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# “Polarization of Indian media in communicating public policies – content analysis of headlines.”

By

Dipyasuruj Konwar

A dissertation for the fulfilment of the Degree of Masters in Journalism and Public Relations

Faculty of Journalism & Media Communications

Griffith College Dublin

August, 2023

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## Abstract

“Polarization of Indian media in communicating public policies – content analysis of headlines.”

(Under the supervision of Rachel Andrews)

The dissertation titled, “Polarization of Indian newspapers in communicating government policies - content analysis of headlines,” investigates the contemporary media landscape of India. It examines and contrasts the headlines from the three most prominent English language dailies of India— *Times of India*, *Hindustan Times*, and *The Hindu*—focusing on the headlines of Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) of 2019. The study, which uses a mixed-method approach, looks at differences in reporting’s tone, wording, and emphasis to spot any potential biases in favour of or against the government’s policy. The study investigates how such contentious reporting may affect how the CAA is perceived and understood by the general public, as well as its broader effects on democracy and public discourse. This study offers helpful insights for media practitioners, politicians, and researchers negotiating the complexities of media-government interactions in India’s diverse and dynamic democracy by challenging the alignment of polarized reporting with responsible journalism and media ethics

<u>Table of contents</u>	Page
DECLARATION	2
ABSTRACT	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	7
Chapter 1 : Introduction	8
1.1 Overview of Indian media	9
1.1.1 <i>Times of India</i>	13
1.1.2 <i>The Hindu</i>	13
1.1.3 <i>Hindustan Times</i>	14
1.2.1 Overview of Citizenship Amendment Act	14
1.2.2 Importance of Assam Accord	16
1.3.1 Aims and Objectives of the Research	17
Chapter 2 : Literature Review	20
2.1.1 Media Propaganda and polarization	20
2.1.2 Hegemony and media polarization	22
2.1.3 Encoding and Decoding of media	23
2.2 Media polarization in democratic regimes and authoritarian regimes	24
2.2 Moderatism, Polarization and Partisanship	26
2.3 Literature on polarization in Indian media	29
2.3.1 Contemporary literature on Indian media under BJP government (since 2014)	32
2.3 Literature on Citizenship Amendment Act 2019	35
2.4 Indian print media in the year 2017-2018	37

Chapter 3 : Methodology	38
3.1 Overview	38
3.1.1 The research plan	41
3.2 Findings	43
3.2.1 Headlines on campaigns protesting CAA and supporting CAA	44
3.2.2 Pro CAA and anti CAA quotes by protesters and members of opposition parties in headlines	50
3.3 Use of language	58
3.3.1 Use of negative adjective to CAA in headlines	59
3.3.2 Use of phrases reflecting CAA's negative impact	60
3.4 Reporting on the adversities caused by the protest	61
3.4.1 Neutral tone in reporting adversities	63
3.4.2 Headlines reflective of authoritative stand of the government and police atrocities	64
3.4.3 Headlines on blaming the protestors quoted by Police officials and Government representatives	66
3.5 Headlines mentioning advantages of CAA	68
3.6 Reporting on international criticisms on CAA	65
Chapter 4 : Discussion	69
4.1 Overview	71
4.2 Quantitative & Qualitative analysis of the findings from the methodology	71
4.2.1 Anti CAA headlines	72
4.2.2 Pro CAA headlines	77

4.2.3 Quantitative analysis – referring to chapter 2	79
4.3 Analysis of the newspapers in relation to the research questions and reviewed literatures in chapter 2	85
Chapter 5 : Conclusion	87
Bibliography	89
Appendices	92

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## Chapter I | Introduction

In recent times, worries have been raised concerning the trivialization of content and the growing concentration of huge corporate entities' ownership of the media. It has been opiated globally that the culture of non-stop breaking news may turn the media into a commodity. (*BBC News*, 2012)The problem of "paid news," which involves powerful people—primarily politicians—paying newspapers and news organizations for favourable treatment, is evident not just in India. (*ibid*) In the months building up to the 2009 Indian general elections, the discourse of Indian media was significantly challenged.

Leading Indian publications that had received funding for disseminating false information presented as news in support of people, including top politicians, were listed in a 71-page Press Council of India probe. ('Press Council Of India', 2010) Independent journalist and one of the investigators Paranjoy Guha Thakurta claimed that a group of major publishers pressured the Press Council to weaken the findings. (*ibid*) The Press Council's unwillingness to release the study, according to then Vice President Hamid Ansari, was "a pointer to the problems of self-regulation and the culture of silence in the entire industry when it comes to self-criticism," he said. (*ibid*)

The purpose of this research is to understand the underlying reasons affecting media sovereignty in India and media polarization. For the purpose of this study "media polarization" is defined as the situation in which different media houses hold different stands on their publications reflective of distinct ideologies, impacted by factors such as ownership, commercial benefits, political influence etc. (Fletcher, 2022)This study will be carried on the basis of content analysis of the publications on the mass protest against Citizenship Amendment Act 2019 in India, for which three of the biggest English language newspapers *Times of India*, *The Hindu* and *Hindustan Times* are chosen.

Television, radio, newspapers, magazines, and web-based portals are just a few of the various forms of media that make up Indian media. Coming through a long way of ever developing media forms, as of summer 2023, India, turns over more than 70,000 publications and over 500 satellite channels in multiple languages out of which more than 80 are news stations. India is the largest newspaper market in the world with than 100 million copies of newspapers sold daily. (*India | RSF, 2023*) However, it has been a matter of serious concern that such rapid expansion of the media industry may have come at the expense of objectivity, journalistic integrity, and ethics. (*India | RSF, 2023*) Therefore, the importance of an objective research for thriving of a transparent and ethical media system has been distinguished as eminent.

### **1.1 | Overview of Indian media**

The beginning of the contemporary Indian mass communication era dates back to the British colonial times. James Augustus Hickey, an Irish born who travelled to India as a surgeon's mate under British East India Company. He became a practicing merchant in India trading along India's coast where he suffered loss and was sentenced to debtor's prison. While he was in prison, he acquired a printing press and with the idea of starting a newspaper business, gave rise to the first Indian newspaper, The Bengal Gazette in 1780, marking the first official press in India in the late 18th century. However, it wasn't until the 19th century, when the printing press was invented and the population's literacy rate began to rise, that the mass media began to rise in India.

Newspapers were essential for spreading information and influencing public opinion throughout the British colonial era. Samachar Darpan, the first newspaper written in an Indian language, was released in Bengali in 1818.

With the advent of private media businesses and the deregulation of the media market, mass media in India saw substantial changes in the post-independence era. Satellite television first became popular in the 1990s, ushering in a new era of 24-hour news and entertainment networks. Online news portals and social networking sites have become well-liked sources of information and communication in India as a result of the internet and social media growth in the twenty-first century. A significant variety of newspapers, magazines, radio stations, television channels, and internet media outlets that serve various demographic groups make up India's diverse and thriving mass media business today.

In the post-independence history of Indian media for the first time, the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi established a state of emergency from 1975 to 1977 when the righteousness of media was censored and the possibility of government retaliation was demonstrated. (Ghosh, 2017) A similar scenario is observed in the present but in a much broader and deeper algorithmic structure with the inseparable factors responsible to disturb the sovereignty of press, such as the ownership influence, political dominance and economic context. (*India | RSF, 2023*)

The vast landscape of Indian media with multiple acknowledged media sources, is concentrated in a very small sphere of ownerships. At the national level, there are only a few large media conglomerates, such as the Times Group, HT Media Ltd and *The Hindu* Group holding authority over the most popular English language newspapers of India those are *Times of India*, *Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* respectively. Hindi, being the primary language of the nation, three-quarters of the Hindi language newspaper readerships are concentrated in just four newspapers namely - *Dainik Jagaran*, *Dainik Bhasker*, *Hindustan* and *Amar Ujala*. Local language periodicals like Kolkata's Bengali-language *Anandabazar Patrika*, Mumbai's Marathi-language *Lokmat*, and southern India's *Malayala Manorama* are among other regional language newspapers where the readership

concentration (focus) is even more prominent. All news radio stations are owned by the government-run All India Radio (AIR) network.

The political landscape of Indian media drastically changed after the Narendra Modi led BJP party came into power in 2014. As per World Press Freedom Index India ranked 133 in 2016 among 180 countries which fell to 150 in 2021. Violence against press representatives, media polarization and concentration of ownership exhibit threat to freedom of media in India. (RSF Index, 2022) An indication of such predispose is the financial and goodwill relationship between the PM Modi and Mukesh Ambani, a businessman, owner of the Reliance Industries group. Reliance owns more than 70 media sites that has at least 800 million followers. Similarly, PM Modi is in strong connection with Gautam Adani, a business man who took control over NDTV news channel in 2022.

(Frontières, 2023) Modi has long been dismissive of journalists, viewing them as "intermediaries" negatively affecting the interaction between him and the Indian public. (India / RSF, 2023) The hard-line followers of PM Modi, referred to as "bhakts" meaning devotees, have been engaging in aggressive campaigns against journalists who are critical of the government. In principle, Indian media law is protective, yet accusations of slander, sedition, contempt of court, and harming national security are frequently imposed against journalists who criticize the government and are labelled as "anti-nationals" by the *bhakts*. (India / RSF, 2023) During Covid-19 pandemic, the BJP government supporters engaged in a clandestine legal campaign against media organizations whose coverage of the pandemic ran counter to official assertions. Some of the journalists have been assaulted and many accused of reporting fake news. (Raza, 2020) Journalists who attempted to cover anti-government strikes and protests during Covid 19 were frequently detained arbitrarily and occasionally arrested. (Pasricha and Anjana, 2020) Media self-regulatory organizations like the Press Council of India (PCI) and the Electronic Media Monitoring Centre (EMMC) are undermined as

they do not have power practically as media houses are under the control of PM Modi by these persistent infractions.

Despite frequently high stock market valuations, local and regional governments' advertising contracts are the main source of revenue for media outlets. Media executives frequently view editorial policy as merely another variable to be changed in accordance with business needs since there is no clear separation between business and editorial policy. (*India / RSF, 2023*) In fact BJP government spends more than 1.8 billion rupees (20.4 million euros) annually on advertisements in print and online media as of 2022. The term "Godi media" meaning "media those are the lap to Modi", a pun on PM Modi's name came into expressions since NDTV journalist Ravish Kumar said it in an interview in 2017 describing media organizations that combine populism and pro-BJP propaganda. (Sen, 2023) Therefore, a mix of intimidation and influence is significantly undermining the traditional Indian model of a pluralist press.

With the epidemic of media conflict happening, a massive protest broke out across Indian subcontinent against Citizenship Amendment Act 2019 (Citizenship Amendment Act 2019, known as CAA 2019 explained in section 1.2.1) on 4<sup>th</sup> of December 2019, occupying all Indian media coverages. The news publications were observed highly polarised into pro BJP government and anti-BJP government the newspapers were reporting contradictory reports some pro BJP government and some anti govt. which means they are polarised in some ways. Why they are polarised will be found and the search for an unmanipulated truth about the situation diverted the attention of the population to the newspapers, meaning print media, which traditionally had the reputation of being truthful and unbiased. However, the fact that newspapers like all other media failed to deliver in the sense that the newspaper reports were contradictory to each other, ignited the idea of a necessity for this research. Hence this research will focus on the headlines and

pictures published about the protests that happened across India and among Indian nationals living abroad, starting from the date December 04, 2019, to March 14, 2020, on the web versions of the three most prominent English language newspapers of India that are “*The Times of India*”, “*The Hindu*” and “*Hindustan Times*”.

### **1.1.1| *Times of India***

The *Times of India*, also referred to as TOI, is the second oldest newspaper and the oldest English-language daily newspaper published in India which is still in print. TOI has a digital news outlet The Times Group owns TOI and its digital news outlet. The inaugural edition of TOI was published in 1838. It has the third-largest circulation in India and is the best-selling English-language daily worldwide.(Times Group, 2023) (‘Maps of India’, 2013)

The Times Group is run by Sahu Jain family’s Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd. The TOI was regarded as India’s most dependable English-language newspaper in the Brand Trust Report India 2019 survey. (afaqs, 2023)

### **1.1.2| *The Hindu***

*The Hindu*, which was established in 1878, started as a weekly and changed to a daily newspaper in 1889. *The Hindu* was instrumental in advancing the cause of Indian independence from the yoke of colonialism. The pioneering journal was founded by lawyer Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, whose son K Srinivasan took over as editor. Today, this newspaper is only second to the TOI in circulation among the English languages newspapers in India and has the greatest circulation in South India with 21 sites across 11 Indian states as of March 2018.

S. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar bought it from the newspaper's original proprietors in 1905. The "Kasturi family," who are descendants of Iyengar's, currently jointly own it and act as the holding company's directors. With the exception of around two years when S. Varadarajan served as editor, members of the family have always held editorial roles at the newspaper or worked directly under them.(Buncombe, 2013) Narasimhan Ram, former editor in chief of *The Hindu* and the director of the publishing company, was a committed member of the Communist Party of India.

### **1.1.3 | Hindustan Times**

Hindustan Times is a Delhi based an English-language daily newspaper of India established in 1924 under the leadership of Sunder Singh Lyallpuri, the founder-father of Gurudwara (place of worship of the Sikhs) reformist movement called Akali movement. Later due to financial instability, Hindustan Times was sold to Madan Mohan Malviya, a member of Indian Independence movement and Indian National Congress, With the influence of Mahatma Gandhi, K. M. Panikkar became the paper's new editor in 1928. Eventually when the newspaper was experiencing financial difficulties, Ghanshyam Das Birla, an Indian businessman took ownership.

As of November 2017, Hindustan Times circulated 993,645, according to the Audit Bureau of Circulations. ('Audit Bureau of circulation',2017 )Presently, Shobhana Bhartia, the granddaughter of Ghanshyam Das Birla and an active member of the Congress party, runs the newspaper under the banner of KK Birla Group.

### **1.2.1 | Overview of Citizenship Amendment Act**

The Citizenship Act of 1955 which was passed after the Indian Constitution was put into effect, establishing two ways to become an Indian citizen by naturalization:

(a) After living in India for seven years, residents of undivided India (which included India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh) were eligible to seek for citizenship.

(b) After residing in India for twelve years, people from foreign nations were able to apply for citizenship.

(Citizenship Act, 1955)

On 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019, Indian parliament passed a 'Citizenship Amendment Bill' making and amendment to the Citizenship Act 1955, to be called 'Citizenship Amendment Act 2019 (CAA).

CAA 2019 included the following provisions:

“Provided that any person belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Christian community from Afghanistan, Bangladesh or Pakistan, who entered India on or before the 31st day of December, 2014 and who has been exempted by the Central Government by or under clause (c) of sub-section (2) of section 3 of the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920 or from the application of the provisions of the Foreigners Act, 1946 or any rule or order made thereunder, shall not be treated as illegal migrant for the purposes of this Act;”. (Government of India, 2019)

The act was considered controversial because it marked the first time in Indian law that religion had been explicitly utilized as a factor for citizenship. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the ruling political party of India who formed the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government in 2014 under the leadership of Narendra Modi, is predominantly a right-wing nationalist party with adherence to “Hindutva, Hindu ideology”. BJP having organizational links with Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, popularly known as RSS, a right-wing nationalist volunteer organization which was formed in 1925 with an aim of instilling Hindu discipline, to revive India into a Hindu Rashtra (Hindu Country). After the partition of Pakistan from India, RSS blamed Mahatma Gandhi to have divided the nation and Gandhi was assassinated by Nathuram Godse, a renowned member of RSS. The Indian Prime

Minister Narendra Modi served as a volunteer of RSS for a distinguished part of his life for which he was always perceived as a leader subscribing to the idea of Hindu Rashtra and condemned of prosecuting the Muslim population.

