the United Nations. They are an even smaller niche than those of us who translate text. They deserve equal notice with the original writer because they've taken it upon themselves to engender energy, rather than to relate to a world whose glimpses a translation might give us. So they feel bound to the power that's possible to human words. And may they receive, and some of them do in Europe receive, that kind of acknowledgement.

Have you ever thought of writing a book of your own?

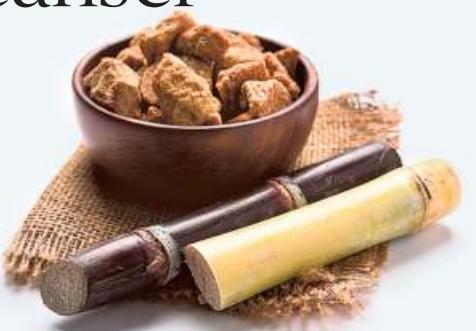
If I wrote a book it would be about my childhood. Being displaced and being treated with people in a place of such kindness (north Bihar), such support of strangers that you can't repeat.

A Window Lived In The Wall (Westland) available online and in stores, ₹399

A ND-ND

HYPE OR HAPPENING?

Jaggery, the lung cleanser



SOMA BASU

It may not have the thorough documentation that say blueberries have, but we in India accept that jaggery has benefits. As the purest form of unrefined sugar extracted from sugarcane juice and sometimes from the palm and coconut, it is a storehouse of iron, vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, potassium and sodium. Most homes have it readily available in their kitchen jars as an effective remedy for throat infections and for general wellness.

HYPE

A small piece of jaggery to suck on, or a spoon of jaggery powder dissolved in warm water to drink, or a piece of jaggery, ginger and tulsi leaf to chew on – in any which way mothers hand it out when you get a bout of bad cough or feel fatigued. It's also the reason why industrial workers in dusty environments like cement factories, thermal plants and coal mines are given a fixed quota of jaggery to eat. We have simply believed, albeit without much research, that it is a protective agent in polluted conditions.

With a doctorate in pharma analysis, Raghu Khimani says in his research paper on jaggery that it helps to 'pull out' dust and unwanted particles from the body and gives relief to the respiratory tract, the lungs, food pipes, stomach and intestines. However, Dr Valsala Varrier, Chief Medical Officer with the Coimbatore branch of Arya Vaidya Sala-Kottakkal, says jaggery is effective not as a stand-

alone remedy, but always in combination – say with pepper, tulsi or dry ginger. Ayurvedic doctors recommend a daily dose of jaggery (not more than 4 gm or little less than a teaspoon) to fight toxins in the body and strengthen one's immunity.

However, if you already have a respiratory disorder like bronchitis, asthma, or wheezing, allopathic doctors clarify that only medication and treatment will heal. "Jaggery cannot replace or substitute the treatment of indoor- or outdoor-pollution-related diseases," says Dr Anantha

Subramanian, Consultant Pulmonologist at Chennai's Kauvery Hospital. There is no scientific evidence to suggest jaggery is a broncho-dilator, a substance that relaxes bronchial muscles in people who find it difficult to breathe to increase the airflow to the lungs. Neither does it have the power to provide immediate relief to someone gasping for breath. In that context, jaggery as medicinal sugar that de-smogs the lungs is hype.

Madurai-based certified naturopath Dr S Harishankar, says natural remedies do not match the pace and intensity of allopathy treatment. At best, this iron-rich, anti-allergic source of energy improves the haemoglobin levels that increases the oxygen-carrying capacity of the blood and thereby strengthens the body's defence mechanism.

In this column, we decode health trends and decide if it's all just 'hype' or actually 'happening'

SUSAN JOE PHILIP

Parenting is hard, because nothing can prepare you for it. If you're questioning your parenting abilities, know you're not alone. We asked parents what their trickiest troubles were, and got the experts in to help.

Thenndral S, child counsellor, and founder-CEO of Eros Psychour Services, Chennai and V Shreya Mythre, a clinical psychologist and psychotherapist at Aarohi Centre for Mental Health, Coimbatore answer tough questions parents ask themselves.

The quick guide to naughty or nice parenting

Your child may not be keeping score, but parents often doubt themselves and their parenting abilities

Should I reward my children for good marks?

Encouraging children for their work is good, but psychologists warn against materialistic rewards. "If a child is constantly being given gifts, they will always expect something materialistic in return for their actions," says Thenndral. If you feel that your child has worked hard, gift them experiences. "This could be taking them to a park, going out for dinner or giving them a monthly subscription to their favourite comic," she says.



I think my child prefers my husband because he plays the good cop and I am always the bad cop. How do I become the favoured one?

The idea of one parent being favoured is inappropriate. What is ideal for a child is to look at both parents with equal respect. "Parents should bring a balance here and it can be done by making decisions together. For example, when a child approaches the father for permission to go on a school trip, tell him that it is important for him to discuss it first with the mother. This helps the child understand that opinions of both the parents are equally important and eliminates the situation of being the good or bad cop," says Thenndral.

My child dresses outrageously in tiny shorts. What are my options: keep quiet or bring it up?

Asserting themselves is a part of a teen's developing identity. Conversations are important. "Have a discussion with your child and listen to them. State why you feel it is inappropriate. Explain to them the importance of dressing to the context and reach a middle ground. For example, a parent might say that they can wear short shorts when they go on a picnic but not when they go to the local market," says Shreya. Relationships are not built overnight, so spend time with your child, always giving her your full attention when you do – which means get off the phone, chat, laugh, and listen.

I used to smoke. Now I tell my kids not to. Should I confess?

Yes. "Tell them how it affected your health and the reasons you quit. If they come to know about this from anyone else, your child could lose trust in you and may not be interested in listening to you at all, even on other matters," says Thenndral.

What should I do when my child throws a tantrum in the store: grin and bear it or throw one myself?

Acceptance is the first step. Understand that children can get overwhelmed in public spaces. "Usually, the problem arises when parents become conscious and place the onus on what others may think of them. Avoid succumbing to the tantrum. Instead, reassure them and avoid shouting or threatening," says Shreya. Prep children before you go to the store. "Tell them what they are allowed to buy, and if they make a scene for something that has not been discussed, explain the reason," she adds.



I suspect that my child is hiding a social media handle. Is it okay to snoop?

No, but it is okay to let your child know that you feel your number 1 priority is his safety. Says Thenndral, "Understand that your child also has a personal life. Reflect on why your child was reluctant to share this information with you and then have a conversation. Explain the pros and cons of using social media and also share your concerns with them. Do also listen to your child." Explain the non-negotiables: for instance, online bullying or accessing social media that may have age guidelines.

