

# BJP workers vulnerable, could be targeted by ULFA (I), says cop

Agency  
Guwahati Jan 22,

On Monday, the state's police intelligence chief said that the rebel group ULFA (Independent) taking advantage of the volatile situation in the state in the wake of the controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Bill could target BJP workers. Director General of Police, in-charge of Special Branch, Pallab Bhattacharyya said that the security officials are apprehensive after the Lok Sabha had introduced and passed the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, ensuing agitation in the state. He added, "the situation is fragile. In this surcharged atmosphere vulnerable groups like Hindi speakers, Bengali Hindus and BJP workers could be the likely target of ULFA (I)." Last November, five marginal farmers, all Bengali speaking Hindus, were gunned down in Tinsukia. The police had said the ULFA (I) was behind the attack even as the outfit denied any involvement. Bhattacharyya said ongoing protests against the Bill, especially in Brahmaputra Valley and the upcoming Republic Day have turned the situation volatile amid intelligence inputs about the movement of armed ULFA (I) cadres in various groups.

Two BJP offices were vandalised in Dibrugarh and Golaghat on January 8 during a bonfire and chief Sarbananda Sonowal and his ministers have been facing black flag demonstrations ever since the Lok Sabha passed the Bill. According to officials familiar with developments, there have been reports about the presence of at least four separate groups of ULFA (I) insurgents in the past few days. Officials said there is a possibility of them being joined by militants belonging to the Naga rebel group NSCN (Khaplang) in Tinsukia in Assam and in Changlang in neighbouring Arunachal Pradesh which also shares a border with Myanmar where the militants have their camps. Officials suspect that these groups have political workers, especially of the BJP in their hit list. "There is not much movement inside Assam. They usually cross over from neighbouring states carry out a crime and again move out," said Bhattacharyya. He also said there is a need to strengthen the police in districts of Tirap, Changlang and Longding in Arunachal Pradesh and Mon and Tuensang in Nagaland. Meanwhile, an economic blockade by a student outfit of the Moran community in Tinsukia has added to the worries of the police.

"They are holding up a coal train in since yesterday in Makum," Bhattacharyya said adding how oil blockade "was a potent tool during the Assam agitation in 1979." Arunjoyoti Moran, the president of the All Assam Moran Students Union confirmed the protests and said the students' body has also stopped oil tankers on some routes. "We want immediate Scheduled Tribe status for Morans. We want an autonomous district council and they should scrap the Citizenship Bill," Moran said. He also accused the government of delaying conferring the ST status by appointing another committee. "These Morans and Muttokos form the stock of entry into the ULFA (I)," Bhattacharyya explained why it was a worrisome development. Since January 2018, 29 people have joined ULFA (I) , according to official figures. "The situation is under control. But the trend of agitation is building up. Once the Bill goes to the Rajya Sabha for voting, protests will increase again," Bhattacharyya said with a caveat that it is still not like the anti-foreigners agitation in 1979. "This one is organized by some parties and subverted. That was spontaneous," he said.

# Former CM Ibobi for joint protest against Citizenship Bill

Source Telegraph  
Imphal, Jan 22,

Former Manipur chief minister Okram Ibobi Singh on Monday said if Northeast chief ministers oppose the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019, together, the Centre would take serious note of the people's voice. "When the chief ministers of Mizoram and Meghalaya had opposed the bill, Manipur chief minister (N. Biren Singh) had said he had asked the Centre to insert a clause to protect the state's indigenous people. Will his request be accepted by the Centre when the bill was passed in Lok Sabha denying the people's voice?" he asked. "Is the BJP-led state government afraid of the Centre in opposing the bill?" he added. Ibobi Singh, leader of the

Congress Legislature Party, spoke to reporters at the Congress Bhawan here after submitting a memorandum to governor Najma Heptulla, requesting her to convene a special session of the Assembly at the earliest. He was accompanied by PCC president T.N. Haokip, member of the Congress Working Committee Gaikhangam, and others. The governor told the delegates that it would take 15 days to convene a session as the House had been prorogued. Ibobi Singh said the Congress has been opposing the bill since the day it was tabled in Parliament. "We have been requesting an all-party meeting and special Assembly session. As there was no response to our demand, we approached the governor," he

added. "We want to help the government take a unanimous resolution in the House to oppose passing of the bill in the Rajya Sabha. The budget session of Parliament is scheduled to begin on January 31," he said. Ibobi Singh said the bill has sparked anxiety among the people and in the backdrop of region-wide protests, they were demanding immediate collective response from their elected representatives. "The PCC shares the public sentiment and wants an urgent special Assembly session for an in-depth debate on the bill," he added. Ibobi Singh said the Centre talks of Act East policy and development of the Northeast but the rhetoric has not been implemented. "So we are wary about the bill," he added.