CAA 2019 was protested across the country. However, there were two layers of agitations.

They are -

(a) Students from several higher education institutions around the nation protested, claiming that CAA 2019 is unconstitutional since it violates India's secularism concept by excluding Muslims. (The word "secular" has been distinctively mentioned in preamble of the Indian constitution. Hence, any law based on religion is seen as religious discrimination)

(b) In the north-eastern Indian states Assam and Tripura, as well as to a lesser extent in other eastern Indian states, democratic protests were mostly spearheaded by ordinary citizens and students. The violation of the "Assam Accord of 1985" (refer to 1.2.2) was a major focus of these protests, which were heavily supported by the All Assam Students Union (AASU). Instead of being motivated by religious concerns, the protests in North-East India were in opposition to a law that gave citizenship to undocumented immigrants of all faiths.

### **1.2.2 | Importance of Assam Accord**

Pakistan was separated from India in 1947. The Eastern Indian states shared a long 4096 km international border with East Pakistan, which are West Bengal (2217 km), Assam (262 km), Tripura (856 km), Mizoram (318 km), and Meghalaya (443 km). Along this boundary, there was a substantial amount of illegal immigration happening since 1947 which even accelerated after 1947 when East Pakistan was separated from Pakistan to form Bangladesh. The illegal immigration tremendously affected the demographics of the states of Tripura and Assam, where the local Tripuri population

have become a minority compared to immigrants. The All Assam Students Union (AASU) started the Assam Movement in 1979 as a response to the political events and the problem of illegal immigration in India. The movement's goal was to reduce the rising number of undocumented immigrants. Finally, a solution was reached on August 15, 1985, when representatives of the AASU and the Indian National Congress Party-led government signed the "Assam Accord." The Assam Accord sought to safeguard the area's cultural heritage and stop illegal immigration, yet illegal immigration has continued from 1985 to the present despite the agreement.

When the CAA 2019 was passed and the idea of giving citizenship to the immigrants evoked, a huge population of the state went into protesting CAA.

### **1.3.1 | Aims and Objectives of the Research**

This research aims to scrutinize the ideological inclinations of three prominent Indian newspapers *Times of India*, *The Hindu*, and *Hindustan Times* through a thorough content analysis of their news headlines and image publications related to the protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) 2019. This study tries to find any biases, polarizations, or propaganda in the coverage of these issues by scrutinizing the language, content, and visuals employed by these media.

The primary focus of this study is the wider topic of "Polarization of Indian News Media in Communicating Public Affairs." Since news headlines and images are a newspaper's primary means of communication to its audience in terms of its grabbing the attention of the readers, they become crucial in demonstrating their ideology. The media uses a strong flow of visual and emotional communication through the image publications by means of visual cues, symbols, and emotions in accordance with its ideological stance to shape the public's understanding and response to a given

issue, and the headlines reflect this ideological agenda. To determine the framing strategies employed, the content of the three aforementioned publications will be compared. The research intends to evaluate the degree of polarization in the Indian news media landscape and comprehend the underlying mechanisms contributing to this polarization.

### **Research questions**

This research aims to explore the polarization of Indian news media in communicating public policies, specifically focusing on the following aspects:

- The presence of polarization in Indian media when reporting on public affairs: The polarization of Indian media when reporting on public policies has been emphasized in numerous studies. According to research, some media sources frequently associate themselves with certain political ideas, leading to biases. Researchers have looked at how editorial bias, media ownership, and ideological inclinations affect the polarization of the media.
- The influence of business profitability on media narrative: Media companies' financial inclinations frequently has a big impact on how news stories are presented. Studies have looked into how media coverage of public policies in India is influenced by commercialization. There are evidences on commercial pressures resulting in sensationalism, the priority of particular subjects, and the acceptance of particular ideologies.
- The impact of the majority in the government on media narrative: The connection between political influence and media coverage of public policy has been studied by researchers. According to research, media organizations frequently match their narratives with the

majority that is in power, which results in either positive or negative coverage of government programs depending on political allegiance.

- Do Indian Newspapers Serve Ethics or Propaganda? Scholars have studied the issue of whether Indian publications value ethics or propagandas. According to certain studies, a sizable proportion of newspapers exhibit a lack of commitment to ethical standards, which may have an impact on the objectivity and reliability of news regarding policies.

The research will investigate the above questions by conducting a content analysis of the news headlines of how the protests were covered in three publications between December 4<sup>th</sup> 2019 and March 14<sup>th</sup> 2020. The news headlines will be analysed and on the basis of the analysis, they will be divided into categories having affiliations to the government representation and against. As per the understanding that the headlines are the gateways to the news articles, thus playing an important role in shaping opinions in the readers. And in order to carry forward the analysis, the areas as “Use of language,” “Manipulation of facts,” “Opinion journalism,” “Different angles of presenting the same news,” “Factors such as ownership, political inclination, commercial benefits and historical context,” etc that contribute to forming ideological stance of the selected newspapers will be taken into consideration. The Ethics of Journalism, theories of Propaganda and Persuasion, Public Relations Theories will form the broad theoretical context for the project. Before I move to a deeper discussion of the methodology, however, I will present an overview of scholarly articles, research papers, and expert opinions on the relevant areas.

## **Chapter 2 – Literature Review**

In the ever-evolving landscape of media, the notion of polarization has gained significant attention. Media polarization refers to the widening divide between differing ideological perspectives in media and the consequent intensification of public discourse. This literature review seeks to explore and critically analyse the existing literatures, theories, and perspectives surrounding media polarization, shedding light on its origins, mechanisms, and consequences in the context of contemporary media ecosystem in India.

### **2.1.1 | Media Propaganda and polarization:**

#### **Key Thinkers: Chomsky**

In the world today, when information transmission has evolved to be one most vital component of public opinion and political discourse, Herman and Chomsky's study on media propaganda is extremely pertinent. The propaganda model, proposed by Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky in their book "Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media," describes the structural biases and institutional limits that influence media narratives and promote polarization. (Herman and Chomsky, 1988)

The propaganda model explains that the concentration of media ownerships and media outlets frequently placing a higher priority on profit-driven goals than impartial reporting, results in a homogenization of news content. By limiting the variety of viewpoints made available to the public, reiterating pre-existing biases, and fostering echo chambers that pander to particular ideological

leanings, this dynamic exacerbates polarization. In relation to the research question on Indian media being polarized in reporting public affairs Herman and Chomsky's hypothesis, implies the proliferation of particular ideologies resulting in media polarization when media ownership is concentrated. (Herman and Chomsky, 1988) In India, most popular media organizations are in ties with political parties and business owners. As a consequence, the position of Indian media as an unbiased forum for information distribution is disturbed and leads to the division of public opinion.

Herman and Chomsky draw attention to how advertising income affects media content. Advertisers have a lot of financial clout, and they use it to pressure media outlets to cover stories that support their agenda. As a result, news organizations could be reluctant to present divergent or controversial perspectives that are not in alignment with the sponsors. By stifling alternative voices and constricting the variety of ideas that are available to the general public, this self-censorship adds to the polarization of the media. (Herman and Chomsky, 1988) In the context of business profitability impacting media narratives in India, Herman and Chomsky's approach remains relevant. Media organizations in India rely largely on advertising money, which makes them dependent on corporate interests. Brief readings on Indian media depending on advertising funds is presented in chapter 2.4 with reference to the article by Parthasarathy and Agarwal. (Parthasarathi and Agarwal, 2020)

The propaganda model also highlights how media outlets rely on government news sources. For information and commentary, journalists frequently turn to elected politicians, company spokespeople, and other establishment figures. Being dependent on sources having their own agendas restrict news reporting and sometimes forces to serve propaganda over ethics. (Herman and Chomsky, 1988) Herman and Chomsky's media propaganda is significant in understanding the

effect of Government Majority on Media Narrative in relation to publications on the protest against CAA 2019.

### **2.1.2 | Hegemony and media polarization**

In the book “Encyclopaedia of Media and Communication, Chapter: Media Hegemony (p.336-338).”

The idea of hegemony put forwarded by Antonio Gramsci offers a foundation for comprehending media polarization. Hegemony describes the control an elite group has over society in terms of culture, religion and ideology. Gramsci’s theories give insight on how dominant ideologies are reproduced through media narratives, deepening the ideological divide, in the setting of media polarization. (Artz, 2013, p. 336 - 338)

According to Gramsci, hegemony is achieved with involvement of the subservient group and is not only maintained by compulsion. This involves the spread of information and forming opinion through media that support the objectives of the governing group. (Artz, 2013) In the context of media polarization during the protest against CAA 2019 India, the BJP government being the ruling party by majority, BJP and supporters become the dominant group.

The concept of the “Manufacturing Consent” by Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman is in alignment with Gramsci's theories on hegemonic media. Media organizations, owned by business corporations, support specific ideologies and narratives that align with their goals. According to Gramsci, while dominant ideologies are spread through mainstream media, counter-hegemonic media develops in response to question and refute the prevalent narratives. In analysing media polarization, Gramsci’s theory of hegemony becomes significantly instrumental. (Artz, 2013)

### 2.1.3 | Encoding and Decoding of media

A framework for comprehending the creation, dissemination, and audience interpretation of media messages can be found in Stuart Hall's encoding and decoding paradigm. (Shaw, 2017) Hall's concept of encoding and decoding is highly contributory in the content analysis methodology proposed for this research, on Indian newspapers' headlines and pictures to understand how various audience groups receive news in shadows of cultural, social, political and religious aspects.

According to Hall's approach, media messages are first encoded by producers with intended meanings before being decoded by audiences based on their own cultural, social, and ideological backgrounds. There are three different decoding options: dominant or hegemonic, negotiated, and oppositional. The concept places a strong emphasis on consumers' active participation in deciphering and understanding media content. (Shaw, 2017, p.592-602)

It is the hypothesis of this thesis process of encoding and decoding news for Indian newspapers is impacted by social, cultural, religious and political influences as they operate in a multilingual, multireligious, and regionally distinct cultural environment. The content analysis will examine if the dominant cultural values, traditions, and customs that prevail in various locations frequently influence news content. Most Indian nationally circulating newspapers including Times of India, *The Hindu* and Hindustan Times have multiple outlets in different regions prioritizing the requirements of the locals. In encoding, it is potentially the case that newspaper contents are also influenced by ownership patterns, editorial prejudices, and political party affiliations. In decoding, depending on the alignment of the receiving audience with or opposition to the dominant ideologies portrayed in the news, different audience segments decode news in dominant, negotiated, or oppositional ways. (Shaw, 2017 p. 592 - 602)

## 2.2 Media polarization in democratic regimes and authoritarian regimes

The factors influencing citizens' decisions between state-controlled and independent media sources, despite the crucial role played by the media in authoritarian regimes and the fact that a sizable portion of the world's population lives in nations where media freedom is either severely restricted or non-existent, Magdalena Wojcieszak puts forward a research on media consumption patterns in societies with non-Western political ideology and constrained media environments, in the research paper "What Drives Media Use in Authoritarian Regimes?" analysing 'Selective Exposure Theory' in the context of Iran. (Wojcieszak *et al.*, 2019)

Media evolved fundamentally on the very freedom of speech of the citizens of a country. Wojcieszak *et al.*, (2019) suggest Hence democratic populations naturally exercise an unprecedented variety of media options to choose from. In considering media polarization in democratic regimes, the researchers suggest that selective exposure is a phenomenon where people choose to selectively expose themselves to information that supports their pre-existing preferences and beliefs. (p. 72) Partisan views like partisanship, ideology, or policy preferences have been highlighted by the researchers as major motivators of selective exposure to news sources. (p.72) In contexts of the authoritarian regimes, where national media outlets are state-controlled, journalists are subject to censorship and intimidation, and social and political dynamics are shaped by overarching identities based on religion, culture, or nationalism rather than Western political ideology, selective exposure is limited. (p.72) As autocratic leaderships use the media to boost their legitimacy and spread popular narratives about the country, it is vital for regime stability in these circumstances. The promotion of free and diversified media is linked to democratization and liberalization, therefore the media can also act as change agents.(Wojcieszak *et al.*, 2019 p.72-74)

In the research work of Filipe R. Campante and Daniel A. Hojman, “Media on Political Polarization: Evidence from the Introduction of Broadcast TV in the United States,” date the impact of new media on political polarization in the United States is analysed. The authors emphasize that the introduction of broadcast television in the post-war era, contending that these technological developments had a significant impact on the mid-20th century decline in political party polarization because of the change in the medium of audience receiving news. (Campante and Hojman, 2013) Campante and Hojman’s paper is relevant to this research in terms of understanding the impact of the television and digital media on the market of the newspaper industry and thereby extending its influence on the polarization of the newspaper media in India.

Campante and Hojman posits two mechanisms—the ideology effect and the motivation effect—through which changes in the media environment affect polarization. Evidence about voter behaviour further supports this differentiation. This study’s potential relevance to changes in the media landscape outside of radio and television is one of its most noticeable advantages. The authors advise using their methodology to look at the effects of the introduction of new media in recent decades as well as in nations with various institutional media histories, hence is relevant in the context of India. (Campante and Hojman, 2013)

Gaoming Zhu, a scholar of Illinois Wesleyan University, puts forward an insightful discussion on media censorship and polarization in China through his research paper “Polarized China: The Effect of Media Censorship on People’s Ideology, 2019.” Zhu suggests that Chinese individuals display polarization between nationalism, which defines “China-as-superpower” in the worldview, and cultural liberalism, which is linked to ideals like individual freedom and rights. (p.22) Similar to the liberal-conservative division seen in West like in United States of America, the ideologues in China take more extreme stances. Zhu’s study contends that the growth of unofficial media such as social

media and the effects of media restriction laws such as laws on use of certain social media platforms, are significant causes of this ideological divergence. (Zhu, 2019, p.21-23)

Zhu states that the liberals in China, prefer fewer regulated media sources, whereas nationalists want nationalistic news sources although less controlled media does not automatically mean progressive media. (p.23-24) In fact, the polarization has become more prominent by the dearth of expressly liberal media sources through which people learnt about liberal principles. The study makes the case that the twin effects of media restriction policies have a substantial impact on the formation of ideological polarization. The negative impacts of media-controlled liberals to more unregulated outlets. The study also discovers that while the atheists and anti-socialists take extreme positions, the middle-class agnostics, who predominantly use media for educational purposes, have a tendency to become more nationalistic. On the other hand, agnostics who watch media purely for entertainment tend to be more liberal. This discovery emphasizes how media consumption habits affect the polarization process. (Zhu, 2019, p.21-23)

## **2.2 | Moderatism, Polarization and Partisanship**

In the research paper, "Moderatism or Polarization? Representation of Advocacy Groups' Ideology in Newspapers," 2012, Michael McCluskey and Young Mie Kim conduct an examination of news articles to investigate the predominance of polarization and moderatism in the representation of advocacy groups in the United States and its potential impact on media coverage.