Poof! The Cafe

POOCH CAFE



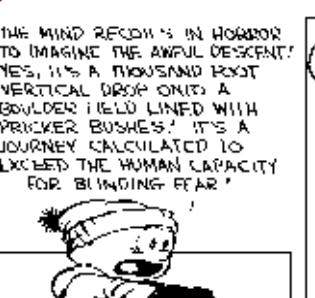
PEANUTS



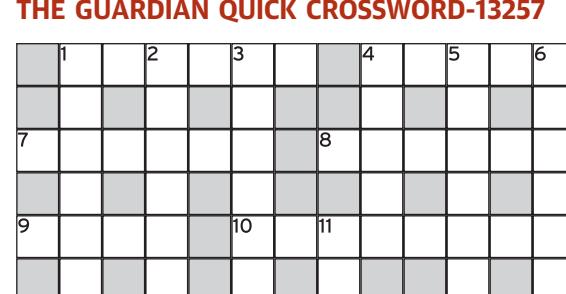
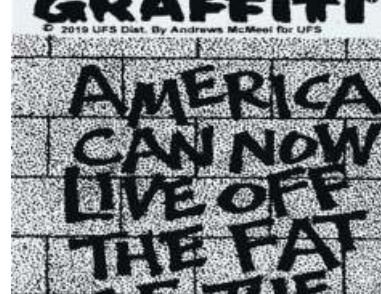
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



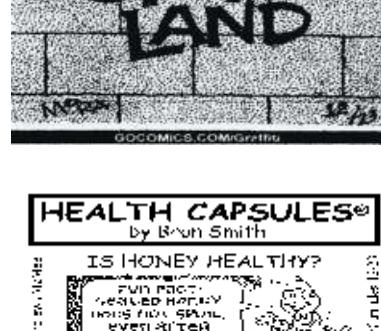
CALVIN AND HOBBES



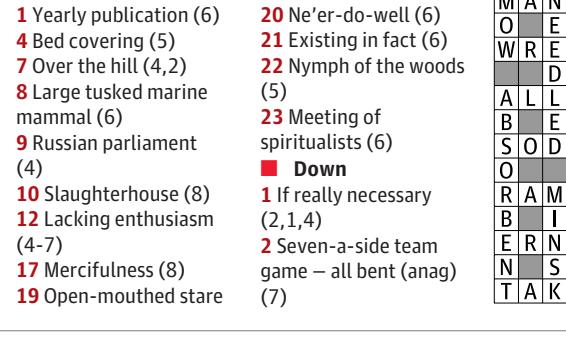
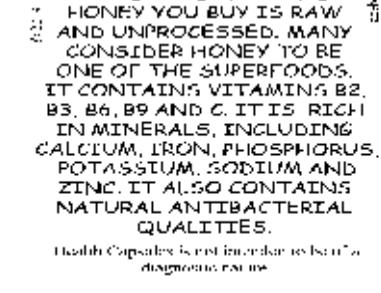
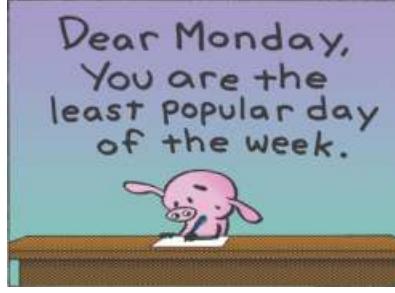
TIGER



WUMO



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE



3 Curly fleece of an Asian breed of lambs (9)

4 Distributed the cards (5)

5 Observe (anag) – long-winded (7)

6 Stun guns (6)

11 Whatever may have happened (2,3,4)

13 Free pardon from punishment (7)

14 Make more restrictive (7)

15 Corrupt (7)

16 Blemished (6)

18 Make improvements to (5)

Solution will appear in The Hindu dated December 24, 2019.

Solution No. 13256

M	A	N	O	F	T	H	E	W	O	R	L
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BE PREPARED: Expect the unexpected

Question of adaptability

A backup plan on being prepared for any twists and turns is the right way to be equipped to change

BACKPACKER'S GUIDE

USHA RAMAN

I am sitting in a small apartment in a West European town and in the past half hour have seen the sky go from grey to cloudy blue to rainy to rainbow-sunny. So, I've gone from packing and unpacking, alternatively, a scarf, gloves, hat, and umbrella. I don't want my bag to get too heavy but I do want to be prepared for what seems like a temperamental day.

Have the mindset

One of the key skills in what is touted as the "21st century toolkit" is adaptability. It's a word that can mean flexibility, open-mindedness, resilience, or responsiveness. It is of course all those things and more. It is broadly, the ability to work with and within changing circumstances in a manner that makes best use of both individual and contextual resources. It's a level of preparation (carry that umbrella, layer your clothing, pack some food, make sure your phone is fully charged) and it is a mindset that anticipates and accepts that things may not turn as you expect.

It's almost a cliché to say that we live in a world that is rapidly changing, where we are faced with circumstances that are unprecedented and require innovative responses for which history does not offer too many lessons. That's at the macro level – issues of climate change, automation, resource depletion, and so on – for which much of what goes into adaptability happens at a systemic level (policies, frameworks, plans). But at the micro, or individual level too, we need to think about how we can build an attitude and practice adaptability.

This is a discussion that can span many pages, but for now, let me focus just on how we might cultivate adaptability on those two levels I mentioned above – preparation and mindset. The example I began with, about being prepared for variable weather, can be applied to many other situations. Think about the many possible variations or disruptions that could occur in a given situation and what you would need to quickly be ready to handle it.

Essentially, adaptability is all about backup; equipping yourself with the material resources you need for a range of possibilities and being mentally prepared to deal with the unexpected.

The writer teaches at the University of Hyderabad and edits Teacher Plus.
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It is the basic level of practical knowledge and judgement that we all need to help us live in a reasonable and safe way. Yet, it is rare...

■ SAIKAT MAJUMDAR

I was on a plane from Delhi to Bengaluru, getting ready for take-off. A few people were having trouble adjusting their luggage in the overhead cabin. A gentleman came along, helped a few people with a smiling face and made space for everybody. "It's a matter of common sense," he said with a smile. More space showed up in no time, his own baggage was tucked in, and the people waiting in the aisle got going in a matter of minutes.

And all it took was common sense? A little event like this gets you thinking: is common sense commonly available? If it were, why did the people have trouble finding space for their luggage in the first place? Anyone who travels frequently on short-haul flights between Indian cities knows that the common sense required to adjust luggage in a high space-yielding way is anything but common. For me, what that gentleman did in such a short time, and with such good humour, was a rare constellation of skills.

Not common

Indeed, such common sense is the right mix of spatial, bodily kinaesthetic, and interpersonal skills, and I suspect even the aircrew needs some training to grow them. The man found the best pattern to fit the luggage in the overhead compartment; common sense, too, is a form of pattern-recognition in the spatial, bodily, and emotional dimensions. He was also correct in describing this essential skill as common sense as the term is

generally used. At the same time, his use revealed the basic flaw in the general currency of the term. Common sense is not *common*. But we have been trained to think of it as lowly. It is common not in the sense of ubiquitous – but common in the sense of petty or trivial. It merely brings out the biased naivety of our daily values and the language that codes them.

