

## Why are there riots in New Delhi?

**News:** President Trump ended his visit to India in the country's capital in New Delhi. As he was enjoying a lavish welcome and state dinner at one end of the city, there were violent riots in another. The riots took place in the slum districts in the north-east of the city. The riots have left at least 27 dead, dozens injured, and many properties burnt and damaged.

### What caused the riots?

Peaceful protests against the [CAB \(Citizenship Amendment Bill\)](#) started in Shaheen Bagh, a predominantly Muslim area, on December 14. People have been protesting here non-stop (for 24 hours) since that date. Reports say that there are anywhere from 1,000 to 20,000 protesters there every day.

Like this, there have been protests across Delhi and other parts of India. People are protesting what they feel is an anti-Muslim Bill. Many Muslims feel like they have been targeted and may be stripped of their rights. Muslims make up 4% of India's population and 13% of Delhi's.

Last week on Sunday, a leader of the ruling party in India, the BJP, warned the peaceful protesters to vacate the protest sites in the north-eastern parts of Delhi. On Monday, the police tried to forcefully evacuate the protesters, which led to violence between the groups that have escalated over the past few days.

**Got it. What's happening there now?** Extra police have been deployed across Delhi, and the situation is still unfolding.

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Written by: Biyash Choksey and Sunaina Murthy

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## Protest Art!



Credit: weburbanist.com

## **Hey, I heard a new term - Bushfire Brandalism. Have you?**

Yup. 'Bushfire Brandalism' is when a bunch of Australian artists in three cities changed advertising on bus shelters with posters criticising how Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and his government were handling the bushfire crisis. Each poster had a QR code on it that linked to a charity that was helping bushfire related charities that the artist supported

## **Did Mr Morrison respond well?**

Er, not really. Of all the 78 posters put up, most have been taken down. But the artists insist they needed to take action against what they thought was the response of the Morrison government to control the fires, including denying it was climate-change related.

## **I like the idea of using nonviolent ways to protest. Has it been done before?**

Yes, many times in various forms, and for many, many years. In recent times, British artists, the KLF, were famous for it in the 1990s. Another example is street artist Banksy who has also taken political art to a very visible level. Further, in 2015, during the UN climate change conference in Paris, 600 bus shelters were taken over and plastered with climate awareness art posters.



Banksy, Credit: theconversation.com

**I've seen some interesting signs during the anti-NRC and CAA movement here in India too.**

Oh yes! Creative posters and placards, poetry, graffiti, songs and slogans and of course memes, have all played a part in growing the movement. Some used humour, others had a more serious tone. But the has become an outlet for anger and frustration that people have felt. Many went viral like the sketch that artist Tanzeela made after the assault on students in Jamia Milia University.



Caption: Protest art - Tanzeela, Credit: upnewsmedia.com

## **So freedom of speech lives on?!**

The artists are doing their best to ensure that. However, they are being muzzled. For example, during the Serendipity Arts Festival in Goa last December, the space that was showing three pieces of 'controversial' artwork was abruptly shut down. More bizarrely, a school play in Karnataka that was seen to be anti-CAA received a lot of attention. The children performing were questioned for hours by police, and one of the playwrights, a parent at the school, was even put in jail!

## **That is not on! People must be allowed the freedom of speech, whatever their views!**



Written by: Pereena Lamba. Pereena is a freelance writer, editor and creative consultant. She is also co-author of *Totally Mumbai*.

