

## 'Show Me A Country That Says Everybody Is Welcome': Jaishankar On CAA



No country in the world says everybody is welcome, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Saturday, hitting out at those criticising India over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

Jaishankar criticised the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) for its criticism on the situation in Jammu and Kashmir, saying its director had been wrong previously too and one should look at the UN body's past record on handling the Kashmir issue.

"We have tried to reduce the number of stateless people through this legislation. That should be appreciated," he said when asked about the CAA at the ET Global Business Summit.

"We have done it in a way that we do not create a bigger problem for ourselves." "Everybody,

when they look at citizenship, have a context and has a criterion. Show me a country in the world which says everybody in the world is welcome. Nobody says that," the minister said.

The external affairs minister said moving out of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) was in the interest of India's business.

Asked about the UNHRC director not agreeing with India on the Kashmir issue, Jaishankar said: "UNHRC director has been wrong before.

"UNHRC skirts around cross-border terrorism as if it has nothing to do with country next door. Please understand where they are coming from; look at UNHRC's record how they handled Kashmir issue in past," he added.

## 'They Have Been Wrong Before': Foreign Minister Jaishankar On Unhrc's CAA Move



External affairs minister S Jaishankar said on Saturday the United Nations rights body has been wrong before amid its decision to approach the Supreme Court challenging the amended citizenship act.

The commissioner of the UN Human Rights Commission (UNHRC), Michelle Bachelet, had on Monday informed India that her office has filed an intervention application in Supreme Court over the Citizenship Amendment Act or CAA.

India has already said the citizenship act is an internal matter of India and that no foreign party has a locus standi on issues related to the country's sovereignty.

And on Saturday, Jaishankar said every country, including the US, has different citizenship criteria which are based on context and social criteria.

The minister also pointed out that the international body has been wrong before as he cited its reports and statements on the situation in Jammu and Kashmir.

"They carefully skirt around the problem of cross-border terrorism in the region as if it has nothing to do with Kashmir," he said at the Global Business Summit, according to news agency ANI.

Jaishankar was also asked if India has not been able to explain its position on CAA or has been misunderstood.

"There are sections of the

world outside the media. I engage governments. I was in a room with 27 foreign ministers in Brussels whom I was talking to... Point we make on CAA is that it can't be anybody's case that a government and parliament doesn't have the right to set terms of citizenship," he said in his reply, ANI reported.

"We have tried to reduce a large number of stateless people we have in this country. Everybody, when they look at citizenship, has a context," he added.

Jaishankar also said New Delhi is now getting to know who its true allies were when he asked if "we are losing friends in the world".

"Maybe we are getting to know who our friends really are," he said.

Bachelet has also expressed serious concern over CAA and the riots in north-east Delhi and called on India's leadership to prevent further violence.

The United Nations human rights office had described the citizenship act as "fundamentally discriminatory in nature" and had called for it to be reviewed shortly after it was passed by Parliament in December last year.

India has said CAA was aimed at protecting minorities from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan, but the UN body noted that the law "does not extend the same protection to Muslims, including minority sects".



## Stay Away From Rumours Regarding Coronavirus: PM Appeals To People

**NEW DELHI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday asked people to stay away from rumours regarding coronavirus and emphasised on the need to follow the advice of doctors in this regard.

He also asked people to avoid handshakes and start greeting others with 'namaste' once again.

Modi was interacting with owners of Jan Aushadhi Ken-

dras and beneficiaries of the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) through video conference.

"I appeal to my fellow countrymen to stay away from rumours regarding coronavirus," Modi said.

We need to follow the advice of doctors in this regard, he said.

People should avoid handshakes and start greeting oth-

ers with 'namaste' once again, the Prime Minister added.

Talking about the impact of the PMBJP initiative, he said every month, over one crore families are getting benefits of cheap medicines from these Jan Aushadhi Kendras.

Over 6,000 Jan Aushadhi Kendras across the country have helped people save between Rs 2,000-2,500 crore, he added.

## Coronavirus: Kuwait Sends 170 Passengers Back To India

A total of 170 passengers to Kuwait who arrived at the Kozhikode international airport on Saturday morning were sent back after flights from India were banned by Kuwait's Directorate General of Civil Aviation.

The Air India Express to Kuwait and Etihad flight to Kuwait via Abu Dhabi have been cancelled.

In the wake of Covid 19, Kuwait announced the suspension of all flights to and from Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Bangladesh, Philippines, India and Sri Lanka for a week starting Saturday. It also banned the entry of anyone who has been in those seven countries in the last two weeks.