Educationist and cognitive psychologist, Howard Gardner makes it clear why. Common sense is praised – and its lack mourned – he says, almost wholly with respect to three kinds of aptitudes – 'intelligences.' In Gardner's formulation: the interpersonal, the spatial and the bodily kinaesthetic. The expression 'common sense' is never used to describe other kinds of intelligences Gardner describes, such as musical, logical-mathematical, or linguistic intelligences. These appear to be the 'higher'

intelligences. It is, among other things, based on the hierarchy between mind and body that we have inherited as part of modern consciousness – that mental faculties are somehow superior to physical ones. As a part-mechanical, part-social skill required in everyday life, it sits on a pecking order much lower than those that form the foundation of established academic or artistic fields.

The curious case of common sense brings to the surface the hidden biases with which society evaluates different human abilities. Our language codes these very biases. In her book *Pedigree: How Elite Students Get Elite Jobs*, Lauren A Rivera shows that a similar play of power and prejudice is at work in society's conception of 'merit'. The conception of merit reflects the dominant value-system in a given society, and usually, the biases of dominant social groups. Rivera talks about the infamous prejudice about head size in 19th century

European thought – the notion that non-white races had smaller skulls than Europeans – which was used to propagate a kind of scientific racism.

Likewise, the sociologist Jerome Karabel has shown that before 1920, admission criteria to Harvard, Yale and Princeton were primarily intellectual, centring on disciplinary excellence as evident in subject tests. As Jewish enrolments grew, so did anti-Semitism, and the definition of merit shifted so that Jewish students could be excluded more effectively from admission to these colleges, and white Anglo-Saxon applicants given easier passage. Admission criteria moved from being primarily intellectual to a focus on 'character', as evident through the candidate's involvement in sports and extracurricular activities, and even a perceived sense of 'manliness'.

The fact that these criteria persist to this day indicate the lasting trajectory of this shift. It is common knowledge that the admission to elite institutions of higher education anywhere in the world emphasises qualities that reflect the self-image of the privileged and the powerful. Elitism is all about the preservation of the status quo, and the conception of merit is a very persuasive means of achieving it while making social prejudic

es invisible.

Meanwhile, common sense, a victim of biased nomenclature, continues to be a rare commodity in the world!

The writer is a Professor of English and Creative Writing at Ashoka University, the author of several books, including *College: Pathways of Possibility*. @_saikatmajumdar

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Dr. C. Veerabahu, Principal
V. O. Chidambaram College was awarded 77th Rank, in India Rankings 2019



Kulapathy A.P.C. Veerabahu with Prof. A. Srinivasa Raghavan, and Prof. Sreethara Menon the first and the second principal of V.O.Chidambaram College respectively

V. O. Chidambaram College, Thoothukudi, Tamilnadu, a well-established, pre-eminent post graduate & aided - research institution, affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University is synonymous with excellence, commitment and innovation. V.O.Chidambaram college founded by the eminent statesman, scholar and philanthropist, Kulapathy A. P. C. Veerabahu in 1951 was named after the great freedom-fighter and Tamil scholar V. O. Chidambaram and is administered by the V. O. Chidambaram Educational Society. It was a challenging initiative of the founder, a great visionary who saw in education the power to equip, empower and galvanise the youth of a nascent democracy for nation building. The impelling vision and drive behind this colossal task was "Education for All" and therefore the institution became the first and best option for the youth of this then very backward area. Animated and bound by this vision and zeal, the college admits students predominantly from various marginalized sections of the society, regardless of faith or caste or sex and first generation learners. The college was and has remained a secular and non-commercial campus despite numerous challenges to its founding spirit. It has also been responsive to change and innovation without compromising or accommodating anything that would enfeeble its vision or core values. Hence V. O. Chidambaram College is a campus for excellence, innovation and diversity.



Kulapathy A.P.C. Veerabahu with Dr. A. Lakshmanasamy Mudaliar, former vice chancellor of University of Madras

SPLENDID INFRASTRUCTURE: Spread over a sprawling 65 acres land V.O.Chidambaram College welcomes you with an imposing Golden Jubilee Arch and a bronze statue of V.O.Chidambaram at the entrance. A huge administrative block houses the office, a gigantic auditorium, a state-of-the-art conference hall, audio-visual halls, smart-class rooms, computer labs and seminar halls. Furnished class rooms were constructed at the cost of Rs.11,72,825/- under merged scheme of the UGC, New Delhi.

The Kulapathy A. P. C. Veerabahu library houses a diverse collection of books and subscribes to numerous journals and magazines. It has approximately 65,000 titles and 85,000 volumes, including very rare books that are either too expensive or entirely out of print. The library subscribes to online learning resources and Infibnet. There are laboratories with the latest equipment (all built both with UGC funds and management contributions) a synthetic tennis court, smart-classrooms, a language lab, a competitive exam and career-guidance section attached to the main library. There is a separate hostels for boys and a state-of-art women's hostel constructed with the UGC assistance of Rs. 80,00,000/- and there is a splendid guest house also.

Accreditation: NAAC has accredited the college with 'A' grade in the past continuous three cycles - 2004, 2011 and in 2017 it was accredited A Grade (CGPA 3.31/4) under the dynamic leadership of the incumbent principal, Dr.C.Veerabahu, who is also a proud alumni of the college. Further the college is marching towards greater heights and had been awarded 77th rank by NIRF under the India Rankings 2019.

SPECIAL COURSES: Apart from the regular courses, the college

had expanded its original remit and had conducted two UGC innovative programs namely M.Sc. Nano Science (2012-2017) and M.Sc. Marine Environment Conservation (2013-2018).

Skill Development Courses: The college also ensures that students are provided with multi-disciplinary expertise with the acquisition of a broad range of critical skills, preparing the graduates to work adaptively in diverse settings, developing the key skills of critical thinking, problem-recognition, problem-solving, adaptability and effective communication and also to successfully encounter life challenges. Around 20 value added courses are offered by the college to equip the students with appropriate additional skills to enhance their employment opportunities. Another recent initiative is to offer skill development programs in collaboration with IECD (Institute for Entrepreneurship and Career Development), Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli.

Research: The vision of the Founder to transform this institution into a hub of research for various disciplines has been realized. The College has an exclusive multi disciplinary research journal 'OUTREACH'. Today the campus has 10 recognised research departments that have received a number of minor and major projects worth Rs. 30,92,000/- and Rs. 47,16,968/- respectively. Organisations and government funding agencies such as UGC, DBT, DST, NCESS and ICSSR have sponsored various science and social science research projects. An MoA with ONGC as a part of CSR scheme had been entered into for enhancing the research activities and upgrading the infrastructural facilities of the Department of Geology. The findings of various researchers carried out have been published in various reputed national and

international journals with Scopus, Web of Science citations etc. **Employer Relationship and Career Development**

V. O. Chidambaram College aims to develop mutually beneficial relationships with employers to embed employability and career-development opportunities for both the undergraduate and post graduate students. The college aspires not only to set excellent standards in academics but also to provide a healthy and congenial atmosphere in achieving total education through all round personality development of the students passing their way towards a bright and composed career. The Placement Cell was constituted in 2004 which strives incessantly to bridge the gap between academic programmes and the needs of the industry. Students are trained by an exclusive placement wing which makes focused efforts in honing the skills of students and in preparing them to face interviews for placement. Special mention would be the MoU with InaWORD, a multi linguistic centre for providing reading and writing skills in foreign languages and an MoU with Bitstep Training Academy for providing soft skills and language training. The college has organized mega placement drives in collaboration with the District Employment Office, Thoothukudi in 2017 and 2019. More than 1000 students have been placed in reputed institution including MNCs, IT sectors etc. Various Career Oriented Programs (COP) supported by UGC were conducted during the years 2007-2012 which includes Disaster Management, Communicative English, Retail Management, Geographic Information, Export and Import Management and Tourism for providing gainful employment and ensuring career progression.