The authors refer to Herbert Gans' view of moderatism (a principle encouraging a moderate way of news presentation) as a fundamental news virtue. Gans in 1979, asserted that media organizations frequently discourage outlandish or excessive perspectives. However, McCluskey and Kim state that the media landscape has changed substantially since Gans' work, with technological developments

and audience's media selection leading to media stratification and fragmentation. (McCluskey and Kim, 2012, p.565-584)

The study examines 208 advocacy organizations representing various political perspectives, including labour unions, professional/trade associations, and public advocacy groups. The researchers examine the variations in news presence and presentation between groups supporting moderate and polarizing viewpoints by examining 118 publications in the USA. According to McCluskey and Kim, polarized groups are given more prominence in stories than their moderate counterparts. This implies that polarized viewpoints, which inherently offer conflict and can be presented as a way of journalistic balance, are prioritized by publication houses. The authors point out that this desire for polarization is consistent with news values, which look for conflict and compelling examples to attract readers' interest. McCluskey and Kim's research further concludes that moderate and liberal publications are r more than the polarized or conservative publications. (McCluskey and Kim, 2012, p.566-584)

The study "Polarization and Partisanship: Key Drivers of Distrust in Media Old and New?" by Jane Suiter and Richard Fletcher examines the connection between partisanship, polarization, and trust in the news media of 36 countries that were reported by 2017 Reuters Institute Digital News Report. (Suiter and Fletcher, 2020)

Partisanship is recognized as a significant independent component influencing trust in the news at the individual level. The data shows that people who strongly support a specific political viewpoint have a tendency to have less faith in the news media. Additionally, they show a higher level of faith in the news, which creates a gulf between the trust they have in their political viewpoint and the

trust people have in the professional journalistic news sources. (Suiter and Fletcher, 2020, p.484-501)

In the study, the United States is highlighted as an uncommon situation because of its extreme polarization and low level of trust in the media. This research confirms widespread beliefs, but it also highlights the necessity to take into account partisanship in more subtle ways in the USA or in other countries that go beyond the conventional left-right spectrum. The authors also recognize the difficulty in measuring the relationship between trust and other factors at the national level because people may believe unreliable news sources. Despite the huge discrepancies in press freedom rankings, they provide the example of China having higher press trust than Sweden's. (Suiter and Fletcher, 2020, 484-501)

'Centre for the Study of Developing Societies' published a report in 2022 on the trust levels of different news media sources in India. According to the report, a survey states that 64% of respondents trusted in the news channels operated by the public funded television broadcaster Doordarshan (DD), over other news sources. Since newspapers are owned by private corporations, 60% of the respondents' trusted newspapers and only 41% trusted private television news channels. (p.128) No specific reason have been identified to support this data. However, newspapers being the oldest mode of news media, it always has had a distinct and readership undisturbed by new media forms. Other explanation possibly is because they have the choice between privately funded TV and publicly funded TV, and only privately-owned newspapers. The fact that the newspaper readers trusted newspapers nearly as high as Doordarshan news viewers. And radio listeners do not have the same level of trust in the news on All India Radio (AIR), another public broadcaster is a potential area of research. (Lokniti\_CSDS Report, 2022)

There is a definite partisan division. Compared to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) supporters, Congress and regional parties' supporters have a tendency to have lower levels of confidence in all media. (p.129) But among supporters of all parties, there is a constant order or pattern of confidence, with newspapers coming in second place and DD's news outlets coming in first. The report also reveals that Muslim and Hindu news consumers have different levels of trust in the media. Muslim news consumers are less trusting of all forms of news media than Hindu news consumers. (Lokniti\_CSDS Report, 2022)

### **2.3 | Literature on polarization in Indian media**

India's media industry has grown significantly in recent years, with a profusion of sources and a sizable audience base. The prevalent celebratory narrative, however, ignores the alarming structural patterns that permeate the nation's media environment. Kalyani Chadha from the University of Maryland, in her research article "The Indian news media industry: Structural trends and journalistic implications" (2017) articulates that the factors, commercialization, ownership concentration, and political influence seriously affect news output and journalism quality in India by undermining the idea of a dynamic and pluralistic media ecosystem. (Chadha, 2017)

In the volume "Media Influence Matrix: India, Funding Journalism," published by CEU Center for Media, Data and Society (CMDS), Budapest, 2020, the authors Parthasarathi and Agarwal discuss that ownership concentration and funding mechanisms define the landscape of Indian news media. Despite the market's regional and linguistic fragmentation, ownership is concentrated within a small number of significant firms, especially in localized regions. It's interesting to note that most people and families with non-media business interests and assets such as business owners operate and own India's news industry. (Parthasarathi and Agarwal, 2020)

The excessive emphasis on information that appeals to advertisers has diverted news organizations' attention from critical examinations of business and politics. Print media, especially English-language publications, place a greater emphasis on entertainment, fashion, and sports than on rural India, which receives little to no coverage. Television networks that cater to urban viewers and support market-oriented policies frequently highlight crime, cricket, and movies. This emphasis on making a profit also encourages sensationalism, infotainment, and the blending of news and entertainment. The authors suggest that even Doordarshan, India's state broadcaster, has caved in to commercial demands by reducing the amount of essential public interest themes, covers in favour of entertainment programming. (Chadha, 2017)

Across all news media, fast-moving consumer groups, services, transportation, and banking and finance are the biggest advertising segments contributing major fundings to news media in India. (p.4) Among the top marketers are national and multinational companies and major investors are business owners. For instance, Chandra's Essel Group, a business corporate owns a conglomeration of television networks and businesses in a number of related industries, whereas Ambani's Reliance Group, a business corporate now controls Network 18 Media and Investments Ltd. and its subsidiaries. The ownership, funding, and involvement of many stakeholders, such as large investors, politicians, global players, and the state, are complexly intertwined in the Indian news media ecosystem. (p.11-19) While digital platforms are altering the industry and diversifying funding approaches, advertising is still the main source of income for the media industry. (Parthasarathi and Agarwal, 2020)

The dominance of a small number of media outlets, which has resulted in oligopolies in numerous states, is a worrying trend in India's media landscape. Vertical integration progressively centralizes authority over both the creation and dissemination of news. These worries are made worse by the

involvement of commercial and political interests, as media organizations wind up serving as tools to push their own goals. The independence of local media is threatened by funding from “dubious capital” and a reliance on owner financial gain. The variety and impartiality of news are adversely impacted by the constant pressure placed on journalists working for such channels to provide biased news in line with the political or economic views of their owners.(Chadha, 2017) The Sun Group in Tamil Nadu and the Panda Family in Odisha are two notable examples of how politicians and their allies are heavily involved in the regional news media. Through acquisitions and vertical integration, these people, who primarily work in non-media sectors, have increased their sway in the news industry. The Indian government also provides grants, subsidies, and income from public advertising to the news media. (Parthasarathi and Agarwal, 2020)

Chadha analyses the relationship between journalism and public sphere challenges. Chadha suggests In India, journalistic methods and the state of the public realm are directly impacted by media ownership and control. There is often pressure on journalists to generate biased news when they work for organizations with ties to corporate and political interests. Lack of training, low pay, and unstable employment all affect the integrity of journalists. In particular, regional and local journalists are susceptible to political and commercial sway. Because some journalists also serve as fixers for nearby companies, conflicts of interest might occur. Investigative reporting and the dissemination of balanced information are hampered by the financial constraints media outlets confront, compromising the democratic values of accountability and openness. (Chadha, 2017)

In the thesis “Perceptions and Content of Traditional and Online News: An Analysis of Bias in Indian Media,” Sangya Tyagi Investigates the differences in perceived bias among people who consume news through various media forms was the goal of the research project. The poll information

gathered gave useful insights into how traditional and internet news are perceived and what they cover. (Tyagi, 2021)

Tyagi discusses that people's perceptions of bias change depending on the socio-political issue being discussed. The study shows how complicated the perception of media bias is and how it relates to numerous things like religion, philosophy, and the particular topics being covered. Tyagi analysed news articles from two internet and two traditional media sources using content analysis. Shortlisting themes for Boolean searches on online media sources, the analysis concentrated on front-page coverage from traditional media sources. The tone of the chosen internet articles was then coded to look for signs of bias. To find out if there was a significant difference in tone bias between the two media sources, a chi-square test was used. Using content analysis, the study looked at news articles from two internet and two conventional media sources. Shortlisted themes were used in the analysis, which concentrated on front-page coverage from traditional media sources, to run Boolean searches on internet news sources. To discover signs of bias, the tone of the chosen internet articles was then coded. The two media sources were compared using a chi-square test to see if there was a significant difference in tone bias. Tyagi disseminated the poll online for which there was an unequal distribution of replies, with the majority coming from large urban areas like New Delhi. As cultural, political, and media environments change across different states, this suggests that the findings might not accurately reflect the overall Indian people. Moreover, half of the respondents were between the ages of 18 and 34, indicating that the respondents' age distribution was likewise skewed towards younger people. The dependence on self-reported statistics tend to overstate media usage. (p.49-54)

Tyagi's findings revealed a sizable variation in the tone bias between traditional and online news sources. 36.7% of traditional news pieces had a positive tone, 27.4% had a negative tone, and

35.8% had a neutral tone. Online news items, in comparison, had 13.4% of them rated as positive, 38.14% as negative, and 48.4% as neutral. These results show that online media produced a higher number of articles with a negative tone, while neutral pieces were distributed fairly equally between traditional and online media sources. It's interesting to note that 51.5% of the web articles had some form of prejudice. (Tyagi, 2021)

### **2.3.1 | Contemporary literature on Indian media under BJP government (since 2014)**

Pooja George and Vedika Inamdar, researchers at The Polis Project published their essay “Mainstream news media and majoritarian state violence in India,” criticising Indian media of serving Hindutva (Hindu ideology). Since the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power in India in 2014 and again in 2019, the fourth pillar of democracy’s function as the media has been under threat. Mainstream news media outlets have been openly spreading propaganda and misinformation in recent years. makes the case that state violence in India is a result of the mainstream media’s cooperation in the unchecked dissemination of propaganda and misinformation. (George and Inamdar, 2021) *The Hindu* nationalist majoritarian ideology supported by the BJP-led government in India serves the interests of the privileged upper caste and business elites. The media, which is driven by corporate and commercial forces, frequently marginalizes minority populations while speaking for the wealthy middle class. In newsrooms, marginalized groups like Other Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes are vastly underrepresented, which feeds prejudice and discrimination. (George and Inamdar, 2021)

According to the authors George and Inamdar, since 2014, the majority of national news outlets have unconditionally backed the BJP-led government and pushed divisive ideologies and propaganda, fueling an environment that is communal, anti-Muslim, and polarizing. The dominant

party uses the mainstream media as a political tool to advance its majoritarian agenda at the expense of underrepresented groups, naysayers, and dissenters. The introduction of both state-run and privately owned news outlets furthers the government's purpose while undermining media independence, objectivity, and dependability. Majoritarianism and division in society are maintained by the media's selective reporting, use of language to minimize state-sanctioned violence, and creation of equalizing phrases. (George and Inamdar, 2021)

Researchers Subhajit Paul and Uttam Kr Pegu in their study "Media Polarization and Assertion of Majoritarianism in Indian News Media" discusses the underlying elements that contributed to the BJP's ascent to power. The 1990's saw a rise in Hindu nationalism, which culminated in the 1992 Babri mosque demolition and the Ram Janmabhoomi Movement. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and the BJP supported the campaign, which was a turning point in Indian politics that resulted in the mainstreaming of majoritarian politics. (Paul and Pegu, 2021)

With the BJP's comeback in 2014, majoritarian politics saw a rise in support. Media professionals started to self-censor more as a result of the online smear campaigns that were launched against journalists who were critical of the administration. The safety and credibility of journalists and media organizations that did not adhere to BJP ideology were threatened. (Paul and Pegu, 2021)

Prime-time news debates on media outlets such television news networks Times Now and Republic TV have been shown to be biased in favour of the ruling party. These networks were very important during the 2019 general elections because of their high television rating points (TRPs). Despite the fact that panelists from all religious backgrounds had the chance to voice their thoughts, there were signs of media polarization and a maintenance of the status quo that promoted majoritarian beliefs. (Paul and Pegu, 2021)

Paul and Pegu's analysis emphasizes the difficulties experienced by journalists who criticize the government as well as the effect of majoritarian politics on the Indian media. The rise of Hindu nationalism and the polarization of the media have both helped the BJP succeed in gaining control of the government. There is evidence of a prolonged shift towards majoritarian sentiment, despite claims to the contrary. (Paul and Pegu, 2021)

### **2.3 | Literature on Citizenship Amendment Act 2019**

The study undertaken by Mr. M. Shriram and Dr. S. Arulchelvan, "Multilayer Perceptron Analyzed the Audience Perception towards Citizenship Amendment Act-CAA (India)," offers an examination of how the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in India is perceived by the general people. The study focuses on how the CAA is portrayed in the media and how that affects the audience. The study looks at how the media covered the contentious bill and affected how the public saw it in order to assess the level of media influence on public policies. The media's partial coverage of the CAA has skewed public opinion while some media outlets even spread false information to boost readership and revenue while ignoring crucial public issues. (Shriram and Arulchelvan, 2021)

Shriram and Arulchelvan use a quantitative research design to gather information from a sample of more than 200 Chennai-area respondents. The results show that a sizeable percentage of respondents think newspapers present a more accurate representation of the facts than television news programs. Newspaper consumers' preferences are primarily influenced by credibility and thorough coverage. Others read news stories online or through other digital media platforms, while some readers still prefer hard copies. (Shriram and Arulchelvan, 2021)

Shriram and Arulchelvan argue that it is impossible to overstate the influence of the media on how society views socioeconomic, political, and cultural concerns. While this study clarifies how the

audience views media coverage of the CAA, the geographical region that was chosen for the investigation is just one city limiting the scope of pan India comprehension.

However, Shriram and Arulchelvan's study puts forward a relevant comparison of news sources. Compared to television news programs, around 43% of viewers in this study felt that newspapers present a true portrayal of the facts while only 14% of respondents think otherwise. One-third of the respondents in this study valued newspapers over other media for their credibility and credibility, and 32% of readers concur that newspapers offer comprehensive coverage, which is one of the most crucial considerations when choosing to read a newspaper to learn about daily events. Recognition and detailed presentations are greatly influenced by the credibility factor of newspapers. (Shriram and Arulchelvan, 2021)

Readers have quite different preferences for how they read newspaper items when it comes to the information they consume from them. Nearly 37% of readers in this area choose to read newspapers in print or purchase them from a store. 34% of respondents and about 29% of respondents, respectively, claim to have read news articles in print newspapers and other digital media. The statistics are different, with 27% of readers consuming daily newspapers, based on the fact that people tend to read newspapers more frequently. Each was equally divided into around 25%. More than 40% of respondents who were asked about their interests said they were interested in news-related national events, with 36% saying they were interested in local issues. Notably, 22% of respondents claim to be interested in monitoring world events.(Shriram and Arulchelvan, 2021)

## 2.4 | Indian print media in the year 2017-2018

In “Media Influence Matrix: India, Funding Journalism,” the authors Parthasarathi and Agarwal gives an insight discussion on the growth of newspapers in India. The 2017–2018 year had little development for the Indian newspaper and magazine sector, with a growth rate of 3.4% which is the lowest in a decade. Hindi and regional language newspapers, which witnessed growth rates of 4.6% and 4.2%, respectively, were the main drivers of the expansion. English newspapers, on the other hand, only saw a 1.5% growth rate. On the other hand, revenue from circulation and advertising fell by 6% for magazines. The difficulties were exacerbated by the rising cost of newsprint, which rose by almost 40%. Additionally, digital media platforms posed a greater threat of competition to the sector. (Parthasarathi and Agarwal, 2020)

The key sources of income for the print journalism sector are advertising and circulation.

Advertising and circulation together brought in €2.6 billion and €1.37 billion, respectively, in 2018.

Despite its cyclical nature, advertising revenue is essential for supporting the expenditures associated with publishing. With cover prices per paper varying from €0.01 to €0.26 depending on the language and edition, news material is priced rather affordably. This generates monthly circulation revenue of about €2.5 per household. (Parthasarathi and Agarwal, 2020)

With a circulation to advertising ratio of 1:2, English newspapers rely more on advertising revenue.