The passengers were not informed of the ban and they came to know about it after reaching the airport. The airport authorities said that they received a circular from Kuwait's Directorate General of

Civil Aviation. Passengers mainly from Kozhikode, Kannur, Palakkad and Malappuram protested at the airport against the last minute communication regarding cancellation of flights.

## Masks Required For Those Having Symptoms, People Close To Them: AIIMS Doctor

**NEW DELHI:** Respiratory masks are now coming at a premium due to a sudden spurt in their demand which is largely being fuelled by fear surrounding over coronavirus. "I tried looking out for masks at medical stores, they are charging at least Rs 100-200 more for the better quality ones. Even the surgical masks are being sold at higher prices. I can compare because I purchase almost throughout the year," said Sukanya Mitra, a resident of Uttam Nagar said.

Vivek Chauthan from Preet Vihar also faced a similar task. "Since most of the masks don't have any manufacturing price labelled on it, the buyers are paying off whatever is being touted. Also, since it is required, consumers have no choice but to purchase."

Outside AIIMS and Safdarjung hospital, medical stores are speedily running out of stocks. While surgical masks are still available,



many medical shops are running out of better quality masks.

"Demand is mostly for middle-priced masks. The costlier ones have selected takers. But, it is true that there is a sudden demand owing to which many shop owners are failing to cope with the surge," said a medical store owner.

The shops are also exper-

riencing heavy demand because of patients rushing in from these hospitals. "Usually during winter and post Diwali people look for masks. Stores who have stock unsold from that time are able to sell now. The common surgical mask is still available," noted another one.

A senior doctor has a different opinion on the use of masks. Dr Vijay Hadda, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Pulmonary Medicine and Sleep Disorders, AIIMS, said masks are to be used only by those with symptoms or medical representatives attending patients. "Masks are not required for those who doesn't have symptoms. The purpose of surgical masks is to prevent from infection and the problem is that it doesn't fit well. Although, N-95 masks are the best that is not recommended for daily use. It is for doctors," he added.

## Not A Single Bomb Blast Under PM Modi's Watch: Javadekar



**PUNE:-** Union minister Prakash Javadekar on Saturday said that not a single bomb blast had taken place in the country in the last six years thanks to the strong security measures taken by Narendra Modi government.

Javadekar was speaking at a function to mark the 'Jan Aushadhi Divas' at the B J Medical College here.

Later, Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the gathering via video conferencing.

In his speech, Javadekar cited various schemes related to healthcare and said that providing affordable healthcare facilities for the poor is the 'mantra' adopted by the PM.

"Various schemes and efforts taken by Modi ji such as lowering the rates of medicines, stents and implants, setting up Janushadhi shops, Ayushyam Bharat scheme and promoting Yoga and Fit India Movement to keep the ailments at bay, shows his concern for the poor," the Information and Broadcasting Minister said.

He also said that before the Modi government came to power in 2014, the country used to

witness bomb blasts in various cities on a regular basis.

"What we had experienced for 10-15 years (before Modi government came to power)? We saw bomb blasts taking place in Pune, Vadodra, Ahmedabad, Delhi and Mumbai. Every eight to ten days, blasts used to happen and people used to get killed.

But in the last six years, not a single incident of blast has taken place.

"This has not happened just like that but due to some strong measures undertaken by the PM to ensure the safety and security in the country," Javadekar added.

Talking about the Jan Aushadhi Shops, the minister said more than 6000 such shops are being set up and 2-3 lakh people are getting the benefitted everyday. "As people are getting medicines at affordable and cheaper rates, such shops should be promoted," he said.

Javadekar also lauded the Centre's initiatives to make the country open defecation free and construct toilets. "The United Nations has appreciated the efforts," he added.

## Blocked Malayalam Channels Resume Broadcast



The Centre's temporary ban on two Malayalam channels Asianet News and Media One invited widespread criticism. Opinion makers, political leaders, scribes' unions and noted personalities have registered strong protest against the ban.

Congress MP from the state and senior party leader Shashi Tharoor expressed his dissent through his twitter handle. "How on earth can Malayalam channels inflame communal passions in Delhi? Whereas the truly vicious propaganda channels continue their brazen distortions w/impunity. Asianet News and MediaOne are fine independent media. LiftTheBan now," he tweeted.

However, hours after the ban was imposed, Asianet News resumed broadcasting. And the ban on Media One was lifted today morning.