# More than 30 Guwahati-bound Rohingyas held in Tripura-Assam border

Agency  
Agartala Jan 22,

Even as 31 Rohingya Muslims are stranded along the India-Bangladesh borders since Friday, 30 more Rohingyas, including 12 children, were on Monday night apprehended along the Tripura-Assam border, a police officer said. "The Assam police have arrested 30 Rohingya Muslims from a Guwahati-bound bus at Churaibari along the inter-state border on Monday night," North Tripura District police chief Bhanupada Chakraborty told IANS over phone from the district headquarters Dharmanagar, 200 km north of Agartala. Quoting Assam police officials, he said that the 30 Rohingya Muslims, including nine

women and 12 children, boarded the Guwahati bound bus from Agartala. Chakraborty said senior Assam police officials would interrogate the detainees in Karimganj, one of the four districts of southern Assam. They would be produced in a local court in Karimganj on Tuesday. Further details about these foreign national are awaited. Meanwhile, 31 Rohingya Muslims are stranded since Friday at Zero Line on the India-Bangladesh border with western Tripura. A meeting between the Border Security Force (BSF) and Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB), supposed to be held on Monday over the 31 Rohingya Muslims, did not take place. "We are waiting instructions

from the BSF headquarters in Delhi by Tuesday about the next course of action concerning these 31 Rohingya Muslims," a BSF official told IANS late on Monday night refusing to disclose his identity. Deputy Inspector General of BSF Brajesh Kumar told the media that the BSF has been providing food and other basic necessities to the six men, nine women and 16 children on humanitarian ground. The Bangladeshi media said that the BGB Commanding Officer Lt. Col. Gomal Kabir, who is the commandant of 25 Battalion of the BGB, has alleged that the BSF has been pushing Rohingyas into Bangladeshi territory. The BSF rejected the charge.

# Rain, hail lash north India; hit rush hour traffic in Delhi

Agency  
New Delhi, Jan. 22

Commuters were caught up in traffic jams in several places across Delhi as heavy rains and hailstorms hit the national capital and its neighbouring areas during rush hour on Tuesday morning. Delhi Traffic Police tweeted advisories asking commuters to avoid stretches as waterlogging was reported in several areas including Mathura Road, Ashram Chowk, Moolchand underpass, Bihari Colony, Chhatrasal Stadium and Savitri Cinema area in Greater Kailash Part 2. As traffic jams were reported in the national capital, airlines such as Vistara asked its passengers to travel to the airport accordingly. "Due to rain, there is traffic congestion enroute to Delhi airport road. Customers are advised to allow more time for their journey to the airport," Vistara tweeted. News agency ANI reported that at least 15 trains to the Capital were delayed due to fog and low visibility. Hail storms were reported in areas like Subhash Nagar and Paschim Vihar in the morning in the city, which received rains throughout on Monday night. Some trees were also uprooted after the rains. The rain and hailstorms caused a sharp dip in temperature in parts of Delhi and its neighbouring areas as well. The minimum temperature



recorded was at 11.5 degrees Celsius, which was four notches more than the season's average. On the other hand, the maximum temperature was at 22.6 degrees Celsius, which was a notch more than the season's average. The weather office has said heavy to very heavy rain and snow at isolated places is very likely over Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh and heavy rain/snow over Uttarakhand. It added that heavy rain at isolated places is very likely over Punjab and Haryana, Chandigarh and Delhi. It also said a hailstorm is also very likely over Jammu division, lower regions of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, northwest Uttar Pradesh and north Rajasthan. "A cyclonic circulation has already formed over Rajasthan because of an approaching

western disturbance. This is expected to trigger rain across the plains of northwest India, including Delhi, from the intervening night of Monday and Tuesday," BP Yadav, deputy director general of the India Meteorological Department (IMD), said. Another IMD official said the night temperature is expected to rise while the days are expected to get colder with the rain. "By Tuesday, the night temperature could go up to 10°C while the day temperature could drop to around 20°C," the official said. The national highway connecting Jammu and Srinagar was closed on Tuesday following landslides and snowfall and reports of an avalanche hitting the highway in the Jawahar Tunnel area. A team has been rushed to take stock. Traffic department officials said landslides have hit the strategic highway at some places in the

Ramban district, including Digdol, Panthal, Magarkote and Khoni Nallah. "There has been fresh snowfall in Bannihal sector. Incessant rains are continuing in other parts of the highway. This is the second consecutive day of the highway remaining closed," a traffic official said, according to PTI. "No vehicular movement will be allowed on the highway today. Landslide clearance will be started only after the weather improves," the official said. The MeT Centre in Uttar Pradesh's Lucknow has forecast that rain and thundershowers with gusty winds very likely to occur on Tuesday at some places over Haryana, Bahrach, Lakhimpur Kheri, Sitapur, Meerut, Hapur, Shamli, Baghpat, Muzaffarnagar, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Ghaziabad and adjoining areas.