Unique Distinctions: The college has the unique distinction of

being a nodal centre of ISRO-IIRS program Dehradun for conducting certificate courses in remote sensing and GIS. An exclusive project for asset mapping for the entire Thoothukudi district has been executed to facilitate Bhuvan Panchayat Portal, an initiative of ISRO/NRSC, Hyderabad. The institution has been also chosen by UGC to serve as a national research centre with a grant of Rs.88,00,000/- under the Scheme for Trans-disciplinary Research for India's Developing Economy (STRIDE) scheme component 1, which focuses on capacity building for the promotion of research and development of the socio-economic conditions of the nation. The college has been recognised as a mentor institute by NAAC, Bengaluru and as well as by UGC under the PARAMARSH scheme to sensitise the importance of NAAC and its reforms to non accredited institutions. The college has also set its footprints in MHRD, MIC(IIC) and an exclusive EDP cell has been constituted to take a lead in developing an integrated approach to innovation and entrepreneurship, extending from fundamental science to the humanities, obtaining three stars for the various institutional activities carried out to inculcate the spirit of innovativeness and creativity thus developing an innovation ecosystem. In alignment with the various government initiatives the college has been granted funds under the UBA scheme for village adoption. DST Inspire programs for the school children had been conducted for the past 8 years.

Milestones: The college had commemorated the Sesquicentennial birthday celebration of Mahatma Gandhi in association with MIB, Chennai from 2nd-4th of October 2019. The College also had organised a mega space expo as a part of world space week celebration in collaboration with ISRO from 9th-11th of October 2019.



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Scholarships: The Kulapathy A.P.C.Veerabahu Endowment offers annual scholarships instituted by magnanimous contributions by the faculty for meritorious students who are not recipients of any other scholarships. Behind the success of this esteemed institution is the uncompromising spirit that insists on transparency, participation and accountability. V. O. Chidambaram College is an institution into which a student can enter with hope and exit with pride.



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Showcasing Culture and Fine Arts: V. O. Chidambaram College has always emphasized the need for participation in extra and co-curricular activities to provide a holistic development of the learners. The college grooms a highly talented cultural team which has provided opportunities for the students to develop and sharpen their creativity and also to show the rich and diverse culture of our nation. The team has won the overall championship twice in 2012 and 2018 in VYUHA, a cultural meet conducted by the Madurai Medical College and latest being selected as the top participant in the finals to be conducted in 2020 at SHISYAS, a national level cultural event conducted by Srimad Andavan Arts and Science College, Thiruchirappalli.

Accolades in Sports: The Department of Physical Education has produced numerous sports persons who have gone on to represent the nation, the state and the university. Many of them have been placed in various government undertakings and banks for their achievement and acumen in sports. The department also offers a common non-major paper in sports for fitness and health in the under graduate programme. The department has also organized a national level seminar on Sports Medicine. The management supports sports activities with regular funds for infrastructural development, sports equipment and for

the welfare of sports persons. A significant number of seats are earmarked for sports persons each year and some of them are given free board and stay and full or partial fee concession.

An Indoor and an Outdoor Stadium of 7500 sq. feet has been constructed at the cost of Rs. 1,35,00,000/- funded by the UGC, New Delhi and by the management. A Multipurpose gymnasium of 7500 sq. feet has been set up at a cost of Rs. 1,10,00,000/- funded by the UGC, Hyderabad and by the management. A Synthetic flood lit Tennis court at a cost of Rs. 35,00,000/- has also been constructed.

VOCES' Special School for the Differently abled : In 2000, V. O. C. Educational Society came forward to provide accommodation in its premises for a District Disability Rehabilitation Centre (DDRC), Thoothukudi, established by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India. The commitment and care of the centre was so obvious that DDRC handed over the centre to VOCES in 2003. The services provided at this centre include a day care centre, providing teaching, learning materials and aids with the assistance of the government, workshops for the parents and the special educators, music therapy, behaviour modification, computer literacy, internship training and job placements with the consent of the parents.

Kohli, Rahul and Rohit propel India to a memorable series win

Chasing a target of 316, the three provide the impetus before Jadeja and Thakur take the Men in Blue past the finish line; Pooran and Pollard's knocks go in vain

WI IN INDIA

Y.B. SARANGI
CUTTACK
Virat Kohli proved yet again that he was the master of the chase as he joined hands with Ravindra Jadeja to help India chase down a daunting target of 316 with eight balls to spare in the third and final ODI against the West Indies at the Barabati Stadium here on Sunday. Though the captain – quite uncharacteristically – wasn't there till the end, Jadeja took the Men in Blue past the finish line in the company of Shardul Thakur.

The thrilling victory took India to a 2-1 come-from-behind series win, its 10th successive one against the West Indies. Kohli's men had lost the opening ODI in Chennai before bouncing back at Visakhapatnam.

Openers on the prowl

The Indian openers' success story in 2019 continued with Rohit Sharma and K.L. Rahul forging a 122-run partnership and laying a strong foundation for the big pursuit.

Rohit, elegant as usual, made a 63-ball 63 with eight fours and a six – a hit that soared over midwickett – before being caught behind off Jason Holder. It was the Hitman's sixth half-century of the year.

Rahul oozed class, his cut shots and delicate whips on the leg-side bringing him a lot of runs. His 89-ball 77 was his third fifty in 2019. The wristy Karnataka batsman, who added 45 with skipper Kohli, flicked Alzarri Joseph for a magnificent six over



Pulling it off: Kohli's men came from behind to clinch a 2-1 win against the West Indies in Cuttack on Sunday. ■ K.R. DEEPAK

deep-square leg before gloving the same bowler down the leg-side to the wicket-keeper an over later.

Rahul's departure brought Windies back into the game and India lost three more wickets between the 33rd and 39th overs. With Keemo Paul striking off consecutive overs, the visitors sensed an opportunity.

However, a determined Kohli worked the ball around effortlessly and played his signature strokes – cover drive and pull – to take the

team forward and keep the asking rate at an achievable range.

Kohli (85, 81b, 9x4) found an partner in allrounder Ravindra Jadeja (39 not out, 31b, 4x4), their 58-run association reversing the trend of the visitors striking at regular intervals to put the kids on the chase.

