

# ECHO WORLD



**A tourist child in tradition Kashmiri dress pose for photograph in a Shikara, at Dal Lake in Srinagar on Tuesday**

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## SC makes playing of national anthem in cinemas optional

**NEW DELHI, JAN 9 /-** The Supreme Court today made the playing of national anthem in cinema halls before screening of movies optional. The apex court modified its November 30, 2016, order by which it had made playing of the anthem mandatory in cinema halls before the screening of a film. A bench headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra said a 12-member inter-ministerial committee, headed by the Centre, would take a final call on the playing of national anthem in the cinemas. The bench, also comprising Justices A M Khanwilkar and D Y Chandrachud, said the committee should henceforth look into all the aspects relating to the playing of national anthem and allowed the petitioners to make representations before the panel. The bench, while disposing of the petitions pending before it, made it clear that the exemption granted earlier to disabled persons from standing in the cinema halls when the national anthem is being played, shall remain in force till the committee takes a decision. The top court accepted the government's affidavit which said that the 12-member panel has been set up to suggest changes in the 1971 Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act. Attorney General K K Venugopal told the bench that the committee will submit its report within six months.

## AT A GLANCE

**Promoter gunned down in city**  
**KOLKATA:** A promoter was gunned down allegedly by another promoter on an open street this morning in the city's Kamra area. Police said the promoter was shot from close range by the other promoter, who was his friend-turned foe at around 9.45 am when he was accompanying his son to school. The promoter was declared brought dead when rushed to a nearby hospital and locals ransacked the accused's residence and office. A large police force was rushed but none was arrested.

**2 militants killed in JaK encounter**  
**SRINAGAR:** Two militants were killed in an encounter with security forces in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir today, the army said. "Two militants have been killed in an anti-insurgency operation in Larnoo area of Kokeranag in Anantnag district," an Army official said. He said the operation was in progress when last reports came in. The identities of the slain militants were yet to be ascertained.

**30 Chinese firms to take part in BGBS**  
**KOLKATA:** Thirty Chinese companies would participate in the upcoming Bengal Global Business Summit (BGBS) to be held in the metropolis later this month. Consul general of China in Kolkata Ma Zhanwu said that out of the 30, 10 of them would be participating for the first time in the business summit to be held here on January 16 and 17. The remaining 20 already have ongoing projects in India, he said briefing newsmen here today.

# Shall guard against politics of hatred: Mevani

## Refusal to allow rally an example of Gujarat model of politics, says Dalit leader

**NEW DELHI, JAN 9 /-** The Narendra Modi-led Union government poses a "threat" to the country's democracy and Constitution, Dalit leader Jignesh Mevani said today at a youth rally for which the Delhi Police had refused permission. The newly-elected MLA from Vadgam in Gujarat termed the refusal to grant permission to the effective implementation of the Constitution an example of the "Gujarat model" of politics. "The 125 crore people of this country are watching that someone is not being allowed to speak for merely demanding the release of Chandrasekhar Azad, effective implementation of the Constitution and two crore jobs to the youth. "If an elected representative does not have the right to speak then this is Gujarat model," the Dalit leader said to loud cheers from a crowd comprising student activists from Delhi, Lucknow and

Allahabad among other places. The rally -- held in Parliament Street in the heart of the national capital where prohibitory orders are in force through the year -- was demanding the release of Dalit outfit Bhim Army founder Chandrasekhar Azad. The gathering also sought to emphasise issues like educational rights, employment, livelihood and gender justice. Mevani said he will stand guard against the politics of hatred and stick to constitutional values and the "politics of love", along the lines of statements made by Congress president Rahul Gandhi after the Gujarat polls. "I believe in politics of unity. I believe in politics of love, not love jihad. Alpesh Thakore, Hardik Patel and I are being targeted because we demolished their (BJP) pride and arrogance in Gujarat. There's a looming threat to our democracy and Constitution today," he said. Although authorities had main-

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Gujarat MLA Jignesh Mevani addressing 'Yuva Hunkar Rally' at Parliament Street in New Delhi on Tuesday

tained till the last minute that the new MLA and his supporters did not have permission to hold the event, it seems the rally organisers and Delhi Police reached a compromise later. The rally, which began around 1 pm, saw a modest turnout. Former and current JNU student leaders, including Kanhaiya Kumar, Shehla Rashid and Umar Khalid were present on the stage, metres away from the Parliament Street Police Station. Assam farmers leader Akhil Gogoi and senior Supreme Court lawyer Prashant Bhushan were also present, apart from students from JNU, Delhi University, Lucknow University and Allahabad University among others. Azad (30) was arrested in June last year from Himachal Pradesh as he is the main accused in Thakur-Dalit clashes in Uttar Pradesh's Saharanpur district. His supporters turned up with posters bearing his image.