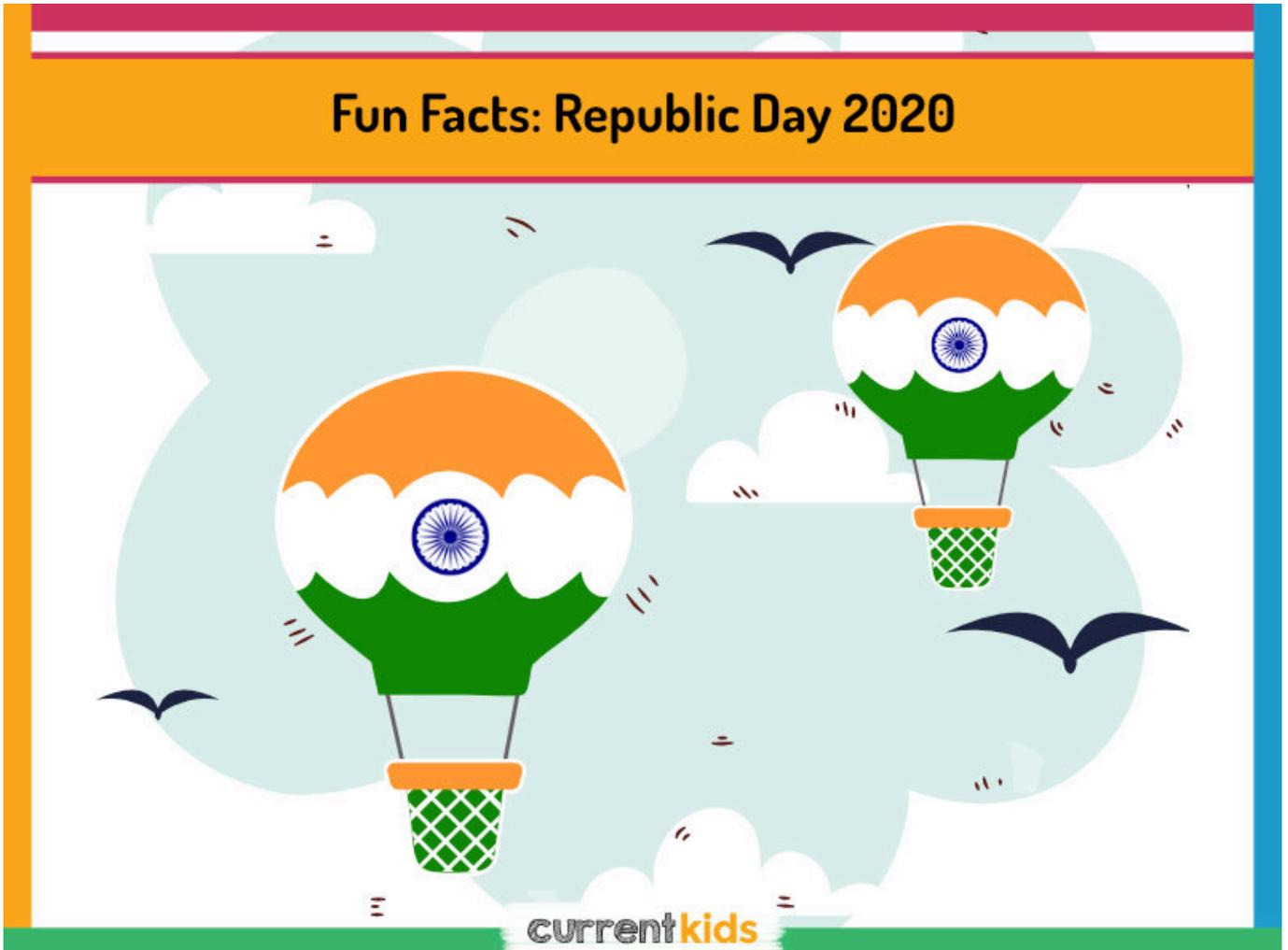
## Get With It!

Here's your quiz on what went on in the world last week. How much do you know? Check it out!

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**It is Republic Day in India. Here are some things people are talking about.**

## Fun Facts: Republic Day 2020



**This Sunday, January 26, 2020, brings India her 71st Republic Day. India gained her Independence in 1947, it was three years later on January 26, 1950 that we adopted our Constitution and became a 'republic'. It is marked every year by a magnificent parade that takes place in New Delhi.**

**Why did we choose January 26th as Republic Day?** It is the same date on which, in 1930, twenty years before the adoption of the Constitution, that the Indian National Congress decided on complete independence or Purna Swaraj from the British empire.