Just when it looked like he would take the team home yet again, Kohli played on to Paul with India needing 30 off 23 balls. But a calm Jadeja and an aggressive Shadul

Thakur who blasted 17 off just six deliveries with two fours and a six, ensured that there were no more hiccups.

Earlier, asked to take first strike, West Indies' openers Evin Lewis and Shai Hope, who relied on timing and placement during his 50-ball 42, batted with restraint to put on 57.

Breaking through
Jadeja provided the breakthrough, having Lewis caught at long-off. Mohammed Shami castled

Hope with a beauty, the batsman missing the line and seeing his middle-stump knocked back.

Roston Chase, who was yet to score when wicket-keeper Pant dropped him off Kuldeep Yadav, and Shimron Hetmyer repaired the innings with a 62-run stand.

The left-handed Hetmyer, who made 37 off 33 balls, had some close shaves and was eventually dismissed when he pulled debutant Navdeep Saini straight to fine-leg fielder Kuldeep.

Saini rattled Chase's stumps with a yorker in the next over, leaving West Indies at 144 for four in the 32nd over.

Toe-crusher

Nicholas Pooran and Kieron Pollard, who needed attention after being hit by a Saini toe-crusher, took the attack to the opposition with a 135-run partnership off just 98 deliveries.

Pooran, who cut, pulled and drove brilliantly, clubbed Saini for three fours

in an over before completing his fifth half-century (89 off 64) of the year. The Trinidadian, who was dropped on 52 and 72 by Pant, was caught at deep extra-cover off Thakur.

Pollard was at his brutal best during his undefeated 51-ball 74.

His knock contained three hits to the fence and seven mighty sixes as the Caribbeans plundered 77 off the final five overs. Though West Indies finished with an impressive total of 315, it proved inadequate.

SCOREBOARD

WEST INDIES

Evin Lewis c Saini b Jadeja 21 (50b, 3x4), Shai Hope b Shami 42 (50b, 5x4), Roston Chase b Saini 38 (48b, 3x4), Shimron Hetmyer c Kuldeep b Saini 33 (33b, 2x4, 2x6), Nicholas Pooran c Jadeja b Shardul 89 (64b, 10x4, 3x6), Kieron Pollard (not out) 74 (51b, 3x4, 7x6), Jason Holder (not out) 7 (4b, 1x4); Extras (lb-4, w-3); Total (for five wkts. in 50 overs): 315.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-57 (Lewis, 14.6, 2-70 (Hope, 19.2), 3-132 (Hetmyer, 29.2), 4-144 (Chase, 31.3), 5-279 (Pooran, 47.5).

INDIA BOWLING

Shardul 10-0-66-1, Shami 10-0-66-1, Saini 10-0-58-2, Kuldeep 10-0-67-0, Jadeja 10-0-54-1.

INDIA

Rohit Sharma c Hope b Holder 63 (63b, 8x4, 1x6), K.L. Rahul c Hope b Joseph 77 (89b, 8x4, 1x6), Virat Kohli b Paul 85 (81b, 9x4), Shreyas Iyer c Joseph b Paul 7 (7b, 1x4), Rishabh Pant b Paul 7 (6b, 1x4), Kedar Jadhav c Cottrell 9 (10b, 1x4), Ravindra Jadeja (not out) 39 (31b, 4x4), Shardul Thakur (not out) 17 (6b, 2x4, 1x6); Extras (lb-2, w-9, nb-1); 12; Total (for six wkts. in 48 overs): 316.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-120 (Rohit, 21.2), 2-167 (Rahul, 29.5), 3-188 (Shreyas, 32.3), 4-201 (Pant, 34.6), 5-228 (Jadhav, 38.5), 6-286 (Kohli, 46.1).

WEST INDIES BOWLING

Cottrell 10-1-74-1, Holder 10-0-63-1, Paul 9.4-0-59-3, Chase 4-0-19-0, Pierre 7-0-46-2, Joseph 8-0-53-1.

Toss: India.

Man-of-the-Match: Kohli.

Man-of-the-series: Rohit.

India won by four wickets with eight balls to spare and clinched series 2-1.

'Maybe 340 would have been a stiffer one'

Jadeja feels that the 316-run target was not a big one

Y.B. SARANGI

CUTTACK
All-rounder Ravindra Jadeja, who kept his nerve in a thrilling chase, said he wanted to be there till the end.

"It was a good wicket to bat on and we needed to play according to the merit of the ball."

"The last 10 overs were very tough for the bowlers because of the dew. And the outfield was fast."

"Virat told me to keep playing normal cricketing shots and not do anything silly," said Jadeja. "After he got out, I knew I needed to play till the end."

Jadeja felt that the 316-run target was not a big one. "It was not a big target to chase on this pitch as the dew factor played a big role. Maybe 340 would have been a stiffer one."

West Indies' top-scorer Nicholas Pooran said he enjoyed his century partnership with captain and mentor Kieron Pollard. "Pollie is like a big brother and he gave me the opportunity. We complement each other while batting."

Pooran said the West Indies will take home some positives despite losing the T20I and ODI series by identical margins (2-1). "We showed that we are fighters and there are better things to come," he said.



STAT SPHERE

1 Kohli has set the world record for scoring the most international runs by an opener in a calendar year, surpassing Jayasuriya
2,442 Rohit (2019)
2,387 Jayasuriya (1997)
2,355 Sehwag (2008)
2,349 Hayden (2003)

1 Kohli is the first player to aggregate 2000-plus runs in four consecutive calendar years. He has recorded the most runs in international cricket for the fourth year on the trot
2019: 2,455 | 2018: 2,735
2017: 2,818 | 2016: 2,595

2 Hope has become the second quickest to 3000 ODI runs, behind Amla

Fewest Innings Taken
57 Amla | **67** Hope
68 Azam | **69** Richards
72 Greenidge, Kirsten, Dhawan & Root

8/8 In 2019, the Indian openers crossed the 50-run partnership eight times in ODIs and went on to convert that into a century stand all the time

Most ODI Runs in this Decade
11,125 Kohli (avg. 60.79)
8,249 Rohit (53.56)
7,265 Amla (49.76)
6,485 de Villiers (64.20)
6,428 Ross Taylor (54.01)



Sri Lanka in dire straits

With four scoring hundreds, Pakistan closes in on victory

SL IN PAKISTAN

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

KARACHI

Sri Lanka opener Oshada Fernando struck a maiden century to delay Pakistan's victory quest after the home team's top four all scored hundreds in the second Test here on Sunday.

Set 476 runs to win, Sri Lanka was tottering at 97 for five before Fernando and Niroshan Dickwella halted the slide with a resolute 104-run stand for the sixth wicket.

But the last three overs of the day saw Dickwella fall for 65 and Dilruwan Perera caught behind off Naseem Shah for five.

The 16-year-old Naseem had the best figures of three for 31.

At close, Sri Lanka was 212 for seven with Oshada (102 not out) at the crease and the visitors needing 264 runs for victory.