# NUTA urges President to withhold assent to Citizenship Bill

Agency  
Kohima, Jan 22,

Strongly protesting against the passing of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill - CAB - by Lok Sabha, Nagaland University Teachers' Association (NUTA) has urged university's visitor, the President of India, to withhold granting his assent to the Bill, if passed by Rajya Sabha. The association, in a release issued by its central executive council (CEC) president Prof Rosemary Dzuvichu and secretary general Prof D Kuoile, expressed serious concern over the possible impact of CAB on

Indigenous people of Nagaland as well as of the entire Northeast, which had been witness to turbulent protests. Stating that the Bill was not secular as it envisaged granting citizenship to immigrants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan based on religion, NUTA warned that CAB would change the entire demographic of the North-eastern region, including Nagaland that had been facing the onslaught of illegal immigrants. NUTA said the Nagaland government's stand was most unfortunate, adding that the present Inner Line Permit (ILP) system did not include the entire

State and thus "failed us to a large extent". The ILP system was inconsistent as it excluded the State's commercial nerve centre Dimapur, which had been flooded with illegal immigrants, it added. The association urged the State government to strictly implement the ILP, inclusive of Dimapur, and protect the rights of people, irrespective of partisan politics, by ensuring that the Bill did not become a law in the State. It further claimed that provisions of Article 371(A) too did not enable Nagaland Legislative Assembly to stop such a citizenship law after it

becomes an Act. Referring to the Joint Parliamentary Committee report tabled in Parliament that, citing Intelligence Bureau, stated that around 31,313 immigrants would immediately benefit from the proposed amendment and that 25,447 were Hindus, NUTA said it was evident that religion would form the basis of citizenship. In a State and region reeling under the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, the association said CAB was another onslaught and destruction of the identity of Indigenous people.

# Assam 3 persons including man from Delhi held in Guwahati; smuggled cigarettes seized

Agency  
Guwahati Jan 22,

Three persons were arrested by the police for allegedly smuggling foreign-made cigarettes. Nine cartons of cigarettes worth several lakhs was seized by the city police which was being allegedly smuggled to Delhi. The seizure was made in Boragoin. Three persons, including one person from New Delhi and another person from Tripura, were nabbed for allegedly trying to smuggle the consignment. Sources said the cigarettes had been brought from

Myanmar. "Acting on a tip-off, the sleuths nabbed the trio with the illegal items in the city while they were on their way from an interstate bus terminus to Kamakhya railway station, from where they were supposed to smuggle the cigarettes to New Delhi," said city police sources. The nabbed persons have been identified as Srimita Das of Guwahati, Anurag Chandil of Delhi and Chaibon Das of Tripura. "As these cigarettes are not duty-paid and many brands have price tags in foreign languages, traders make quite a profit," sources added.

# Landslide, snowfall blocks Jammu-Srinagar highway, Jawahar tunnel closed

Agency  
Jammu Jan 22,

Road link to many areas including Kashmir Valley was cut off and power and water supply disrupted at various places as incessant rains and snowfall since Monday paralysed normal life across Jammu region. The Jammu-Srinagar and Batote-Doda-Kishtwar highways were blocked following landslides and heavy snowfall at various places. There was between 1 ft to 2 ft snow at Patnitop and Batote, while a snow avalanche on Tuesday morning had closed both the tubes of Jawahar tunnel on Kashmir side. The Ramban town along the Jammu-Srinagar national highway and Bhaderwah town in Doda district were also witnessing snowfall since wee

hours of Tuesday. The road to Kishtwar was slippery at Assar, sources said, adding that many link roads in Chenab Valley region were closed due to inclement weather conditions. Similarly, the vehicular traffic was suspended along the Thanamandi-Buffilaz road linking Rajouri with Mughal road in Poonch due to snowfall. There was heavy snow along the Mughal road, besides Surankote and Mandi areas of Poonch district. Roads in many hilly areas of Udhampur district like Basantgarh were also closed due to snowfall, while plains of Jammu were witnessing incessant rains since Monday leading to rise in water level in rivers and nullahs. The power and water supply in various areas was disrupted in view of high turbidity in water due to flash floods.