The ministry of information and broadcasting announced a 48-hour ban on the two channels on Friday evening for allegedly covering the violence in Delhi in a biased manner.

The Kerala Working Journalists Union is organising protest marches and meetings in all districts across Kerala and in New Delhi.

"The Centre is trying to silence the media for reporting the truth. They are trying to impose an undeclared emergency. It is the most undemocratic stand that media should report as per the wish of government," said K.P Reji, state president of KUWJ.

Asianet channel sources said that though they had submitted an explanation earlier to the ministry, they had not been informed about the decision to block the channels. The Media One editor-in-chief CL Thomas made it clear that they will legally fight against the ban. It is a blatant attack against free and fair journalism, he said in a statement.

The Centre's decision to lift the ban before 48 hours might follow a strong protest and pressure from various quarters.

CPM state secretary Kodiyeri Balakrishnan and Opposition leader Ramesh Chennithala strongly condemned the ban.

"The communal riots are engineered by the government support and the Modi government is trying to shut down media organisations which does not report as per its wish," Kodiyeri said. Ramesh Chennithala stressed the need to unitedly resist such fascist steps.

### NEWS MAKERS

## Uddhav Thackeray Marks 100 Days In Office By Visiting Ayodhya Today

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, along with his son and Sena leader Aaditya, reached Ayodhya on Saturday. The Thackerays' visit coincides with Uddhav completing 100 days in office.

Addressing a gathering at Ayodhya he expressed his delight for the visit and said "I am here to seek blessings of Ram Lalla. I have with me today several members of my 'Bhagwa' family. It is my third visit in the last 1.5 years. I will also offer prayers today," ANI reported.

He further announced that he will be donating a sum of Rs one crore for the Ram temple. "This sum is not from the government but from my trust" he highlighted.



Talking to Twitter this morning, senior Sena leader Sanjay

Raut hinted that the Chief Minister might make an important announcement with regard to the construction of the Ram temple in the city. He is scheduled to reach Faizabad at 1.30 pm.

Amid coronavirus fears, the Sena chief will not participate in the Sarayu river aarti programme that was a part of his initial Ayodhya visit itinerary. He will, however, offer prayers at the Ram temple.

"Maharashtra Chief Minister and Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray will visit Ayodhya but will not participate in the 'Aarti' programme on the banks of Sarayu River due to coronavirus," Raut was quoted as saying by news agency ANI yesterday.

Shiv Sainiks in large numbers are expected to greet the Sena chief, who will also be accompanied by his wife Rashmi Thackeray.

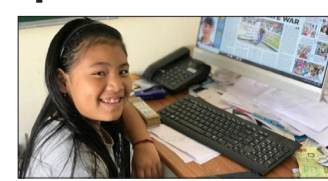
Thackeray's visit to Ayodhya, his first since assuming office, comes a month after the Union Cabinet cleared the formation of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust. However, the party has iterated that his visit should not be viewed in a political spectrum.

Thackeray had visited Ayodhya last June after the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. He had previously visited the city in November 2018, during which he had asked the BJP to announce when construction work for the Ram temple would begin.

## 8-Year-Old Climate Activist Turns Down PM'S #Sheinspiresus Honour

Upset over her demands going unheard, Manipuri climate change activist Licypriya Kangjum has turned down Prime Minister Narendra Modi's honour of joining the #SheInspiresUs campaign ahead of International Women's Day on Sunday.

On Friday, the government took to Twitter to share the story of the eight-year-old as one of the inspirations. "@mygovindia@LicypriyaK is a child environmental activist from Manipur. In 2019, she was awarded a Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Children Award, a World Children Peace Prize, and an India Peace Prize. Isn't she inspiring? Do you know some-



one like her? Tell us, using #SheInspiresUs," the government posted on the micro-blogging site.

Responding to this, Kangjum, who had staged a protest outside Parliament in July last year, wrote: "Dear Narendra Modi ji, Please don't celebrate me if you are not going to listen to my voice. Thank you for selecting me amongst the inspiring women of

the country under your initiative #SheInspiresUs. After thinking many times, I decided to turn down this honour. Jai Hind!"

Speaking to indianexpress.com later, Kangjum said it is an honour to attain recognition from the government, but she could not see her demands to curb climate change fall on deaf ears.

"It (the campaign) may be a good initiative to them, but considering the crimes against women and children, I don't think it can solve anything. This will be like applying a fairness cream on our face which no longer stays once you clean yourself," she added.