Pakistan needs just three wickets on Monday to win



Resolute: Oshada Fernando struck a maiden century to delay Pakistan's victory quest. ■ AP

the series.

Pakistan earlier declared its second innings at lunch on 555 for three after Azhar Ali returned to form with 118 and Babar Azam struck 100 not out.

It was only the second

SCOREBOARD

Pakistan – 1st Innings: 191.
Sri Lanka – 1st Innings: 271.

Pakistan – 2nd Innings: 555.
Sri Lanka – 2nd Innings: 212.

Dimuth Karunaratne c Rizwan b Abbas 16, Oshada Fernando (batting) 102, Kusal Mendis c Azam b Naseem 0, Angelo Mathews c Rizwan b Shaheen 19, Dinesh Chandimal lbw b Naseem 2, Dhananjaya de Silva b Sohail 65, Dilruwan Perera c Rizwan b Naseem 5; Extras (lb-3); Total (for seven wkts. in 60.1 overs): 212.

Fall of wickets: 1-278, 2-355, 3-503.

Sri Lanka bowling:

Vishwa Fernando 24-2-105-0, Kumara 29-5-139-2, Embuldeniya 50-4-193-1, Perera 21-1-94-0, Dhananjaya 7-0-19-0.

Sri Lanka – 2nd Innings:

Sohail 11.1-3-31-3, Yasir 19-2-84-1, Sohail 4-0-10-1.

Will Bumrah make the cut for T20I, ODI series?

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI
The focus will be on pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah as the current selection committee will have its final meeting here on Monday to pick the teams for three T20Is against Sri Lanka and as many ODIs against Australia.

Bumrah, who recovered from stress fracture, is fit again and could be picked for the T20I series against Sri Lanka beginning on January 5, or the ODI series against a full-strength Australian side.



starting on January 14.

Bumrah will most likely make a return for the Australia series.

EURO LEAGUES

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

LONDON

Frank Lampard out-witted Jose Mourinho as Chelsea powered to a 2-0 win at Tottenham on Sunday that featured a double from Willian, a red card for Son Heung-min and allegations of racist abuse.

Billed as a showdown between Mourinho and Lampard, an explosive London derby showed the student is more than a match for the man who served as his mentor during their time together at Chelsea.

On Saturday, Manchester City hit back to beat Leicester 3-1 as the champion kept alive its faint hopes of catching

Premier League leader Liverpool.

The results: Premier League: Watford 2 (Sarr 50, Deeney 54+ pen) bt Manchester United 0; Tottenham 0 lost to Chelsea 2 (Willian 12, 45+ pen).

La Liga: Leganes 2 (Braithwaite 11, En-Nesyri 54) bt Espanyol 0; Osasuna 3 (Ariadne 45+, Avila 49, 84) lost to Real Sociedad 4 (Oyarzabal 15, Portu 18, Odgaard 28, Isak 79); Real Betis 1 (Bartra 90+) lost to Atletico Madrid 2 (Correa 58, Morata 84).

Ganguly-Tendulkar faced better bowlers than Rohit-Kohli: Chappell

Former spent opening together against some of the best fast-bowling combinations

CRICKET

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma have stacked up astonishing numbers while batting as a pair but when it comes to facing quality fast bowlers, the celebrated opening duo of Sachin Tendulkar and Sourav Ganguly had a far tougher job.

"An argument could be mounted that Kohli and Rohit are India's best ever one-day batsmen. The obvious challengers would be the feted combination of Sachin Tendulkar and Sourav Ganguly, who tormented international bowlers for 15 years," Ian Chappell wrote in his column for *ESPNcricinfo*.

Chappell then gave an example of how during the Ganguly-Tendulkar era, each international team had two quality fast bowlers.

Test of skill

"They (Tendulkar-Ganguly) spent bulk of that time opening together against some of the best fast-bowling combinations. Facing Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis from Pakistan; Curtly Ambrose and Courtney Walsh of West Indies; Glenn McGrath and Brett Lee of Australia; Allan Donald and Shaun Pollock for South Africa; Lasith Malinga and Chaminda Vaas of



Great pair: Chappell feels on the basis of the quality of the opposition, Ganguly and Tendulkar had a tough job to do.

■ FILE PHOTO: AFP

Sri Lanka was a serious test of a batsman's skill."

Quoting a comment of Pakistani pace great Imran Khan that "you judge a man by his opponents," Chappell said, "on the basis of the quality of the opposition, you'd have to lean towards Tendulkar and Ganguly.

"However, if you extrapolate their current figures to give Kohli the same number of innings as Tendulkar, and Rohit the equal of Ganguly, the current pair finish well in front," he added.

Chappell acknowledged

that the one indisputable argument was that Kohli and Rohit are the best ever white-ball combination.

"Their combined ODI and T20I records are excellent, with Kohli – averaging over 50 in both formats – at the unbelievable level. To be fair, Tendulkar played very little T20I cricket and Ganguly's career was finished by the time the format blossomed," he wrote.

"Rohit, on the other hand, tends to play risk-free cricket early on, but once he gets motoring, it's a case of 'watch out in the stands'."

"Indian fans have been extremely fortunate to witness, close up, four of the best short-form batsmen of all time," Chappell wrote.

All-round mastery

"With Tendulkar it was his all-round mastery of the art but he never ceased to amaze with his back-foot forcing shots on bouncy pitches for a man short in stature. W

"When he was going there was no better off-side player than Ganguly; his drives, so effortlessly played, would pierce even the most crowded cover field."

About Kohli and Rohit, he said: "It's not so much the huge scores that stamp Kohli's class but the regularity of his success. He punishes bowlers all round the wicket by keeping the ball on the ground the bulk of the time.

Thanks to him eliminating a lot of the risk in batting, his scores are consistently high but still amassed at a good rate.

"He said even though Tendulkar led the way in being the first batsman to score an ODI double-century, Rohit

Harinder Pal returns to winning ways

Life was a dark tunnel for him around this time in 2018

SQUASH

NANDKUMAR MARAR
MUMBAI

The swift retrieving and agile mind displayed on court gave no indication of the anxiety inside Harinder Pal Singh Sandhu's mind. Like draping a veil over a torn fabric, the Indian buzzed around the court at the Willingdon Sports Club (WSC), as if on wheels.

"There are things on court I cannot do. I won't tell," quipped a smiling champion, soaking in the winning feeling after the 11-5, 11-6, 11-7 verdict at the PSA Challenger Tour event.

Ready to fight for every point at the HCL SRFI Indian Squash Tour's third leg, he brushed aside the 120-ranked Tomotaka Endo in three games for the men's open title.



Back with a bang: Harinder Pal Singh Sandhu brushed aside 120-ranked Tomotaka Endo in three games for the men's open title. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

dy in the rehabilitation phase, following the back injury.

He became familiar with medical terms like disk bulges, nerve impingements, scoliosis. The champion got sharper with each winner, celebrating each point won like an escape from a road to hell and back. The Indians has been advised "do's and don'ts" by the sports medicine experts, he did the do's smartly enough to walk away an easy winner.