# If there is trouble in Assam, Bengal is affected: Mamata

■ PRASHANT ACHARYA  
■ SOUMYA DE SARKAR

**SILIGURI, JAN 9 /-** Chief minister Mamata Banerjee slammed the BJP for allegedly creating a communal divide in the state saying it was creating unrest and social tension. "BJP is coveting Adivasis into RSS cadre in the name of providing education by forming non-government organizations. Their false assurance to Adivasis in the name of education will no longer be tolerable. And talking of the CPM, they did nothing for the people of the state in the past. Now some of their members are joining hands with BJP," the chief minister said during her speech at a rally at Alipurduar. Mamata accused the BJP of harming the country's economy by announcing demonetisation and introducing the Goods and Services Tax (GST). Mamata also used the occasion to accuse the BJP for allegedly hatching a conspiracy to drive out Bengalis from Assam. "I would like to



Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee getting down from the helicopter at Uttar Parokata in Alipurduar...Bala Sutradhar

know why the names of over one crore people did not figure in the first draft of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam. If there is any problem in Assam, as a neighbouring state, West Bengal is also affected. It is a pity of the BJP to drive out not only Bengalis out of Assam but those from Bihar settled there too. I am saying this because it hurts us," she said at the rally. Asking the people of this north Bengal town to stay alert, the Trinamool Congress (TMC) chief urged them to give shelter to those left out of the NRC, if they were forced to leave Assam. Mamata fumed: "I would like to ask my BJP friends that how long they will continue to spread canards, instigate riots and hatch conspiracies. They must learn that the people and the country can prosper only if peace prevails." Incidentally, Assam Police had registered an FIR against the West Bengal chief minister last week for an alleged inflammatory speech to trigger an enmity between the people on the updating of the NRC.

# India equipped to lead, guide world against instability: PM

■ We do not eye anyone's territory; we seek ties based on humanity, he says

**NEW DELHI, JAN 9 /-** Prime Minister Narendra Modi today said India has no intention of exploiting any country's resources and is not eyeing anyone's territory, basing its relationships not on "profit or loss" but on humanity. Addressing the first PIO Parliamentarians Conference here, Modi said India has always played a constructive role in the world arena. If any philosophy can counter extremism and radicalisation, it is Mahatma Gandhi's and India's philosophy of non-violence and 'satyagraha', he noted. "We neither have the intention of exploiting anyone's resources nor are we eyeing anyone's territory. Our focus has always been on capacity building and resource development," the Prime Minister said. The comments come in the wake of increasing border tensions in certain sectors of India's border with China. "India is that country which has always played a constructive role in the world arena. We have not weighed our policy towards any country on profit or loss basis, but have viewed it from the prism of human values," Modi said. India's model of development aid, he added, is not based on give and take, but depends on the needs and



PM Narendra Modi being received by External Affairs Minister Sushma Swara on arrival at the First PIO Parliamentarians Conference in New Delhi on Tuesday

priorities of countries. "At a time when the world is divided by ideologies, India believes in the mantra of 'sabka saath, sabka vikas'," he said. "When concerns over extremism and radicalisation in the world are increasing, India's message of inclusiveness can go out to the world, the Prime Minister told the Parliamentarians. "If there is any philosophy to counter radicalisation and extremism, it is the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and the philosophy of Indian values," he said. India, with its rich values and traditions, has the power to lead and guide the world dealing with instability, Modi said. According to the Prime Minister, the 21st century is known as the Asian century and India has an important role to play in it. Persons of Indian origin can take pride in the country's increasing strength worldwide, he told the gathering. Modi also called on Indian origin lawmakers from across the world to be partners in India's development and act as catalysts in the country's economic growth. Over half of the total investment into the country came in only last three years with a record USD 16 billion of foreign direct investment (FDI) last year. All this has happened due to far-reaching policy changes ushered in by his government, with "reform and transform" being its guiding principle, the Prime Minister said.