If you would like to read our Constitution, it's going to take a while. **The Indian Constitution is the longest in the world.** At last count, it had 448 articles in 22 parts with 12 schedules and 97 amendments! No wonder it took Dr B.R. Ambedkar nearly three years to write it!

Our Constitution is also one of the few to have a Preamble. **The Preamble is an introduction to the Constitution and**

**spells out its main purpose and philosophy.** The word Fraternity was added at the last minute as the Drafting Committee thought it necessary to emphasise this after Partition in 1947. Another change was made in 1976, when the words ' Socialist, Secular and Integrity' were added to the first line. Given all the protests that are taking place across the country, many people are talking about and raising awareness about the contents of the Preamble.

### **Here's the Preamble of Indian Constitution**

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizens:

JUSTICE, social, economic and political;

LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;

EQUALITY of status and of opportunity;

and to promote among them all

FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation

### **Here are some of the things people are talking about on Republic Day 2020:**

**Tableaus:** Every year, there are tableaus or 'floats' from various states on show during the Parade. This year there is an exciting new one - a Start-Up tableau with the theme, 'Reach for the Sky'. One of the highlights will be performers wearing AR and VR glasses! Look out for this one if you are there or watching on TV!

The **Chief Guest** at this year's event is Brazilian President Jair Messias Bolsonaro. Brazil has spoken against India at the WTO (World Trade Organisation) in the past and so farmers are upset that he has been invited. Others are too, as Mr Bolsonaro has strong views against LGBTQ people, women and immigrants. He is also unpopular with environmentalists, having recently passed several policies (especially in the Brazilian Amazon rainforest) against the global climate change agenda.

Another tradition is the **Beating Retreat Ceremony** on January 29th, which marks the end of the Republic Day celebrations. Every year, the Christian hymn 'Abide With Me', one of Mahatma Gandhi's favourite songs, plays towards the end of the ceremony. However this year, the Defence Ministry dropped it from the list of tunes. The move was severely criticised for being seen as 'non-inclusive'. It has now been reintroduced and will be played, along with Vande Mataram.

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## A student's thoughts on the Citizenship Amendment Act



The Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) basically states that religious minorities who have sought asylum in India from Bangladesh, Pakistan or Afghanistan and have resided in India for at least 7 years will be granted citizenship even if they don't have any papers on them. It has been passed on 11 December 2019 in the Parliament of India. The Indian Government had promised in previous elections to offer Indian Citizenship to persecuted religious minorities from neighbouring countries who entered India before 31 December 2014. The CAA provides a path to Indian citizenship for Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jain, Parsi and Christian minorities settled in India from neighbouring countries.

If you open a newspaper, switch on the television or go to any social media site, all you will see are posts, tweets, comments, debates and quotes on the CAA and the protests that are happening daily due to this clear discrimination. The

protests are peaceful and are occurring due to the exclusion of Muslims. But if you read the law that has passed, eventually, you will notice that it is not just excluding Muslims, but Hindus from Sri-Lanka and Buddhists from Tibet and China. The real question is 'should the persecuted minorities be granted citizenship in India?' My answer is no. As India has over 1.37 billion people of which barely 20% manage to pay taxes and only the top 1% are able to do it annually. From the 7.8 billion people in the world, 1/6th of the people live in India. It really doesn't take a genius to figure out that we can't afford, in the name of fairness, to be unfair to the original citizens of India.

"In the last 200 years the population of our planet has grown exponentially, at a rate of 1.9% per year. If it continued at this rate, with the population doubling every 40 years, by 2600 we would all be standing literally shoulder to shoulder."-Stephen Hawking

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Written by: Aliya Shetty Oza, student, 6th Grade, Ecole Mondiale

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## 5 stories to Stay Current this week!