Regional language publications typically charge higher cover costs than English publications and obtain lower ad rates. Although the need for news in regional languages has grown, advertising focus has shifted to semi-urban and rural areas. Comparatively to English newspapers, Hindi and regional language newspapers saw better growth rates in ad and circulation revenue in 2018.

(Parthasarathi and Agarwal, 2020)

Indian print media also makes money from sponsored events and brand extensions, which are listed as “other income” in financial reports in addition to revenue from advertising and circulation. The overall financial viability of the sector is aided by these extra funding sources. (Parthasarathi and Agarwal, 2020)

In this chapter, literatures on the key thinkers of media propaganda, media polarization global and in Indian context and Citizenship Amendment Act 2019 have been reviewed and further I will proceed with the content analysis.

### **Chapter 3 | Methodology**

The methodology used in this study is a content analysis of headlines published over the protests against the 2019 Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in India, from three illustrious newspapers: *Times of India*, *Hindustan Times*, and *The Hindu*. The focus of the study is to understand the media in terms of their polarization towards pro-government, right-wing, and anti-government, left-wing perspectives. A content analytic strategy, integrating quantitative and qualitative evaluations, has been adopted to accomplish this goal.

#### **3.1 | Overview**

In the research article “The Connotation of Newspaper Headlines,” the author Elmer Emig, refers back to the president of the university of Wisconsin and the former editor of *The Century Magazine*, Dr Glenn Frank’s idea that the power held by a journalist or editor who craft the headlines, become evident when we realize how few people actually read the news pieces in-depth. (Emig, 1928, p.53-59)

In the study “A Corpus Study of Evaluative and Speculative Language,” the authors give a thorough corpus analysis of language used for speculative and evaluative purposes. It offers insightful information on subjectivity tagging and the traits of subjective language at various textual levels. By enhancing the recognition of subjective language, the findings boost natural language processing (NLP) applications such as text categorization, summarization, and sentiment analysis. (Wiebe *et al.*, 2001)

The corpus study annotates subjectivity at the expression, sentence, and document levels in an effort to establish standards for separating sentences that convey conjecture and other subjectivity from phrases that present factual information. The authors think that this duty is especially crucial for news reporting because the reader would benefit from knowing how opinionated the language is and if the author claims to convey factual information objectively or not. (Wiebe *et al.*, 2001)

Having mentioned this, a type of subjective speech that frequently goes unnoticed by the broader public is speculative language. Let’s considering news report about CAA 2019 as an illustration. The headline published by *Hindustan Times* on December 6, 2019 “10 million people likely to benefit from bill: Sarma” serves as the title for this story, which presents the facts stated by someone who is in support of the bill. The headline published by *The Hindu* about the same bill on December 5, 2019, “Citizenship (Amendment) Bill may benefit ‘declared foreigners’,” is an illustration of speculative language in a headline for this news. The second example suggests a complex situation dealing with immigration and legal issues.

In the research “News Or Speculation? A Comparative Content Analysis Of Headlines And The Prevalence Of Speculative Language In Corporate And Independently Owned Newspapers,” by

Lindsay Hudock from the University of Central Florida studies 'News Headlines as a Fundamental Unit of Analysis and Unravelling their Influence on Public Discourse.' The study illuminates how these ostensibly innocent phrases exert enormous control over forming societal perceptions by focusing on the significance of news headlines. The paper offers a thorough explanation of how these headlines can be extremely effective persuasive techniques. Skilled writers and editors may create headlines that spark interest, arouse feelings, and even mould readers' thinking before they read the complete story. They do this by using linguistic and psychological tactics. The effectiveness of these headlines lies not only in their succinctness but also in their capacity to leave readers with enduring impressions that influence how they interpret the reported events. (Hudock, 2005)

Hudock's study refers back to Pulitzer and Hearst on changing newspaper headlines into large print in 1895, establishing the modern large newspaper headline. The visual character of headlines, which makes them stand out from the rest of the content, successfully grabs readers' attention and compels them to read on. The tendency for readers to base their opinions only on these catchy phrases is echoed by Steigleermann's description of the American reader as "a shopper of headlines" in his book. This idea is supported by Emig's 1928 survey, which found that 51% of participants acknowledged to basing their assessment of the day's news purely on the headlines. According to a 2004 Pew Research Center survey, this trend has remained over time, with 18% of readers admitting they simply read the headlines and 37% saying they prefer to read the headlines and "some reporting." Given that the average reader only spends 17 minutes per day reading newspapers, headlines play a significant role in how readers interpret the news. (Hudock, 2005)

Having read literatures on the importance and impact of news headlines, the understanding is that headlines serve as gatekeepers to whether the general public will read the entire narrative or only

skim the surface. In the fast-paced world, where information overload is the norm, headlines have a significant impact on shaping public opinion. While some responsible people check facts and look beyond the headlines, many people merely base their opinions on these brief summaries. And for this population headlines become the sole information. A headline's concision pushes it to distil the essence of a lengthy story into a few words. As a result, the wording and tone used can greatly influence readers' opinions by highlighting some characteristics and underplaying others. Sensationalized or deceptive headlines have the potential to unintentionally spread false information by inciting strong emotional responses that could impair reason. Given the current as well as pre-CAA political and societal divisions in India, this phenomenon is especially extraordinarily crucial in the Indian media landscape because polarization can be exacerbated by headlines that pander to pre-existing biases. Therefore, this research chooses analysis of headlines as the methodology.

### **3.1.1 | The research plan**

The research takes a quantitative and qualitative approach. It focuses on the core idea of framing and examines a variety of aspects, including how -

- a. news is presented from diverse perspectives,
- b. how language is used,
- c. how facts are manipulated, and
- d. how opinion journalism is frequently used.

This study intends to shed light on the varied approaches used by media outlets to sway the public's perception and comprehension of news events by studying these components in the context of their headline presentations. The aim is to elucidate the underlying patterns and methods used in news framing through a diligent approach, providing light on the complex

interactions between media, information delivery, and audience reception throughout the protest against Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) from 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019 to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

As mentioned in chapter 1.2.1, the Citizenship Amendment Act 2019 of India, known as CAA, was passed by the parliament of India on 12<sup>th</sup> of December 2019. As the act was perceived as discriminatory by a certain population of the country, mass demonstration of protests CAA took place across India. The first protest was reported on 4<sup>th</sup> of December when the bill was in motion in the lower house of the parliament. The protests continued after the bill became an act and petitions were filed in the Supreme Court to prevent it. There have been multiple hearings in the Supreme Court resulting on the decision that Supreme Court will continue to hear pleas, but no halt has been imposed on the implementation of CAA. The protests continued till 14<sup>th</sup> of March 2020 when the news of Covid worldwide shook the entire ecosystem. Though there have been multiple debates over CAA observed in various media after that and another phase of agitation has been in place after covid 19, the phase from December 4 to March 14, 2020, in reporting news about the protest on CAA can be considered complete. Therefore, the duration of the research is chosen from December 04, 2019, to March 14, 2020.

The newspapers chosen for this research are *Times of India*, *The Hindu* and *Hindustan Times*. Brief introductions of these newspapers have been given in chapter 1.1.1, chapter 1.1.2 and chapter 1.1.3 respectively. There are two main reasons behind the choices of newspapers. The first reason is that these three papers are most popular English dailies of with India both by circulation and by readership. The second reason is the accessibility to the newspapers online in their official web achieves where *Times of India* and *The Hindu* are in the web versions and *Hindustan Times* in pictures of the hard printed copy.

A total of 1223 headlines, 456 from *Hindustan Times*, 587 from *Times of India*, and 180 from *The Hindu*, have been found relevant to the research. Due to the limitation in the time in analysing the whole articles and the hypothetical calculation of the research plan, the initial idea was to analyse the headlines and pictures published in the chosen newspapers in relation to CAA 2019. However, due to constraints of time and resources, the research parameters have been kept limited to the headlines only.

### **Chapter 3.2 | Findings**

Now that I have presented an overview of my methodology, I will move to a discussion of its application for this research. I will also present the results of the research in advance of a more comprehensive discussion of these results in chapter 4 of this thesis.

The Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) news headlines can be divided into several main groupings, each of which represents various perspectives and viewpoints on the topic.

Firstly, there are headlines that appear on first reading to encourage rallies in support of the CAA and those who cover protests against it. These headlines also appear to stress the opinions and points of view of both the supporters and oppositions of CAA. Examples in 3.2.1.

Secondly, some newspapers headlines cite only members of the opposition Congress, the left wing leaders and protesting organizations opposed to the CAA, while others cite only representatives and supporters of the ruling Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP). Examples in 3.2.2.

Thirdly, certain headlines use words and phrases that can be read as emotional or presenting clear opinions. These are words such as: *contentious, flawed, dangerous, anti-*

*constitutional, discriminatory, Immoral, controversial, diabolical* etc. and phrases denoting *dividing the country, anti-Muslim, dark day in the constitutional history, threat to unity* etc.

Examples in 3.3.3.

Additionally, there are headlines that emphasizes on protest-related circumstances and negative outcomes, frequently condemning the authorities, the government, and the police.

Examples in 3.3.4

Another thread of these headlines, however, focuses on the plight of refugees and others who might benefit from the Act. Examples in 3.3.5

Last but not least, certain newspapers headlines concentrate on global viewpoints, reporting news critical of the CAA and the BJP and its supporters. Since media channels are so important in influencing how the public perceives the CAA discussion, the variety of these categories indicates how complicated and diverse it is. Examples in 3.3.6.

### **3.2.1 | Headlines on campaigns protesting CAA and supporting CAA.**

The three chosen newspapers—*Times of India*, *Hindustan Times*, and *The Hindu*—published news headlines mentioning the campaigns protesting CAA and supporting CAA distinctively.

#### **A. These headlines are organized based on giving out information on the protest which have the potential to shape public opinion into supporting the protest.**

The headlines that focused on the list of aspects mentioned below fall in this category—

1. Thousands on the street protesting.

Examples:

“Thousands converge on Hyderabad streets against CAA” - Published in *Hindustan Times* on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2020

“Hyderabad: Million march to be held under cop watch” – published in *Times of India* on January 4, 2020

2. Death of protesters and families mourning; appealing for justice.

Examples:

“Protests over CAA continue, death toll in UP climbs to 17” – published in *Hindustan Times* on December 22, 2019.

“A year on, kin of anti-CAA protest victims await justice” – published in *The Hindu* on December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020

3. University Students boycott convocation/varsities/exams as a demonstration of protest and Student organizations protest.

Examples:

“CAA protests: Pondicherry University students’ council to boycott convocation presided over by president Kovind” – published in *Times of India* on December 20 2019

“CAA protest: Students boycott classes in Northeast varsities” – published in *The Hindu* on January 22, 2020

‘CAA not acceptable in Northeast’, say student bodies; to hold protest against JNU violence” – published in *Hindustan Times* on January 7, 2020.

4. Doctors condemn police interference in peaceful protests.

Examples:

“CAA protests: Doctors and health activists condemn police interference” –  
published by *The Hindu* on December 22, 2019

5. BJP MLA/ leaders/members going against their party, quitting and protesting CAA.

Examples:

‘Country can’t be divided on the basis of religion’: BJP lawmaker Narayan Tripathi  
opposes CAA – published in *Hindustan Times* on 29 January 2020

“BJP MLA speaks out against CAA” – published in *The Hindu* on January 29, 2020

BJP minority cell leader quits post ‘due to NRC & CAA’ – published in *Times of India* on  
January 7, 2020

6. Muslim organizations take out massive rally.

Examples:

“Muslim organisations take out massive rally against CAA, NPR and NRC”- published  
in *The Hindu* on February 2020

“Muslims unite for huge anti-CAA rally” – published in *Times of India* on January 2, 2020

7. Signature campaign; relentless protest; protest in solidarity; peaceful agitation.

Examples:

CAA protests: DMK, allies to hold signature campaign in Tamil Nadu – published in  
*Times of India* on Jan 24 2020

Shaheen Bagh anti-CAA stir: Protest on their lips, solidarity on their plate – published in  
*Times of India* on January 20, 2020

Peaceful protest against CAA-NRC held in Goa, civil society demands revocation of CAA  
– *Times of India*, December 18, 2019

DMK sends over 2 cr signatures received as part of anti-CAA campaign to President –  
published in *Hindustan Times* on February 16, 2020

Citizenship Act: University students across country protest in solidarity with Jamia  
Millia, AMU – published in *The Hindu* on December 16, 2019

Signature campaign against CAA - published in *The Hindu* on February 2, 2020

#### 8. Copies of CAB burnt as protest.

Examples:

“CAB protest: DU students burn copy of bill” - *Times of India*, published on December  
13, 2019

DU students burn copy of CAB, up the ante – published in *The Hindu* on December  
13, 2019

The number of headlines on campaigns protesting CAA are -

Newspapers	Total number of headlines published (X)	Headlines on protesters’ campaigns (Y)	Percentage (Y/X) *100%	Percentage on [Y/ (Y1 + Y2 + Y3)] *100%
<i>Times of India</i>	587 (X1)	148 (Y1)	25.2%	52.49%
<i>Hindustan Times</i>	456 (X2)	90 (Y2)	19.7%	31.9%
<i>The Hindu</i>	180 (X3)	44 (Y3)	24.4%	15.6%

There are 282 headlines published, which were found reporting on campaigns protesting CAA, in the chosen time span from 4<sup>th</sup> December to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020, out of which 148 are from *Times of India*, 90 from *Hindustan Times* and 44 from *The Hindu*.

**B. These headlines are organized based on giving out information on the rallies in support of CAA which have the potential to shape public opinion into supporting the protest.**

The headlines that focused on the list of aspects mentioned below fall in this category–

1. Rallies supporting CAA

Examples:

Rally to support CAA – *Times of India* on February 12, 2020

Indian Americans hold rally in support of CAA in Boston – *Times of India* on January 7, 2020

At pro-CAA rally in Bengal, Nadda says ‘huge’ turnout signals change – published in *Hindustan Times* on December 24, 2019

Rally in support of CAA – *The Hindu* on January 13, 2020

Human chain in support of CAA, NRC formed in Pune even as protests against Act grow – *Hindustan Times* on December 22, 2019

2. BJP Leaders showing concerns, spreading awareness, providing booklets on agonies of the refugees.

Examples:

“BJP to reach out to 3 crore families to spread awareness over CAA” - published in *Hindustan Times* on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2020

BJP member tries to ‘explain’ CAA to locals in UP, thrashed – published in *Times of India* on December 29, 2019

CAA: BJP plans awareness blitz – published in *The Hindu* on December 21, 2019

CAA: BJP to bring out booklet on agony of refugees – published on January 19, 2020

PM Modi leads BJP outreach on CAA – *Times of India* on December 31, 2019

3. BJP leaders felicitates cab driver for taking passenger to police for anti CAA speech.

Examples:

BJP leader felicitates Mumbai cab driver who took poet to police for anti-CAA comments – published in *the Hindu* on February 8 2020

4. Students rally in support of CAA.

Examples:

ABVP rallies in support of CAA & NRC, says it’s a security – published by *Times of India* on December 24, 2019

*Hindustan Times*, December 18, 2019, “Students gather support for CAA protest on Dec 19”

The number of headlines on campaigns supporting CAA are -

Newspapers	Total number of headlines published (X)	Headlines on supporters’ campaigns (Y)	Percentage (Y/X) *100%	Percentage on [Y/ (Y1 + Y2 + Y3)] *100%
<i>Times of India</i>	587 (X1)	34 (Y1)	5.8%	64.1%

<i>Hindustan Times</i>	456 (X2)	10 (Y2)	2.2%	18.9%
<i>The Hindu</i>	180 (X3)	9 (Y3)	5%	17%

There are 53 headlines published, which were found reporting on campaigns supporting CAA, in the chosen time span from 4<sup>th</sup> December to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020, out of which 34 are from *Times of India*, 10 from *Hindustan Times* and 9 from *The Hindu*.