Life was a dark tunnel for Harinder around this time in 2018 and afterwards.

"I have to give 200% in ev-

ery match to move ahead. I have not fully recovered," he said and added: "2019 was very painful, very depressing after getting injured last December. It took three months to get free from the pain. Squash was not even in my mind."

Harinder won four matches enroute to a coveted title, triumphing Czech Republic's Ondrej Uherka in a match stretching almost one hour.

"This whole week was tough, I was not playing upto my mark. I told myself to hang in there till the match turns in my favour, because I

am playing in my home country and even when you are not doing well, there is a lot of crowd support."

He credits the experts at the Abhinav Bindra Targeting Performance Centre and Primal Patterns (specialists in peak performance fitness training) for recovery.

"They helped me re-educate my body, how to lift things, how to bend properly. My body was not the same it was for so many years, so I went through a full re-education."

The Indian Squash Academy welcomed his return to the court after rehabilitation and motivated him.

For a pro with a career high ranking of 47 in 2018, the New Year resolutions include lasting the course in two tournaments early in 2020. "I hope my body holds and I will be able to carry this form in the Jaipur leg of HCL SRFI Indian Tour in January and the Senior Nationals in February."

Indian men's team to train together

Prepares for World Team Qualification tournament for the 2020 Olympics

TABLE TENNIS

K. KEERTHIVASAN
CHENNAI

Over the next nine days the entire Indian men's table tennis team will be training at the Hall of TT, Nehru Stadium here, in preparation for the World Team Qualification tournament [for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics] to be held in Gondomar, Portugal, from January 22 to 26.

On Sunday, Sharath Kamal was sparring with Manav Thakkar, and India's highest-ranked women's singles player Manika Batra was playing at the far end of the hall with Sanat, a junior paddler from Pune.

India's best singles player G. Sathiyan, Commonwealth champion Harmeet Desai and SAF Games winner A. Amalraj are expected to join the team soon.

Sharath, who was instrumental in organising the camp, said: "We have been without a coach since the 2018 Asian Games – one year and 2 months now. The



Working hard: From left, Manav Thakkar, Manika Batra and Sharath Kamal train at Hall of TT, Nehru Stadium. ■ R. RAGU

Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI) is trying its best. But we can't keep hoping that something will happen," he said.

The Commonwealth Games champion said he and Sathiyan have requested the TTFI to form a panel of Indian coaches to assist the teams in the build up to the Tokyo Olympics.

TOP Scheme-supported camp

In Chennai, the TOP Scheme-supported camp

has an entire ecosystem to help the players. Former Indian TT team sports analyst Rajath Kamal is assisting his brother Sharath in managing the schedule and logistics, and there is the Indian team's physio Hirak Bagchi and fitness trainer Ramji Srivivasan's Sports Dynamix.

"All components except the [head] coach have been added to the camp," smiles Sharath.

With a month for the qualification tournament, Sharath said one of the main



DO NOT GET MISLED BY MISINFORMATION ON THE CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT ACT.

A LOT OF RUMOURS AND MISINFORMATION ARE BEING CIRCULATED, WHICH ARE IN NO WAY TRUE. HERE ARE THE FACTS OF THE CAA.

MYTHS



FACTS

CAA IS TARGETED AT TAKING AWAY CITIZENSHIP FROM INDIAN MUSLIMS

CAA DOES NOT AFFECT ANY EXISTING INDIAN CITIZEN OF ANY RELIGION.

It is about giving citizenship to persecuted minorities settled in India till 2014 and not taking away citizenship from anyone.

CAA IS AGAINST INDIAN MUSLIMS

WRONG. CAA APPLIES ONLY TO MINORITIES FROM THREE COUNTRIES - PAKISTAN, BANGLADESH AND AFGHANISTAN.

It does not concern any Indian of any religion, including Muslims. So, there is no question of it being against Indian Muslims.

DOCUMENTS TO PROVE CITIZENSHIP NEED TO BE COLLECTED RIGHT NOW OR ELSE PEOPLE WILL BE DEPORTED

WRONG. No nationwide NRC has been announced. If and when it is announced, rules and guidelines would be framed such that no Indian citizen would face any harassment whatsoever.

NO INDIAN CITIZEN OF ANY RELIGION OR ANY REGION WILL BE ADVERSELY IMPACTED BY THE CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT ACT.

TV PICKS

NBA: Sony Ten 1, 5.30 a.m. & 8 a.m.
Pakistan vs Sri Lanka: 2nd Test, Sony ESPN (SD & HD), 10.30 a.m.

IN BRIEF



Antetokounmpo marks up another triple double

NEW YORK Giannis Antetokounmpo delivered his third triple-double of the season to power the NBA-leading Milwaukee Bucks over New York Knicks 123-102 on Saturday. Antetokounmpo had 22 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists for the Bucks. **The results:** Utah Jazz 114 bt Charlotte Hornets 107; Brooklyn Nets 122 bt Atlanta Hawks 112; Philadelphia 76ers 125 bt Washington Wizards 108; Chicago Bulls 119 bt Detroit Pistons 107; Milwaukee Bucks 123 bt New York Knicks 102; Memphis Grizzlies 119 bt Sacramento Kings 115; LA Clippers 134 bt San Antonio Spurs 109; Houston Rockets 139 bt Phoenix Suns 125; Portland Trail Blazers 113 bt Minnesota Timberwolves 106. AFP

FC Goa cruises past Odisha, goes top

MARGAO FC Goa sailed to the top of Indian Super League (ISL) table with a 3-0 win over Odisha FC on Sunday. Ferran Corominas, Goa's talisman, netted a brace and Brandon Fernandes scored his first goal of the season. Goa opened through Corominas strike in the 19th minute. The host struck twice in the second half as Coro completed his brace from a spot-kick in the 89th minute. **The result:** FC Goa 3 (Ferran Corominas 19 & 89, Brandon Fernandes 85) bt Odisha FC 0.



England World Cup winner Peters dead

LONDON Martin Peters, who scored England's second goal in the 1966 World Cup final against West Germany, has died aged 76 following a long battle against Alzheimer's disease. Peters, whose death was announced by former club West Ham, was part of the Hammers trio of captain Bobby Moore and Geoff Hurst, who scored a hat-trick in a 4-2 victory for England's only World Cup triumph.

Top seed Meiraba triumphs

DHAKA India's Maisnam Meiraba lived up to his top billing to win the Bangladesh Junior International Series badminton 2019 here on Sunday. Top-seeded Meiraba, who hails from Manipur, beat Ken Yong Ong 21-14, 21-18 in the final lasting 38 minutes. PTI

Two wins for TN men

NATL. BASKETBALL
SPORTS BUREAU LUDHIANA Tamil Nadu men won their both matches, against Railways and Kerala, in the 70th National basketball championship at the Guru Nanak Dev Stadium over the weekend. It defeated Railways 87-66 and Kerala 68-39.