**1. US and Iran:** The US attacked and killed Iranian Major General Soleimani as he left an airport in Iraq. The Major General was one of the most important military leaders in Iran. Iran is viewing this as an act of war, and has just retaliated by launching ballistic missiles at two US military bases in Iraq. It is unclear how much damage has been done at this point. The UN Security Council is holding meetings in New York, USA this week, and in the meantime, the US has denied a visa to Iran's foreign minister, Javed Zarif. Without a visa, he will not be able to visit the USA and attend the meetings. As such, he will not be able to present Iran's position to other world leaders.

*Why did the US escalate tensions with Iran?* It is unclear right now, whether there was a real risk to American lives, or if President Trump was trying to shift attention away from his impeachment proceedings, or if he is trying to generate support for his Presidential elections this year.

**2. Carlos Ghosn sneaks away from Japan!** Carlos Ghosn was the Chairman of the alliance of car companies Nissan, Mitsubishi, and Renault SA. Under him, the alliance reached the number 2 spot globally, in terms of sales, behind Volkswagen AG of Germany.

He was arrested in November 2018, as the Japanese accused him of reporting only half of what he earned. He has been out

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on bail but under surveillance since then, as have his wife and children. On December 29, 2019, he escaped from Japan in a super sneaky way that amazed us all. In a black box! He is currently in Beirut, Lebanon. He says that he will reveal his side of the story in a press conference today. Stay tuned!

**3. Students at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU)** were attacked by masked members of a youth group associated with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) this past weekend. They were physically assaulted and injured. This has sparked even more protests around India and some places abroad as well. Students at JNU have been protesting against a couple of major issues over the past few months: an increase in college fees, and more recently, against the Citizenship Amendment Act. This recent act of violence is seen as an attempt to silence democracy – people have a right to peacefully protests against rules that we oppose. In a democracy, this encourages debate and discussion.

**4. The bushfires in Australia continue unabated.** These fires are a natural occurrence, but they are more intense and have spread uncontrollably due to extremely dry conditions and strong winds. Humans have been affected but almost 500 million animals have also been killed so far in these fires! Volunteers and fire fighters are trying their best to bring them under control. [Read this for more.](#)

**5. Consumer Electronics Show:** The largest consumer electronics show, CES, has started in Los Angeles, CA this week. Highlights so far have been concept cars, flying machines and smart bikes! Think a folding e-bike with an Alexa smart assistant built in! Stay tuned for more tech you and I can use!



Written by: Sunaina Murthy. Sunaina is a biotechnologist, greedy reader, and amateur photographer.

## Protests across the country greet the Citizenship Amendment Act



**What happened to the Citizenship Amendment Bill?** The Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB) has now become an Act (CAA). A Bill is a draft law proposal that is introduced to the Parliament of India. It has to be passed by both houses (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha) and signed off by the President of the country. It then becomes an Act of Parliament. After that, there has to be a mention of it in the Gazette (a public journal where the Government prints official notices) notification, mentioning the date from when it would take effect.

**How did India respond?** [People all over the country are protesting the new law. They think that it discriminates against Muslims.](#) People from all walks of life, from senior citizens to students, all across the country, came out in large numbers to speak out against the Act. Some State Governments like Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal implement the CAA. The Kerala Assembly even passed a resolution asking the central Government to repeal, or rollback, the Act. Though these are more 'symbolic' rather than being legal (citizenship is something only the Government of India can decide), it definitely shows what people across the country are feeling. While some protests turned violent, especially in Uttar Pradesh, on the whole, the protests have all been peaceful and democratic.

On the other hand, in Assam, there were protests of a different kind. The people of the region believe that thousands who have fled since Bangladesh Independence in 1971 and continue to leave will come into the state. These large numbers will put pressure on state resources and, they believe, could threaten local culture.

**What happens next?** The Government has taken a strong stand and has said that it will not roll back the law. It is confident that it will be implemented. However, there are over 20 petitions in the Supreme Court that are challenging the Act, saying that it is against the Constitution. The petitions say that the Act is against Article 13 (right to equality), Article 15 (which prohibits discrimination) and Article 21 (right to life and liberty) of the Indian Constitution. The Court has asked the Government to give their response to the petitions by January 22, the date for the next hearing.



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