### 3.2 | Anti CAA and Pro CAA quotes by protesters and members of opposition parties in headlines

The Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) has become one of the most divisive topics in Indian politics, and remarks from prominent figures supporting and against the law have been widely reported in the media headlines. The three chosen newspapers—*Times of India*, *Hindustan Times*, and *The Hindu*—published news headlines mentioning quotes by protesters of CAA and supporters of CAA distinctively.

For the purpose of this study, ‘leader’ is used to refer Member of Legislative Assemblies, Members of Parliament, spokespersons of the political parties.

The reason for considering the quotes is that the statements demonstrate the stances of the prominent personalities, on the situation which eventually have the potential to shape public opinion about CAA and its various aspects.

#### **A. These headlines are organized based on comments by people/protesters/political leaders.**

The criticism of the CAA is expressed in quotes from a variety of people in society, including opposition leaders in Congress, protesting students, academics, writers, and filmmakers.

The headlines that focused on the list of aspects mentioned below fall in this category –

1. Jamia students were not involved in violent Jamia protest; JNU violence is state sponsored.  
(Jamia Millia Islamia and Jawaharlal Nehru University are renowned university in New Delhi, India. Students of both the universities protested against CAA. During the protest, violent clash happened between the student protesters and the police. )

Examples:

*Times. Of India*, December 15, 2019 “Anti-CAA stir in Delhi: Jamia Millia Islamia University says its students were not involved in violence”

*Hindustan Times*, December 12, 2019, “Jamia students not involved in arson during citizenship law protest: MHA official”.

*The Hindu*, December 16, 2019, “JMI students disassociate themselves from violence”.

*Hindustan Times*, January 12, “JNU attack ‘state-sponsored’, VC must be dismissed, says Congress fact-finding committee”.

*The Hindu*, January 6, 2020, “JNU violence: It’s state-sponsored goondaism, says Congress”

2. North east MP raises CAA threat to indigenous identity

Examples:

*The Hindu*, December 11, 2019, “Citizenship (Amendment) Bill: Northeast MPs raise concerns of threat to indigenous identity”

*Times of India*, December 12, 2019, “Protests against Citizenship (Amendment) Bill in Northeast: Top Developments”

3. NRC targeted at Muslims; Alienating the Muslims.

Examples:

*The Hindu*, December 27, 2019, "CAA, NRC may affect status of India's Muslim minority: Congressional Research Service"

*Hindustan Times*, December 28, 2019, "In tandem with NRC, CAA may affect status of India's Muslim minority: Congressional Research Service"

*The Hindu*, December 29, 2019, "NRC, CAA aim at alienating Muslims: Panakkad Thangal"

4. CAA is discriminatory; anti-constitutional.

Examples:

*Hindustan Times*, January 29, 2020 "'Either follow Constitution or tear it away': BJP lawmaker speaks against CAA"

*The Hindu*, January 31, 2020, "CAA is discriminatory and should be opposed: Azad"

*Times of India*, January 21, "CAA should be revoked, it's anti-constitutional: MGS Narayanan"

5. Similar to emergency.

Example:

*The Hindu*, December 19, 2019, "Anti-CAA protests: It's similar to Emergency resistance, says Yechury"

6. No CAA in Congress states.

Example:

*The Hindu*, January 02, 2020, "No CAA in States ruled by Cong.: Venugopal"

7. CAA polarizing the country.

Example:

*Times of India*, January 16, 2020, "CAA, NPR and NRC part of a malevolent plan:  
Teesta Setalvad"

*Times of India*, January 18, 2020, "It will be retreat or rout: CAA-NPR-NRC threaten  
the idea, national unity and territorial integrity of India"

8. All parties must come together to protest.

Example:

*Times of India*, January 18, 2020, "Political parties opposing CAA and NRC should  
come together: P Chidambaram"

9. States can't be forced CAA and NRC.

Example:

*The Hindu*, January 19, 2020, "States can't be forced on Citizenship Amendment Act:  
Congress"

10. Anti CAA protests are voices of motherland.

Example:

*The Hindu*, February 21, 2020, "Anti-CAA protests are 'strong voices of motherland': G.N.  
Devy"

9. Opposition cries foul in parliament.

Example:

Parliament proceedings | Opposition cries foul as Naidu refuses debate on CAA –  
published in *The Hindu* on February 3, 2020

The number of headlines mentioning quotes from protesters of CAA are -

Newspapers	Total number of headlines published (X)	Headlines on protesters' quotes (Y)	Percentage (Y/X) *100%	Percentage on [Y/ (Y1 + Y2 + Y3)] *100%
<i>Times of India</i>	587 (X1)	60 (Y1)	10.2%	49.2%
<i>Hindustan Times</i>	456 (X2)	17 (Y2)	3.73%	13.9%
<i>The Hindu</i>	180 (X3)	45 (Y3)	25%	36.9%

There are 122 headlines published, which were found mentioning quotes of protesters and opposition parties on CAA, in the chosen time span from 4<sup>th</sup> December to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020, out of which 60 are from *Times of India*, 17 from *Hindustan Times* and 45 from *The Hindu*.

**B. These headlines are organized based on comments by people/supporters/political leaders.**

The supporting ideas of the CAA is expressed in quotes from a variety of people in society, including opposition leaders in Congress, protesting students, academics, writers, and filmmakers.

The headlines that focused on the list of aspects mentioned below fall in this category –

1. Rights are safe/Situation under control- Modi assures/BJP leaders; Indigenous people's rights will be protected.

Examples:

*The Hindu*, December 29, 2019, "CAA is perfectly legal and Constitutional, says Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad"

*The Hindu*, January 6, 2020, No possibility of large number applying under CAA in TN: BJP leader"

2. Congress stoking fire.

Example:

*Hindustan Times*, January 10, 2020, "Violence in varsities due to opposition's propaganda on CAA: Former Union minister Shanta Kumar"

3. Congress playing hide and seek, misleading.

Example:

*Times of India*, 12 January, 2020, "Opposition lying on CAA, challenge them to a debate: Amit Shah"

*Hindustan Times* on March 13, 2020, "'Won't withdraw CAA; challenge opposition leaders for a debate': Amit Shah"

*Hindustan Times* on December 14, 2020, “Banked on Hindu-Muslim politics for years’: Amit Shah attacks Cong over CAA criticism”

4. Anti CAA protest backed by outside force.

Example:

*Times of India*, December 19, 2019, “Dirty politics, urban Naxals behind violence, says PM Modi on protests against citizenship law”

5. CAA corrects a historical mistake; CAA is to give citizenship-not take away; CAA is a question of countries’ integrity.

Examples:

CAA to fulfill old promises to religious minorities in neighbouring countries: Modi – published in *Times of India* on January 28, 2020

6. Modi – misguiding misinformation by opposition.

Example:

*Times of India* on December 22, 2019, “Lies being spread that I brought law to snatch people's rights: Modi”

7. CAA is not discriminatoty.

Example:

*The Hindu*, February 8, 2020, “CAA does not discriminate against Indians: Venkaiah

8. Lok Sabha/Rajya Sabha passes the bill; Supreme Court accepts plea against CAA but no stay on its operation.

Examples:

*The Hindu* on December 11, 2019, “After a heated debate, Rajya Sabha clears Citizenship (Amendment) Bill”

*Times of India*, January 22, 2020, “Supreme Court on CAA petitions: No stay for now, apex court refers pleas to 5-judge bench”

The number of headlines mentioning quotes from supporters of CAA are -

Newspapers	Total number of headlines published (X)	Headlines on supporters' quotes (Y)	Percentage (Y/X) *100%	Percentage on [Y/ (Y1 + Y2 + Y3)] *100%
<i>Times of India</i>	587 (X1)	44 (Y1)	7.5%	48.9%
<i>Hindustan Times</i>	456 (X2)	28 (Y2)	6.1%	31.1%
<i>The Hindu</i>	180 (X3)	18 (Y3)	10%	20%

There are 90 headlines published, which were found mentioning quotes from supporters of CAA, in the chosen time span from 4<sup>th</sup> December to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020, out of which 44 are from *Times of India*, 28 from *Hindustan Times* and 18 from *The Hindu*.

### 3.3 | Use of language

Regarding its ramifications and goal, the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) has generated controversy in India. We can find three different aspects where derogatory words and phrases have been utilized to criticize the CAA by examining the headlines of three illustrious newspapers—*Times of India*, *Hindustan Times*, and *The Hindu*.

As discussed in 3.1, the understanding that language used in media and thus headlines, in a speculative way, shape public opinion. The consistency of a certain set of terminologies over CAA, presents them as dissenting voices questioning the government's choice to put the Act into effect. Therefore, analysis of the use of language, enables us to comprehend the positions taken by these media in relation to the government's position on the CAA.

The use of language in the headlines are categorised into three categories –

1. Use of negative adjective: The first angle is distinguished by the CAA being described using derogatory adjectives. The Act has been harshly criticized, and use of terms like “flawed,” “dangerous,” “anti-constitutional,” “discriminatory,” “immoral,” “controversial,” and “diabolical” reflect this.
2. Phrases demeaning CAA or gives an idea of CAA having negative impact: Phrases such as “Ignoring the Sri Lankan Tamils,” “NE action is a repeat of Kashmir phenomenon,” “Worry for tribals of North East,” “creating a Hindu Rashtra,” “Changes in state demography,” “Altering the idea of India,” “dividing the country,” “anti-Muslim,” “anti-constitutional,” “dark day in constitutional history,” and “threat to unity” etc. are recognized in this category.

Examples for the above categories are given in 3.3.1 and 3.3.2.

There are total 65 headlines which are found to have used language relevant to this research out of which 26 fall in the negative adjective category and 39 fall in phrases demeaning CAA.

### 3.3.1 | Use of negative adjective to CAA in headlines

The three chosen newspapers—*Times of India*, *Hindustan Times*, and *The Hindu*—published news headlines using negative adjectives of CAA.

Some of the examples are –

*Times of India*, January 11, 2020, “CAA discriminatory and divisive law; NPR is ‘disguised NRC’: Sonia Gandhi”

*The Hindu*, December 18, 2019, “CAA and NRC are both discriminatory”

*Hindustan Times*, January 21, 2020, “The Indian State’s approach to CAA-NRC is flawed”

*Hindustan Times*, January 12, 2020, “Why the CAA is illogical, immoral and ill-timed, writes Ramachandra Guha”

The number of headlines negative adjectives for CAA are -

Newspapers	Total number of headlines published (X)	Headlines using negative adjective (Y)	Percentage (Y/X) *100%	Percentage on [Y/ (Y1 + Y2 + Y3)] *100%

<i>Times of India</i>	587 (X1)	4 (Y1)	0.7%	15.4%
<i>Hindustan Times</i>	456 (X2)	18(Y2)	3.9%	69.2%
<i>The Hindu</i>	180 (X3)	4 (Y3)	2.2%	15.4%

There are 26 headlines published, which were found using negative adjectives for CAA, in the chosen time span from 4<sup>th</sup> December to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020, out of which 4 are from *Times of India*, 18 from *Hindustan Times* and 4 from *The Hindu*.

### 3.3.2 | Use of phrases reflecting CAA's negative impact

The three chosen newspapers—*Times of India*, *Hindustan Times*, and *The Hindu*—published news headlines mentioning quotes by protesters of CAA and supporters of CAA distinctively.

These headlines are organized based on giving out information on the protest which have the potential to shape public opinion into supporting the protest.

Some of the examples are –

*Times of India*, December 23, 2019, “Citizenship law is anti-India: Sugata”

*The Hindu*, December 11, 2019, Citizenship (Amendment) Bill: A dark day in constitutional history of India, says Sonia

*Hindustan Times*, December 30, 2019, “Is the BJP government seeking to create a Hindu rashtra — by jugaad?”

The number of headlines mentioning phrases demeaning the impact of CAA are -

Newspapers	Total number of headlines published (X)	Headlines using demeaning phrases (Y)	Percentage (Y/X) *100%	Percentage on [Y/ (Y1 + Y2 + Y3)] *100%
<i>Times of India</i>	587 (X1)	2 (Y1)	0.3%	5.1%
<i>Hindustan Times</i>	456 (X2)	36 (Y2)	5.7%	92.3%
<i>The Hindu</i>	180 (X3)	1 (Y3)	0.5%	2.6%

There are 39 headlines published, which were found mentioning phrases demeaning the impact of CAA, in the chosen time span from 4<sup>th</sup> December to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020, out of which 2 are from *Times of India*, 36 from *Hindustan Times* and 1 from *The Hindu*.

### 3.4 | Reporting on the adversities caused by the protest

The protests in relation to CAA led to unfavourable circumstances, fatalities, and unrest and turmoil in the country. There have been numerous news pieces on these occurrences in the newspapers, and their headlines appear to differ in style and viewpoint.

1. Some headlines adopt a neutral tone: In this category the headlines refer to situations created as a consequences of the protest and some contexts of these headlines are - “Fear of migrant influx,” “Local resent more rights for refugees,” “Ranji trophy games stopped under the turmoil of CAA,” “India-Japan meet halted,” “UK, France, Israel issues travel advisory,” “Unrest over citizenship bill,” “Political parties spar over CAA,” “No detention camps in Assam exclusively for NRC excludes,” “Anti-CAA protest; shops down shutters,” “Years of assault on culture makes NE wary of CAA,” etc. Examples given in 3.4.1.

2. Headlines reflective of authoritative stand of the government while some headlines depict the use of force sanctioned by the government and police. These headlines mention police atrocities and blame the government.

The highlights of this category are –“Protesters facing sedition,” “144 declared Internet banned,” “Over 500 people detained,” “University VC stops students from protesting,” “Kashmiri student held over anti national post,” “NSA to be invoked against accused” “Prafulla Mahanta loses NSG security cover for speaking against CAA” “Varsity warns parents, “Mobile services snapped,” “Internet banned,” “police atrocities,” “CAA violence victim complains against police,” “Celebrities criticising police and administration,” “Quoting students against police stopping protests - innocence arrested,” etc. Examples in 3.4.2.

3. Headlines on CAA blaming the protestors for adversities and quotes by Police officials and Government representatives: This category of headlines reports on the adverse situations that disrupt public lives created as a consequence of protests. The highlights of this category of headlines are - “Metro shut down, flights cancelled, schools shut down,” “154 citizens filed petition on violence by protestors, “Son reaches 3 days later for father’s last rites,” “Truck driver killed in protests,” “Protesters threatening BJP MP,” “People arrested for attacking supporters rally,” “Protesters arrested for anti-national post,” “Local residents blaming the violence ignited by outsiders.” Examples in 3.4.3.

### 3.4.1 | Neutral tone in reporting adversities

The three chosen newspapers—*Times of India*, *Hindustan Times*, and *The Hindu*—published news headlines mentioning adversities created as a consequence of the protest against CAA, which do not distinctively demonstrate any alignment to any side of the protest.

As mentioned in 3.4, these headlines are organized based on giving out information on the protest which are neutral.