In the women's section, Railways recorded its second win, a 100-55 verdict against Telangana, with Shireen Limaye top scoring (22 points). Madhya Pradesh, too, won its games against Tamil Nadu and Punjab. **The results (league):**

Men: Uttarakhand 77 (Vishesh Bhriguvanshi 30, Arjun Singh 15, Murali Krishna 11) bt Delhi 62 (Rachit 19, Sunil 14).

Punjab 106 (Arshpreet Singh 32, Amrit Singh 19) bt Karnataka 66 (Jitendra 12, M. Harish 12).

Tamil Nadu 87 (Muinbek 19, P. Jeevanathan 14, Prasanna Venkitesh 10) bt Railways 66

Liverpool adds another trophy to its cabinet

Firmino's goal in extra-time proves decisive against an evenly matched Flamengo

CLUB WORLD CUP

AYON SENGUPTA

DOHA

Liverpool kept its date with destiny, winning a dramatic FIFA Club World Cup final against an evenly matched Flamengo at the cheerful Khalifa International Stadium on Saturday.

See-saw battle

After a see-saw battle between two teams sure of their sporting philosophies, it was Brazilian Roberto Firmino who broke the resolve of his countrymen, scoring the game's solitary goal in the 99th minute.

Fellow Brazilian Alisson Becker had done the initial hard work to keep the European champion alive with some timely saves, thwarting every move of Jorge Jesus' side.

After finally winning the trophy that had eluded the club in 1981, '84 and 2005, Jurgen Klopp, the Liverpool manager, struggled to voice his thoughts.

"It was an incredible per-



On top: Liverpool players are in an upbeat mood after lifting the FIFA Club World Cup trophy. ■ GETTY IMAGES

formance in an incredible game against a great opponent. I saw many sensational performances and the atmosphere was great. We deserved to win tonight as we were the better side, the dominant team," he said.

With the recovered Virgil van Dijk re-commanding his position at the heart of the defence, Liverpool started strongly when the Dutchman essayed a long ball over the high defensive line of the Brazilians.

Firmino, however, fluffed the chance. Mohamed Salah got into the action as he teed it to Naby Keita inside the box, but this chance was also squandered.

Flamengo soon found its footing in the game offering

the English giant its own version of counter press as Bruno Henrique, easily the best man on the pitch for the night, used his strength and speed to constantly harangued the Liverpool defence from the left.

The Brazilian, this time, magnificently controlled the ball – flicking it over Rodrigo Caio – to unleash a volley on his second touch, but the ball hit the post before tantalisingly bouncing across the goal, out of harms way.

With skipper Everton Ribeiro and Gabriel Barbosa also joining in, the Copa Libertadores winner slowly wrested control of the midfield. The goal, though, never came its way.

Agonising miss

Liverpool started the second session in almost similar fashion to the first as Jordan Henderson found Firmino, behind the rival defence, with a chipped shot.

The 41-year-old came to Kottayam as the National championship's overall leader, surprisingly in an INRC-3 car – a lower-power vehicle compared to the INRC cars – but the crash gave others behind him, like Younis Ilyas and Bikku Babu, a chance to grab the national trophy.

But Shivram and his brother Dilip Sharani, who is his navigator, and his team worked hard last night and brought the Polo back to run the final day on Sunday. And the three points he earned in the second leg helped the Bengaluru driver claim his maiden overall National title with 78 points.

Meanwhile, after all the problems earlier this season, everything fell in place for Gaurav Gill as he retained the Popular Rally title for his first victory in the National championship this season. It was also Gill's fifth triumph in Popular, which is supported by the Kuttukaran Group.

Bikku Babu and Dean Mascarenhas finished second and third in the Popular Rally.

Shivram claims maiden National title

STAN RAYAN

KOTTAYAM

When he crashed and went off the road a few minutes after the start of the 25th Popular Rally here on Saturday, Chetan Shivram thought his stunning run in the Champions Yacht Club FMSCI Indian National Rally Championship was over.

The 41-year-old came to Kottayam as the National championship's overall leader, surprisingly in an INRC-3 car – a lower-power vehicle compared to the INRC cars – but the crash gave others behind him, like Younis Ilyas and Bikku Babu, a chance to grab the national trophy.

Qatari referee Abdulrahman Al Jassim had a moment of nervousness as he consulted long with VAR to disallow a Liverpool penalty in the first minute of stoppage time.

Flamengo, unfortunately, failed to capitalise on the reprieve as Firmino finally had his goal and Liverpool its title.

Meanwhile, after all the problems earlier this season, everything fell in place for Gaurav Gill as he retained the Popular Rally title for his first victory in the National championship this season. It was also Gill's fifth triumph in Popular, which is supported by the Kuttukaran Group.

Bikku Babu and Dean Mascarenhas finished second and third in the Popular Rally.

TRAU holds Real, gets off the mark

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Debutant Tiddim Road Athletic Union (TRAU) earned its maiden I-League point on Sunday after a 2-2 draw with Real Kashmir FC here on Sunday.

Real led 1-0 at half-time, but the home side fought back admirably well in the second to split points with the Srinagar-based side.

The result: TRAU 2 (Emeka 78, Uche 82) drew with Real Kashmir 2 (Mason 27 & 84).

RACING

Exclusive Blue claims the Speaker's Cup

HYDERABAD: Exclusive Blue (Ashhad Asbar up) won the Speaker's Cup, the feature event of the races held here on Sunday (Dec. 22). The winner is owned by Mr. G. Narasa Reddy and trained by Laxman Singh.

SOLITAIRE PLATE (1,200m), 1 maiden 2-y-o colts & geldings only (Cat. II), (Terms): WHISKEY MARTINI (Rohit Kumar) 1, Kapell Bruke (Akshay Kumar) 2, Team Player (Nakhat Singh) 3 and Chickut (Rafique Sk.) 4. 1-1/2, 2 and 1/2, 13.86s. ₹34 (w), 6, 6 and 5 (p), SHP: 29, FP: 65, Q: 17, Tla: 236. Favourite: Kapell Bruke. Owners: M/s. Veeramachaneni Arjun & Nagendra Prasad Veeramachaneni. Trainer: Laxman Singh.

OLYMPIC FLAME PLATE (Div. II), (1,000m), 3-y-o & over, rated upto 25 (Cat. III): BLAZING SPEED (Rohit Kumar) 1, Conoco Coast (Surya Prakash) 2, Ashwa Vudh Vijeta (N. Rawal) 3 and Negress Princess (Gaddam) 4. 2, 1-1/2 and 1-1/4. Im 8.18s. ₹10 (w), 5, 9 and 18 (p), SHP: 20, FP: 39, Q: 21, Tla: 496. Favourite: Blazing Speed. Owner: Dr. G. Lakshmi Prasad. Trainer: Sreekanth.

CYNDY PLATE (Div. I, (1,600m)), 3-y-o & over, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III): RED RIVER (Jitendra Singh) 1, Maxwell (Kuldeep Singh) 2, Jo Malone (Afroz Khan) 3 and

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