# China mum over Gen Rawat's remarks on PLA troop reduction in Doklam area

**BEIJING, JAN 9 /-** China today skirted a direct response to Army Chief Prakash Singh's remarks that there was a major reduction of Chinese troops in Doklam, but insisted that its soldiers stationed in the area were exercising "sovereignty rights". China and India were engaged in a 73-day tense standoff at Doklam in the Sikkim sector which ended on August 28. "The Dong Lang (Doklam) area has all along been part of China and under China's continuous and effective jurisdiction. There is no dispute in this regard," Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Lu Kang told the media when asked about Rawat's remarks. The Indian Army Chief had on Monday said Indian and Chinese troops had resolved an issue over the recent attempt by Chinese

teams to build a road on the Indian side of the border at Tuting in Arunachal Pradesh. Rawat also said there was a major reduction of Chinese troops in the Doklam area. "Chinese border troops patrolling and stationing in the Dong Lang area are exercising sovereignty rights in accordance with the stipulations of historical conventions and upholding territorial sovereignty," he said, without commenting on the troop reduction. Lu also did not directly refer to Rawat's comment that India and China have sorted out the issue relating to the plans of Chinese troops to construct a road well into the Indian territory at Tuting in Arunachal Pradesh in the last week of December. Lu reiterated China's claims over Arunachal Pradesh which Beijing says is part of South Tibet.



Army Chief Prakash Singh

# PIL in Calcutta HC challenging CU's decision to honour CM with D.Litt

**KOLKATA, JAN 9 /-** A public interest litigation (PIL) challenging the Calcutta University's (CU) decision to honour West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee with a D.Litt has been filed before the Calcutta High Court and is likely to be heard on Wednesday. The CU has announced that it will bestow the honorary D.Litt on the Trinamool Congress (TMC) chief, an alumna, for her contribution to social service at its convocation on January 11. "We have filed a PIL, challenging the decision of the university on several grounds of her illegitimacy which will place before the high court during the hearing," lawyer Shamim Ahmed said here today. The petition claimed that the decision of the syndicate and senate of the university to honour Mamata with D.Litt was arbitrary and devoid of any proper reasoning. "The members of the university senate appointed by the state government, which is headed by Banerjee. The same people have decided to honour the chief minister with the honorary D.Litt," Ahmed claimed. The PIL will be moved before a division bench of Acting Chief Justice J B Bhattacharya on Wednesday. The convocation will be held at the Nazrul Mancha auditorium in south Kolkata, instead of the institution's own Centenary Hall on its College Street campus.

# Madrasas produce terrorists, not docs or engineers: Shia Board chief writes to PM, UP CM

**NEW DELHI, JAN 9 /-** In a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath, the Shia Central Waqf Board today claimed that madrasas breed terrorists and efforts should be made to shift them into mainstream education. "Madrasas should be affiliated to CBSE, ICSE and allow

engineers, doctors, IAS officers," questioned Shia Board chairman Wasim Rizvi. "Yes, but some Madrasas have produced terrorists," he added. Putting forward the suggestion of bringing Madrasas under formal education boards, Rizvi added, "Madrasas should be affiliated to CBSE, ICSE and allow

Rizvi. Rizvi's statement has not gone down well with several Islamic outfits. Asaduddin Owaisi, president of the All India Majlis-e-Talimiha d ul Muslimeen, called the Shia Board chairman a 'buffoon' and an opportunist. "Wasim Rizvi is the biggest joker, the most opportunist person. He has sold his soul



Shia Central Waqf Board chairman Wasim Rizvi

to RSS. I challenge this buffoon to show one Shia or Sunni or Madrasa where such teachings are imparted. If he has proof then he should go and show it to the home minister," said Owaisi. Earlier this week, Madrasas refused to abide by the government's Uttarakhnad order of government's order of installing PM Modi's portrait in all educational institutions claiming it is "against Sharia". "It is against Sharia. There had never been order to put photos of any Prime Minister ever, why now? The government must think before issuing orders which affects the sharia, religion and sentiments," he added.