Some of the examples are –

*Times of India*, December 16, 2019, “Years of assault on demography, land & culture makes NE wary of CAA”

*The Hindu*, December 14, 2019, “Anti-Citizenship Act protests: U.S., U.K., France, Israel issue travel advisories”

*The Hindu*, 21 February 2020, “Anti-CAA protest; shops down shutters”

*Hindustan Times* December 14, 2019, “Days ahead of India-Japan meet, PM Abe calls off visit”

*Hindustan Times*, February 25, 2020, “How violence unfolded on Delhi streets during anti-CAA protests in Jafrabad”

The number of headlines identified to be in neutral tone are -

Newspapers	Total number of headlines published (X)	Headlines reported in neutral tone (Y)	Percentage (Y/X) *100%	Percentage on [Y/ (Y1 + Y2 + Y3)] *100%
<i>Times of India</i>	587 (X1)	86 (Y1)	14.6%	33%
<i>Hindustan Times</i>	456 (X2)	146 (Y2)	32%	56.1%
<i>The Hindu</i>	180 (X3)	28 (Y3)	15.5%	10.8%

There are 260 headlines published, which were found reporting in neutral tone, on situations created due to the protests against CAA, in the chosen time span from 4<sup>th</sup> December to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020, out of which 86 are from *Times of India*, 146 from *Hindustan Times* and 28 from *The Hindu*.

### 3.4.2 | Headlines reflective of authoritative stand of the government and police atrocities

Authorities have reacted forcefully to the ongoing rallies against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in order to put an end to them and preserve law and order.

In response to the unfavourable circumstances brought on by the protests, the authorities' measures demonstrate a clear assertion of their authority. These category of headlines mention authoritative stance of the government and the police atrocities, bearing a tone of blaming the government for the adversities.

The three chosen newspapers—*Times of India*, *Hindustan Times*, and *The Hindu*—published news headlines mentioning adversities created as a consequence of the protests against CAA, which demonstrate opposition to the actions of the government and the police.

As mentioned in 3.4, these headlines are organized based on giving out information on the protest, which are in support of the protesters and against the government.

**Some of the examples are –**

CAA protest peaceful, 350 detained in Delhi – published by *Hindustan Times* on December 28, 2019

Reporting police atrocities – UP police lathi charged on protesters, protesters abused.

*The Hindu*, 17<sup>th</sup> January 2020, “Women protesters are taking to the streets en masse to fight the CAA and police brutality”

*The Hindu*, December 12, 2019, “Citizenship (Amendment) Bill: Kashmir model imposed on Assam, says Opposition”.

*Times of India*, February 27, 2020, ‘Violence government-sponsored to silence CAA protesters.

*Hindustan Times*, December 22, 2019, “Amid police’s no firing claim during anti-CAA protests, video shows cop shooting in Kanpur”

The number of headlines identified to mention police atrocities and authoritarian government are -

Newspapers	Total number of headlines published (X)	Headlines blaming government and police (Y)	Percentage (Y/X) *100%	Percentage on [Y/ (Y1 + Y2 + Y3)] *100%
<i>Times of India</i>	587 (X1)	81 (Y1)	13.8%	54.3%

<i>Hindustan Times</i>	456 (X2)	38 (Y2)	8.33%	25.5%
<i>The Hindu</i>	180 (X3)	30 (Y3)	16.7%	20.1%

There are 149 headlines published, which were found reporting in tone that blames the government and police, on situations created due to the protest against CAA, in the chosen time span from 4<sup>th</sup> December to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020, out of which 81 are from *Times of India*, 38 from *Hindustan Times* and 40 from *The Hindu*.

### **3.4.3 | Headlines on blaming the protestors quoted by Police officials and Government representatives**

The *Times of India*, *Hindustan Times*, and *The Hindu* all reported on negative events brought on by the protests, and an examination of their news coverage reveals various degrees of polarization across the publications. The disparities in the number of headlines devoted to reporting on the unfavourable circumstances brought on by the protests show the divisiveness.

As mentioned in 3.4, these headlines are organized based on giving out information on the protest, which are in comments of the government officials, supporters of CAA or police blaming the adversities on the protesters.

#### **Some of the examples are –**

*Times of India*, December 19, 2019, “Delhi: Commuters face hardship as 20 metro stations shut due to anti-CAA protests”.

*Times of India*, December 24, 2019, “ISI behind violence over CAA, says Tarek Fateh”.

*The Hindu*, January 24, 2020, “154 ‘concerned citizens’ petition President against violence during anti-CAA protests”.

*Hindustan Times*, December 28, 2019, “‘Situation wasn’t normal’: UP cop after officer’s communal rant at CAA protest”.

*Hindustan Times*, March 9, 2020, “Police arrest PFI member for spreading ‘false propaganda’ during anti-CAA protests”.

The number of headlines identified to be blaming the protesters are –

Newspapers	Total number of headlines published (X)	Headlines blaming the protesters CAA (Y)	Percentage (Y/X) *100%	Percentage on [Y/ (Y1 + Y2 + Y3)] *100%
<i>Times of India</i>	587 (X1)	70 (Y1)	11.9%	5.1%
<i>Hindustan Times</i>	456 (X2)	26 (Y2)	5.7%	92.3%
<i>The Hindu</i>	180 (X3)	5 (Y3)	2.8%	2.6%

There are 101 headlines published, which were found including comments of the police and government officials against the protesters blaming them for the adversities created due to the protest CAA, in the chosen time span from 4<sup>th</sup> December to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020, out of which 70 are from *Times of India*, 26 from *Hindustan Times* and 5 from *The Hindu*.

### 3.5 | Headlines mentioning advantages of CAA

A sizable section of the news coverage was devoted to humanitarian issues, emphasizing the effects of a particular Act intended to help various people. This category of headlines provided insight into how the Act would benefit ordinary citizens who eagerly awaited its adoption. The media also raised awareness of the suffering of refugees from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan who have fled to India because of persecution for their religion in their native countries.

The three chosen newspapers—*Times of India*, *Hindustan Times*, and *The Hindu*—published news headlines mentioning the advantages of CAA distinctively. The reason for choosing this aspect of the headlines is that these headlines have the potential to emotionally manipulate the minds of the readers by giving information on the positive sides of CAA and hence shape public opinion onto supporting CAA.

The headlines that focused on aspects like “people being happy about CAA and thanking the government,” “Humanitarian reporting on the refugees - billions benefitted,” “Pakistani refugees cheering and hopeful,” “End of the suffering of refugees,” “Justice to religious persecuted minorities of Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan,” “Permanent home for refugees,” etc. fall in this category.

**Some of the examples are -**

*Hindustan Times* on January 12, 2020, “Amit Shah unveils 5.5 lakh ‘thank you’ letters to PM Modi on CAA”.

*Times of India*, December 29, 2019, “Migrants from Pakistan see a ray of hope”.

The number of headlines mentioning advantages of CAA are -

Newspapers	Total number of headlines published (X)	Headlines mentioning advantages of CAA (Y)	Percentage (Y/X) *100%	Percentage on [Y/ (Y1 + Y2 + Y3)] *100%
<i>Times of India</i>	587 (X1)	16(Y1)	2.7%	66.7%
<i>Hindustan Times</i>	456 (X2)	8 (Y2)	1.7%	33.3%
<i>The Hindu</i>	180 (X3)	0 (Y3)	0%	0%

There are 24 headlines published, which were found mentioning advantages of CAA, in the chosen time span from 4<sup>th</sup> December to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020, out of which 16 are from *Times of India*, 8 from *Hindustan Times* and none from *The Hindu*.

### 3.6 | Reporting on international criticisms on CAA

The CAA also attracted attention on the global scene, as a number of international organizations and nations voiced their concerns. Pakistan condemned the Act, claiming it infringed human rights, and a US commission was against it. South Asian organizations in the US condemned the CAA, which was denounced by the UN as discriminatory. Concerns regarding the Act's conformity with the Indian Constitution were expressed by Amnesty International. Imran Khan, the prime minister of Pakistan, even called for international action.

The three chosen newspapers—*Times of India*, *Hindustan Times*, and *The Hindu*—published news headlines mentioning the advantages of CAA distinctively. The reason for choosing this aspect of the headlines is that these headlines demonstrate the newspapers’ potential to shape public opinion on the basis of the presentation of international perspectives.

The highlights of this category of headlines are – “International news against CAA, “US panel against, Pakistan calls it against Human rights,” “UN Terms discriminatory,” “US South Asian organizations protest,” “Amnesty – clear violation of Indian constitution,” “CAA - Imran seeks global intervention,” “US India debate on CAA,” etc.

**Some of the examples are -**

*Hindustan Times*, March 10, 2020, “US Commission on International Religious Freedom expresses concern over CAA”.

*Hindustan Times*, January 29, 2020, “CAA ‘discriminatory in nature and dangerously divisive’, says European Parliament’s draft resolution”.

*Times of India*, December 13, 2019, “Hindu lawmakers in Pakistan slam CAB”

The number of headlines reporting international criticisms of CAA are -

Newspapers	Total number of headlines published (X)	Headlines mentioning international	Percentage (Y/X) *100%	Percentage on [Y/ (Y1 + Y2 + Y3)] *100%

		criticisms of CAA(Y)		
<i>Times of India</i>	587 (X1)	1(Y1)	0.2%	7.1%
<i>Hindustan Times</i>	456 (X2)	12 (Y2)	2.6%	85.7%
<i>The Hindu</i>	180 (X3)	1 (Y3)	0.5%	7.14%

There are 14 headlines published, which were found mentioning international criticisms of CAA, in the chosen time span from 4<sup>th</sup> December to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020, out of which 1 are from *Times of India*, 12 from *Hindustan Times* and from *The Hindu*.

## Chapter 4 | Discussion

### 4.1 | Overview

In this chapter, the findings presented in the methodology chapter are analysed. The research looked at 1223 headlines from the three well-known Indian newspapers, 456 from *Hindustan Times*, 587 from *Times of India*, and 180 from *The Hindu*, using both quantitative and qualitative content analysis approaches. This study's major objective was to examine how news is framed, including how language is used, how facts are manipulated, and how frequently opinion journalism is used during the protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), which took place between December 4 and March 14, 2020. The goal was to discuss the research questions mentioned in chapter 1.3.2 on the basis of the examination through the methodology – (1) the presence of polarization in Indian media when reporting on public affairs, (2) the influence of business

profitability on media narrative, (3) the impact of the majority in the government on media narrative.

## **4.2 | Quantitative & Qualitative analysis of the findings from the methodology**

As discussed in the chapter 3 | Methodology, the headlines found relevant to this research were divided into eleven categories. Out of these headlines some of them tend to have potential to shape public opinion for and against CAA. Hence the eleven categories are further categorised into Anti CAA and Pro CAA headlines on the basis of the analysis in 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 below.

### **4.2.1 | Anti CAA headlines**

#### **1. Headlines covering protesters' rallies – Chapter 3.2.1(A)**

Referring to the examples given in chapter 3.2.1(A), this category of news headlines, newspapers seem to focus on stories that represent the CAA protesters favourably and demonstrates anti-BJP traits. The fact that the newspapers suggesting protests having “inspiring numbers of protesters” reported on them suggests that the headlines are highlighting the importance and force of the anti-CAA protests. The headlines on grieving relatives for deceased protesters is likely to inspire pity for the demonstrators and may imply that the government’s actions are to blame for these tragedies. Headlines on “university boycotts by students”, in which students and faculty members use their positions of authority to protest the CAA, is presented as an acceptable method of protest. It may be demonstrated that even professionals are critical of how the government is handling the crisis by presenting “doctors who denounce police interference in nonviolent protests”. Even within the youth and student community, there is discontent with the BJP leadership, as evidenced by the

headlines referencing “student organizations denouncing the Prime Minister”. The resignation and suspension of BJP representatives’ supporting CAA campaigning may be interpreted as a sign of discontent inside the ruling party. These situations depict in favour of the protesters; hence, this category is anti CAA. There are 282 headlines published, which were found reporting on campaigns protesting CAA, in the chosen time span from 4<sup>th</sup> December to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020, out of which 148 are from *Times of India*, 90 from *Hindustan Times* and 44 from *The Hindu*.

## **2. Mentioning quotes from protesters - Chapter 3.2.2(A)**

The CAA’s discriminatory nature is one of the main criticisms levelled at it. Since the Act gives citizenship to persecuted religious minorities from neighbouring nations but not to Muslims, critics say that it discriminates against Muslims. They contend that this violates the secularist values entrenched in the Indian Constitution. Many students have been outspoken in their opposition to the Act, particularly those from universities like Jamia Millia Islamia and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), claiming that it violates the rights of minority populations and causes divisiveness in the nation. Concerns about the CAA endangering the indigenous identity of their states have been voiced by several in the Northeast India. They worry that the Act would result in a wave of immigration and change the demographic composition. Opposition parties have voiced similar worries, saying that the combination of the CAA and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) could be used to discriminate against Muslims and cause issues for tribal and Adivasi populations. The alleged state-sponsored violence against anti-CAA demonstrators is another point raised by detractors. They contend that in order to stifle opposition, police and authorities violated human rights by framing demonstrators and using excessive force. The opposition claims that the BJP administration is alienating Muslims and targeting members of opposition parties, further dividing the nation along religious lines. All these

situations clearly stand against CAA, hence, falling in anti CAA category. All the three newspapers gave spaces to the voice of the protesters which means an anti-government stance. There are 53 headlines published, which were found reporting on campaigns supporting CAA, in the chosen time span from 4<sup>th</sup> December to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020, out of which 34 are from *Times of India*, 10 from *Hindustan Times* and 9 from *The Hindu*.

### **3. Headlines using negative adjectives for CAA - Chapter 3.2.3.1**

The Act has been harshly criticized, and use of terms like “flawed,” “dangerous,” “anti-constitutional,” “discriminatory,” “immoral,” “controversial,” and “diabolical” etc. Such language not only represents the opposing viewpoints but also has the potential to make them more prominent among the reading. As a result, the CAA may come to be seen as a divisive and unconstitutional policy, and the government may be shown to be indifferent to the needs of particular communities and the interests of the nation as a whole. Hence, anti CAA. These words are used in 26 headlines out of which 4 are from *Times of India*, 18 are from *Hindustan Times* and 4 are from *The Hindu*.

### **4. Headlines using phrases that demean CAA and demonizes its impact - Chapter 3.2.3.2**

The headlines in this category focus on highlighting the resistance to and worries about the CAA. The headlines highlight how common individuals and particular geographic areas oppose the Act. The references to “Ignoring the Sri Lankan Tamils” and “North-eastern states opposing” show the Act’s widespread opposition. The news stories about “Army called to suppress protest” and “internet shutdown in Assam and Tripura” highlight the heated environment surrounding the Act’s

implementation. The headlines that cite “Protestors killed in NE” and “NE action to J&K phenomenon” further emphasize the seriousness of the crisis and cast doubt on the government’s activities. The newspapers’ anxieties about possible social and cultural repercussions are shown in their concern for “Tribes of NE,” “state demography changes,” and “indigenous rights.” The publications support the dissenting voices and concerns expressed by diverse groups and areas by emphasizing these elements. Reports in the media that “Muslims or minority groups are holding large demonstrations” and running signature drives could be seen as an attempt to depict a general lack of support for the CAA in these communities. This positioning suggests that these publications have a propensity to write critically about how the government has handled the problem. There are 39 headlines that fall in this category out of which 2 are from *Times of India*, 36 are from *Hindustan Times* and 1 from *The Hindu*. Good. Hence, anti CAA.

#### **5. Headlines covering adversities in a tone blaming the government – Chapter 3.2.4.2**

The headlines in this category reflect these situations. A tough attitude against those thought to be encouraging disturbance is indicated by the fact that police have been actively detaining protestors and that several people are now being charged with sedition. Authorities have enacted Section 144 (prohibiting assembly of 4 or more people) in order to keep the situation under control and stop the circulation of false information, which has led to the prohibition of internet services in some locations. The fact that more than 500 people have been detained shows how determined the authorities are to quell dissent. University vice chancellors have intervened to stop students from taking part in protests in an effort to quell the protest movement. Mobile communications have been suspended in some regions in an effort to further regulate communication and mobilization. The exercise of power attempts to silence dissenting opinions and keep the calm, but it also raises

questions about the country's civil rights and the right to peaceful assembly. The developments show that there is a tense and polarized atmosphere surrounding the CAA and its consequences, and that authorities are taking strict action to censor the media and quell dissent. This set of headlines appears to blame the executive branch, the legislative branch, and the police. These headlines appear to stress the difficulties faced by the protesters and their complaints against the authorities by reporting on police brutality and acts that can be perceived as repressing the protesters' rights. This kind of reporting, which sheds light on alleged state wrongdoing and abuses of power, may be appealing to individuals to support the protest movement. There are 149 headlines published, which were found reporting in tone that blames the government and police, on situations created due to the protests against CAA, in the chosen time span from 4<sup>th</sup> December to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020, out of which 81 are from *Times of India*, 38 from *Hindustan Times* and 40 from *The Hindu*.

#### **6. Headlines covering international criticisms of CAA – chapter 3.2.6**

Referring to chapter 3.6, these headlines are notable for covering criticisms of CAA in international platforms. Some of the highlights are "US panel against CAA", "Pakistan calls CAA Human rights violation," and "UN terming CAA discriminatory." The chosen newspapers *Times of India*, *Hindustan Times*, and *The Hindu*, uses the global perspectives and exploring diplomatic dimensions, as evidenced by their particular attention against CAA as their headlines have the power to sway public opinion. Since, the global perspective in all these publications is anti CAA, hence this category come to be considered anti CAA. There are 14 headlines published, which were found including comments of the police and government officials against the protesters blaming them for

the adversities created due to the protest CAA, in the chosen time span from 4<sup>th</sup> December to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020, out of which 1 are from *Times of India*, 12 from *Hindustan Times* and from *The Hindu*.

#### 4.2.2 | Pro CAA headlines

##### 1. Headlines covering supporters' campaigns - Chapter 3.2.1(B)

This set of headlines appear to be pro-BJP and seek to cast a favourable light on the CAA and the BJP administration. There is public support for the government's position, as evidenced by reports of rallies organized by BJP officials and followers in favour of the CAA and distribution of booklets outlining the CAA's advantages. An example of making a headline of BJP leaders praising a cab driver for informing the police about an anti-CAA statement as proof of civic duty and commitment to the government's agenda, demonstrates pro BJP stands in reporting the news. People may view the government's pledge of universal security and request that they refrain from protesting as an effort to uphold law and order while supporting the CAA. According to press reports, students rallied in support of the CAA, demonstrating that some individuals, particularly among the younger age, accept the government's stance. Headlines on opposition leaders sued for provocative statements on CAA gives BJP an upper hand in sending out the idea that protesting against CAA could bring legal troubles to the public. These situations have the potential to mould public opinion into supporting CAA, hence, this category falls under pro CAA. There are 53 headlines published, which were found reporting on campaigns supporting CAA, in the chosen time span from 4<sup>th</sup> December to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020, out of which 34 are from *Times of India*, 10 from *Hindustan Times* and 9 from *The Hindu*.

##### 2. Headlines mentioning quotes of supporters - Chapter 3.2.2(A)

These headlines include remarks supporting CAA from BJP officials and their supporters. Instances like “The rights of Indian citizens are safe, and the CAA does not endanger any citizens - Prime Minister Narendra Modi assures,” “CAA is an issue of national integrity and a rectification of a historical error,” etc. It has been claimed that the legitimacy of the Act has been confirmed by the Supreme Court’s acceptance of an appeal against the CAA without halting its operation. State governments have been reminded that they must implement legislation established by Parliament, and several BJP members have criticized the Cabinet’s resolution against the CAA as absurd. These situations define pro CAA stances, hence pro CAA. There are 90 headlines published, which were found mentioning quotes from supporters of CAA, in the chosen time span from 4<sup>th</sup> December to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020, out of which 44 are from *Times of India*, 28 from *Hindustan Times* and 18 from *The Hindu*.

### **3. Headlines mentioning police and government blaming the protesters – chapter 3.2.4.3**

These set of headlines, referring to the examples and situations of chapter 3.2.4.3, assigns responsibility to the protesters. The quotes from the legislative branch, and the police mentioning the illegal activities carried out and violence created by the protesters, tend to have an impact that the protesters might lose the public support. Therefore, these headlines are considered pro CAA. There are 101 headlines published, which were found including comments of the police and government officials against the protesters blaming them for the adversities created due to the protest CAA, in the chosen time span from 4<sup>th</sup> December to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020, out of which 70 are from *Times of India*, 26 from *Hindustan Times* and 5 from *The Hindu*.

### **4. Headlines mentioning advantages of CAA - chapter 3.5**

Due to severe prejudice and religious persecutions in their native countries, people fled to India in search of safety. With the Act's enactment, their extended suffering as refugees has come to an end and they now have a sense of security and hope for a more stable future. The provision of justice to religious minorities from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan is one of the important components of this Act. In addition to acknowledging their challenges, the Act has given them hope for a stable home and the opportunity to start over in a setting that is more welcoming and inclusive. Therefore, the headlines having mentioned of the advantages of CAA are considered pro CAA headlines. There are 24 headlines published, which were found including comments of the police and government officials against the protesters blaming them for the adversities created due to the protest CAA, in the chosen time span from 4<sup>th</sup> December to 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020, out of which 16 are from *Times of India*, 8 from *Hindustan Times* and none from *The Hindu*.

#### 4.2.3| Quantitative analysis – referring to the reviewed literature from chapter 2

Adding all the findings of chapter 3.2 in connection with the analysis of 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, a chart is formed below -

Newspapers	Anti CAA headlines	Pro CAA headlines	Neutral headlines
<i>Times of India</i>	296	168	123
<i>Hindustan Times</i>	211	69	176
<i>The Hindu</i>	125	32	23

The findings of this chart show -

Anti CAA headlines - 632

Pro CAA headlines - 269

Neutral headlines – 322

These clearly show a glaring discrepancy in covering protest of CAA and frequently quoting opposition leaders, members of Congress, and protesting organizations rather than covering rallies in support of CAA or quoting supporters of CAA, across all three media. One of the conclusions from this analysis can be that there have been more anti-CAA protests than pro-CAA protests, which has led to more anti-CAA protests being reported on overall in all three media. McCluskey and Kim in their paper, “Moderatism or Polarization? Representation of Advocacy Groups’ Ideology in Newspapers,” 2012, states that media has a propensity to highlight and give more emphasis to events expressing dissent and opposition. This can be another reason why *The Times of India*, *The Hindu*, and *Hindustan Times* all have a higher percentage of headlines covering protesters’ demonstrations.

Chomsky’s propaganda model discusses media ownerships and profit driven goals which this research couldn’t look into due to the limitation of the methodology. However, the idea of ‘homogenization of news content’ by Chomsky is still relevant in relation to the fact that all the three newspapers *Times of India*, *Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* have been found to have taken the same side of the situation. Chomsky’s idea of ‘fostering echo chamber that pander to one ideological stance’ is in case of CAA is the ideology of opposing CAA by the majority of the masses. The fact that all three newspapers took the same side reflects ‘homogenisation’, however, also giving out the idea that all the three newspapers verifying the incident to be real as reported.

The idea of hegemony by Antonio Gramsci states that the control an elite group has over society in terms of culture, religion and ideology, influences the narrative of the subservient group through

media forming opinion as per the objectives of the governing group. (Artz, 2013) However in the case of protesting CAA, despite the fact that the ruling party BJP being ideologically Hindu (refer to chapter 2.3.1) the majority of the headlines covers news against CAA reflecting anti BJP. However, the relevance of Gramsci is undeniable because in case of CAA, the opinion against it has been presented to be the dominant opinion. Thus, anti CAA becomes the dominant group.

Stuart Hall's encoding and decoding process news have been a guiding principle while making this analysis. Throughout the research, the newspapers have been observed to have been using languages that are definitely impacted by social, cultural, religious and political influences. Words and phrases like "anti-Muslim," "Hindu Rashtra," "diversity," "threat to unity," "anti-constitutional," etc. suggest the relevance of Stuart Hall's encoding and decoding in today's media landscape of India. The fact that all the three newspapers are using these words frequently shows that use of these words have been a tradition in Indian media referring to the situation that since 2014, BJP being in power, the public opinion have already been formed of a 'Hindu Rashtra', an 'anti Muslim government' and 'threat to diversity' etc. Therefore, use of these words is part of the process of encoding an "anti BJP/anti-government" idea with the assumption that the decoding of this message would have the same impact.

Referring to chapter 3.2.2, Hall's relevance is also seen in the newspapers quoting the political leaders, academicians, professionals such as teachers, doctors, army officers and police officers etc., people as per the social construct of India who can potentially be looked up to by the common mass, quoted extensively in the headlines. The idea of quoting professionals from various fields by diversifying the sources to a concentrated output is a message encoded that people from all sectors and classes are of the particular opinion.

On the basis of the analysis of 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, categories of the anti CAA and pro CAA findings from the methodology have been combined to form the charts below–

A. Anti CAA chart 1 - (Y/X)\*100%

(percentage on headlines published by each newspaper in each category)

Newspapers	Protesting rallies	Quotes of protesters	Negative Adjective	Phrases demeaning CAA	Blaming the protesters for adversities	International criticisms
<i>Times of India</i>	52.49%	49.2%	15.4%	5.1%	54.3%	7.1%
<i>Hindustan Times</i>	31.9%	13.9%	69.2%	92.3%	25.5%	85.7%
<i>The Hindu</i>	15.6%	36.9%	15.4%	2.6%	20.1%	7.14%

As per the Anti CAA chart 1, making an average of the categories,

*Times of India* – 30.6%

*Hindustan Times* – 53.1%

*The Hindu* – 16.3

B. Pro CAA chart 1 - (Y/X)\*100%

(percentage on headlines published by each newspaper in each category)

Newspapers	Supporters' campaigns	Quotes from supporters	Blaming the protesters	Advantages of CAA
<i>Times of India</i>	64.1%	48.9%	5.1%	66.7%
<i>Hindustan Times</i>	18.9%	31.1%	92.3%	33.3%
<i>The Hindu</i>	17%	20%	2.6%	0%

As per Pro CAA chart 1, making an average of the categories,

*Times of India* – 46.2%

*Hindustan Times* – 43.9%

*The Hindu* – 9.9%

C. Anti CAA chart 2 -  $[Y/(Y1 + Y2 + Y3)]*100\%$

(the percentages of the headlines calculated on the total number of published by the newspaper)

Newspapers	Protesting rallies	Quotes of protesters	Negative adjective	Phrases demeaning CAA	Blaming the protesters for adversities	International criticisms
<i>Times of India</i>	25.2%	10.2%	0.7%	0.3%	13.8%	0.2%

<i>Hindustan Times</i>	19.7%	3.73%	3.9%	5.7%	8.33%	2.6%
<i>The Hindu</i>	24.4%	25%	2.2%	0.5%	16.7%	0.5%

As per the Anti CAA chart 2, making an average of the categories,

*Times of India* – 8.4%

*Hindustan Times* - 7.32%

*The Hindu* – 11.55%

D. Pro CAA chart 2 -  $[Y/(Y1 + Y2 + Y3)]*100\%$

(the percentages of the headlines calculated on the total number of published by the newspaper)

Newspapers	Supporters' campaigns	Quotes of supports	Blaming the protesters for adversities	Advantages of CAA
<i>Times of India</i>	5.8%	7.5%	11.9%	2.7%
<i>Hindustan Times</i>	2.2%	6.1%	5.7%	1.7%
<i>The Hindu</i>	5%	10%	2.8%	0%

As per Pro CAA chart 2, making an average of the categories,

*Times of India* – 7%

*Hindustan Times* – 4%

*The Hindu* – 4.4%

Now balancing anti CAA chart 1 with anti CAA chart 2,

*Times of India* – 19.5%

*Hindustan Times* – 30.21%

*The Hindu* – 13.9%

Therefore, *Times of India* demonstrates 19.5% anti CAA traits, *Hindustan Times* demonstrates 30.21% anti CAA traits, and *The Hindu* demonstrates 13.9% anti CAA traits.

Balancing pro CAA chart 1 with pro CAA chart 2,

*Times of India* – 26.6%

*Hindustan Times* – 23.9%

*The Hindu* – 14.3%

Therefore, *Times of India* demonstrates 26.6% pro CAA traits, *Hindustan Times* demonstrates 23.9% pro CAA traits, and *The Hindu* demonstrates 14.3% pro CAA traits.

### **4.3 | Analysis of the newspapers in relation to the research questions and reviewed literatures in chapter 2**

Examining the newspapers in relation to the research question, the following analysis is put forward:

1. The presence of polarization in Indian media when reporting on public affairs: According to the analysis in the chapter 4.1 and 4.2, *Times of India* demonstrates 19.5% anti CAA traits and 26.6% pro CAA traits, *Hindustan Times* demonstrates 30.21% anti CAA traits and 23.9% pro CAA traits while *The Hindu* demonstrates 13.9% anti CAA traits and 14.3% pro CAA traits. Therefore it can be said that the level of polarization these newspapers demonstrates is negligible as per this research, under the condition that the landscape of newspapers have been viewed differently than other media sources.

2. The influence of business profitability on media narrative:

The methodology was limited in the headlines that didn't give an opportunity to discuss business profitability. This is a question that is extremely relevant in understanding the polarization and therefore can potentially be discussed further in this context.

3. The impact of the majority in the government on media narrative:

As discussed in chapter, 2.3.1, George and Inamdar in their research makes the case that the private owned media, frequently marginalizes minority populations while speaking for the wealthy middle class. (George and Inamdar, 2021) The findings of this research contradict George and Inamdar in the aspect that as per the headlines, the minority and the marginalised population which in the context of CAA is the Muslims and the news headlines highly capitalizes on publications about the minority.

According to the authors George and Inamdar, since 2014, the majority of national news outlets have unconditionally backed the BJP-led government and pushed divisive ideologies and propaganda, fuelling an environment that is communal, anti-Muslim, and polarizing.

Again, referring to chapter 4.3, the headlines of all the three newspapers have

demonstrated both sides of the protest for and against CAA which gives the idea that these prominent newspapers have not unconditionally backed BJP government. Thus, the impact of majority in the government on media narrative of *Times of India*, *Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu*, has not been observed in this research. To discuss this further, the magnitude of the protest against CAA and also in support of CAA were very significant. The fact that the rallies and campaigns were not just taken part by people with political affiliations, but it happened in all classes of people from students to professionals in both the sides.

Therefore, in one aspect, it means that the involvement and the awareness about the contentious Act was tremendously high. Therefore, for a well-established newspaper to take a polarized stance about CAA could have been a bad managerial decision on the part of the newspaper owners. From this perspective, the newspapers seem to have taken neutral stances. Therefore, if this research is taken forward, other public policies will have to be taken into account.

## **Chapter 5 | Conclusion**

This research aimed at studying the language of the headlines used by the three prominent newspapers *Times of India*, *Hindustan Times* and *The Hindu* in order to put forward a stylistic analysis and cross-media comparison of three newspapers as three media entities. The hypothesis of the research was to examine media framing and recognizing biases.

The relationship between the majority in the government and the media is complex interplay determined by political, social and economic forces. In Indian context, while some studies

asserted that the media supports the government's divisive ideology and marginalizes minorities. A closer examination of the instance i.e., the CAA demonstrations, painted a more complex picture. The findings show that *Times of India* with highest number of publications, exhibits 26.6% features that relate to pro-CAA beliefs and 19.5% traits that are associated with anti-CAA sentiment. Similarly, to *The Hindu*, *Hindustan Times* exhibits 13.9% anti-CAA qualities and 14.3% pro-CAA traits, with 30.21% anti-CAA and 23.9% pro-CAA traits. Despite these changes, it's crucial that this research considers the level of polarization seen in these newspapers to be minimal. However, it important to note that polarization may be seen differently in the context of newspapers than it is in other media. The context of the divisive Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), where Muslims were the marginalized population, the research showed that the headlines of all the three newspapers appear to capitalize on publications about the minority and indicates a certain level of neutrality in their reporting. To fully comprehend the polarization of the media ecosystem as a whole and its possible effects on public discourse and democratic values in India, more investigation and study are required.

The ramifications of this study go beyond the CAA and relate to the larger issues of media polarization in a multi-ethnic and multicultural nation like India. It is vital for media organizations to consider the effect of their reporting on democratic processes and public opinion as they negotiate the challenges of retaining their editorial independence while keeping the standards of impartiality and objectivity.

In summary, this study adds to the expanding body of research on Indian media, politics, and public discourse. This study provides information for media professionals, decision-

makers, and researchers to promote more responsible and objective reporting by emphasizing the existence of polarization in newspaper headlines and its possible impact on public opinion. This study is intended to stimulate more investigation and debate on media plurality, ethical journalism, and the function of the media in promoting democratic principles in India and beyond.

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Appendices

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## We are protesting against CAA to protect our culture, tradition and language: Assamese in Pune

Hindustan Times, Pune | By Dheeraj Bengrut, Pune

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Dec 19, 2019 04:23 PM IST

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At least 200 Assamese living in Pune gathered for the protest and chanted slogans against CAA and demanded its immediate withdrawal.



Assamese in Pune staged a protest at JM road against CAA and NRC Wednesday morning. (Rahul Raut/HT PHOTO)

# Thousands converge on Hyd streets against CAA

### 'MILLION MARCH' Protesters flood main thoroughfares in the city, bring traffic to a halt

Srinivasa Rao Apparao  
srao@hindustantimes.com

**HYDRABAD:** Tens of thousands of people from all walks of life converged in the heart of Hyderabad city on Saturday to protest against the implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the National Population Register.

The "Million March", organised by Telangana and Andhra Pradesh Joint Action Committee (JAC), comprising around 60 groups and civil society organisations, drew a sea of protesters from all walks of life, in spite of the Hyderabad police stating that only 1,000 people would be allowed to gather there.

The organisers were first refused permission to conduct a rally in Hyderabad's Tank Bund (which is one of the main thoroughfares connecting different parts of the city) last month. The permission to hold the public meeting at Ibrahim Chawki was given after the organisers approached the Telangana high court, which asked the city police to reconsider the application for the protest. The officials finally gave permission for the meeting to be held from 12 to 1 pm.

However, despite heavy police deployment, the protesters flooded the main thoroughfares from all parts of the city to reach the venue, where the march cul-

It was a huge success. People from all walks of life... took part in the Million March. It was undoubtedly one of the largest demonstrations the city had ever witnessed.

MUSHTAQ MALIK, JAC convener



Protesters take to streets against the amended citizenship act, NRC and NPR in Hyderabad on Saturday.

Ministers of the government. The judge had reserved his order on the bail applications of Jafar, Darupuri and the other accused on Friday, after hearing the individual pleas as well as the submissions of the government lawyer.

On December 23, the chief judge said inadequate had rejected their bail applications, following which the petitioners moved the district court.

The prosecution could not submit any evidence to prove my client's involvement in violence. For lack of evidence, the court has granted bail to her (Jafar), said advocate Hargovind Singh, who appeared on behalf of Jafar.

Lawyer Sanjeev Pansley, who appeared on behalf of Darupuri, said: "My client is absolutely innocent. He has been falsely implicated. As there is no proof of his involvement in violence, the court granted him bail."

## Sadaf Jafar among 12 arrested over protests in UP released on bail

Pawan Dixit  
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**LUCKNOW:** A local court granted bail Saturday to social activist Sadaf Jafar and former IPS officer SR Darupuri, besides 10 others arrested in connection with protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) on December 19 in Lucknow.

Additional district judge (ADJ) Sanjay Shankar Pandey granted the 12 bail on sureties of ₹50,000 each. They are likely to be released on Monday.

Social activist Pawan Rao Anbekar is also among those who were granted bail.

The judge had reserved his order on the bail applications of Jafar, Darupuri and the other accused on Friday, after hearing the individual pleas as well as the submissions of the government lawyer.

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Lawyer Sanjeev Pansley, who appeared on behalf of Darupuri, said: "My client is absolutely innocent. He has been falsely implicated. As there is no proof of his involvement in violence, the court granted him bail."

### BJP OUTREACH CAMPAIGN

## Cong stir driven by politics, not love for nation: Nadda

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**GUWAHATI:** Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) working president JP Nadda challenged Congress leader Rahul Gandhi to speak "ten lines" on the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and claimed that the party's protests against the new law were driven by "politics" and not "love for the country".

I want to challenge Rahul Gandhi from this stage. Try speaking 10 lines on CAA and in two lines tell us why are you protesting against the CAA, Nadda said while addressing the BJP's booth level functionaries in Guwahati as part of the party's CAA outreach campaign.

Assam has seen massive protests since CAA was passed by Parliament on December 11. Many indigenous groups in the state feel that the CAB is a violation of the 1985 Assam Accord, which was signed in 1985 to end the date for deportation of all illegal immigrants irrespective of religion. The activists also say that the NRC process was aimed against illegal immigrants and the CAB will selectively benefit non-Muslim migrants into Assam.

"We cannot accept the CAB at any cost." The BJP government at the Centre and the state has left us with no choice but to agitate as we cannot be second-class citizens in our own land," said Sammitajit Bhattacharya, advisor to the All Assam Students Union that led the six-year-long Assam Agitation.



From left: Assam CM Sarbananda Sonowal, BJP working president JP Nadda, BJP state chief Ranjit Kumar Das and state minister Himanta Biswa Sarma in Guwahati on Saturday.

CAA has done," he added. BJP's general secretary Ram Madhav, Assam chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal and senior minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, besides other leaders, were also present at the event.

"In the democratic movement, if anyone has the aspiration to be the chief minister or if anyone dreams of forming a political party, the BJP will answer them politically. The BJP has the strength and courage to contest them politically," Sarma said amid speculation that the All Assam Students Union may form a political party.

Congress's Assam unit spokesperson R Komar left back at the BJP, saying "The BJP has killed Assam Accord by bringing in the CAA. How can they claim that they are implementing it? It was during the Congress regime that most work on implementing the promises of the Assam Accord happened."

"People who have come to India where would they go? India is their home. We will allow them to live with dignity. We will give them citizenship. This is what

05 JAN

DELHI

PAGES

ZOOM

# Jamia erupts after shooting at CAA protest

### FACE-OFF

Massive protests near university after shooting at students' rally

Kainat Sarfaraz  
kainatsarfaraz@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** Jamia Millia Islamia erupted again on Thursday with over two thousand people, comprising university students and local residents, facing off with the police near the university on Thursday after a man fired at a group of anti-CAA protesters, injuring a student before walking away while waving the favour over his head shouting "Yes to azaadi".

Thursday's incident echoed the incident of December 15 when the police entered the campus and beat up students, following protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act. Several students and others were injured.

Massive protest broke out on Thursday with agitated students and others gathering near the university, levelling barricades and clashing with police personnel. Some demonstrators, including a woman, could be seen being forcibly taken away. Many sang the national anthem. With the standstill showed no signs of ending, police officials announced from across the barricades, "Today is Gandhi ji's day. Please



Police pulling a student over barricades after the Jamia student was shot at by a class 12 student during a protest march on Thursday.

### THEIR SON OR A TERRORIST: KEJRIWAL

## Parties target BJP: Shah says guilty will not be spared

HT Correspondent  
htcorrespondent@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** Thursday's firing outside Jamia Millia Islamia triggered a political row with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), Congress and the Left parties training guns at the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), alleging the law and order situation in Delhi had "collapsed" under the party.

The BJP hit back, saying Delhi's chief minister Arvind Kejriwal was trying to "wash his hands of all responsibilities." It linked the incident with the Shaheen Bagh protests and accused AAP and the Congress of "funding" protesters who have been agitating on an anti-CAA campaign since December 15.

Hours after the incident, home minister Shah said the Centre would not tolerate such incidents.

"I have spoken with Delhi Police Commissioner about the firing and directed him to take strict action against the

The AAP's national spokesperson Ajay Kumar accused Delhi Police of being a "mute spectator".

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said the incident was the result of BJP ministers and leaders inciting crowds with incendiary slogans. "When ministers in the BJP government and leaders provoke people to shoot and give provocative speeches, then such incidents are possible. The prime minister should answer what kind of Delhi he wants to build. Is he standing with violence or non-violence. Is he standing with development or anarchy," she asked in a tweet in Hindi.

Speaking at news conference at the party headquarters in Delhi, Congress spokesperson Manish Tewari said: "What happened in Jamia Millia Islamia university is a live manifestation of this spectre of hate and terror that has been perpetrated across this country by the NDA-BJP government, especially since the end of the winter session of Parliament."

The Congress's Delhi chief Subhash Chandra said: "What

31 JAN

DELHI

PAGES

ZOOM

# Oppn spreading lies on CAA, won't affect Muslims: Shah

### AMID PROTESTS Mamata calls for return of peace and normalcy in violence-hit NE Delhi

Dehabrata Mahanty

**BHUBANESWAR** West Bengal chief minister and Trinamool Congress leader Mamata Banerjee said on Friday that it was essential to control the situation and restore peace and normalcy in Delhi, where communal rioting has claimed at least 42 lives this week, continuing against political opposition over the violence.

The usually outspoken Banerjee refrained from passing any comments against the Narendra Modi government at the Centre over the rioting.

She was in Bhubaneswar and came face to face with Union home minister Amit Shah at the 26th meeting of the Eastern Zonal Council (EZC), where she brought up the Delhi riots, but said nothing that could embarrass Shah.

"In the beginning of the meeting, I said we are not in Delhi to discuss or have a protest in Delhi. Peace and normalcy needs to return," Banerjee said soon after lunch with Shah, natural gas minister Dharmendra Pradhan, and Navan Patealk and Nitish Kumar, her counterparts in Odisha and Bihar.

Some part of the country faces a crisis, if we keep on continuing in other parts too," added Banerjee, who only had rats, saying she



Odisha CM Navan Patealk, home minister Amit Shah, Bihar CM Nitish Kumar, steel minister Dharmendra Pradhan and West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee after the 26th Meeting of the Eastern Zonal Council at Navan Nivas, in Bhubaneswar on Friday.

wasn't used to eating hanch. Fourty two people were killed and over 200 injured in the riot in Delhi after protests against and for the Citizenship (Amendment) Act turned violent.

The Trinamool Congress chief, who has been critical of the Modi government and, more specifically, Shah, holding him responsible for spreading division and hatred over CAA, did not bring up the amended citizenship law, the proposed National Register of Citizens, or the National Population Register, at the meeting.

"Neither CAA and NPR nor NRC were discussed in today's meeting," she said.

Home minister Amit Shah did not speak to journalists after the EZC meeting, but an hour after it ended, he issued a statement in support of spreading misinformation over the CAA, aimed at fast tracking grant of Indian citizenship for non-Muslim migrants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

"Entire opposition such as

# Maha planning 5% quota for Muslims in education: Min

Eshwariya MS

**THE STATE GOVERNMENT ALREADY HAS 74% FOR VARIOUS SECTIONS IN EDUCATION AND 75% IN GOVERNMENT JOBS**

**MUMBAI:** The Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government will introduce a law to set apart 5% of admissions in educational institutions for Muslims, the state's minorities development minister Nitish Malik said on Friday.

"Five percent reservation for Muslims in educational institutions can be implemented. A law to the effect will be brought as soon as possible," Malik said in the Maharashtra legislative council, in response to a question by Congress legislator Sharad Rangise over reservation for the Muslim community introduced by the Congress-Nationalist Congress Party government in 2014.

The Bombay high court had in November 2014 struck down reservations for Marathas in government jobs and educational institutions and Muslims in jobs, but allowed the state to provide a quota for Muslims in education.

The Bharatiya Janata Party

right time," he said.

The state government already has 74% for various sections in education and 75% in government jobs. It includes 12% for the Maratha community as an Educationally and Socially Backward Class (ESBC) in education and 13% in jobs as well as a 10% quota for economically weaker section introduced by the Centre last year. If the state government sets apart 5% of seats in educational institutions, quotas will reach 79% in Maharashtra.

Constitutional experts have expressed doubts over the sustainability of the legislation when it is introduced in Maharashtra, given that similar reservations have been struck down by the courts elsewhere for various reasons in the past.

Shreehari Aney, a former advocate general of Maharashtra, said, "It is not that it cannot be done. It can be done. But this is a very complicated issue. Religious reservation is quite different from backwardness reservation."

HT Correspondent

**NEW DELHI:** The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has registered a case of possession of net assets disproportionate to his income against an assistant commissioner of Goods and Services Tax (GST) and central excise, officials at the agency said. The FIR was registered last week.

The official, Deepak Pandit, is alleged to have amassed assets worth ₹1.96 crore, 375% more than his known sources of income. Along with him, his wife Anshu and two sons — Anshuh and Divyansh — have also been named in the CBI first information report (FIR) registered under the Prevention of Corruption Act.

Searches were conducted at seven premises — six in Mumbai and one in Bhubaneswar — belonging to Pandit, brother of Chumetar Ashoke Pandit, and his family members.

Ashoke Pandit did not respond to calls made by HT.

## WHAT LIES AHEAD

### Education, agri focus of Punjab, Haryana budgets

Navneet Sharma and Hinder Bis

**MANGALAGIRI:** The Punjab and Haryana governments have announced their budgets for 2020-21. Punjab's budget focuses on education and agriculture, while Haryana's budget focuses on infrastructure and agriculture.

### Arun Mishra, Singhi in banter over 'Khan mkt'

HT Correspondent

**NEW DELHI:** Dragging judges into controversy for "good words" spoken by them should be avoided.



# Supreme Court to hear 144 pleas on Citizenship Amendment Act on January 22

### Government notified the implementation of the law on January 10

January 21, 2020 10:28 pm | Updated 10:38 pm IST - NEW DELHI

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

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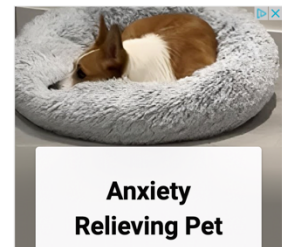
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### Anxiety Relieving Pet

# Protests against CAA-NRC mark NFIW congress in Jaipur

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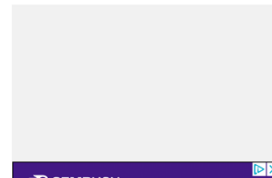
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Priyanka Mukherjee / TIMESOFINDIA.COM / May 30, 2021, 15:44 IST

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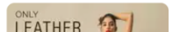
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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2019



PANEL SETS UP TRUMP IMPEACHMENT VOTE... p19

WAS MENTALLY, PHYSICALLY RUINED, SAYS AUSSIE CRICKETER GLENN MAXWELL... p26

## Unrest over citizenship law echoes in Capital; NE tense

**ANGER ON STREETS** Violent protests in Bengal, NE: Delhi students lathi-charged

Ujjal Pal and Saikat Nandi

u.pal@hindustantimes.com

**GUWAHATI** Thousands of protesters clashed violently with police in Meghalaya's capital Shillong on Friday evening that left at least 60 people injured, the latest in a series of massive demonstrations against India's new citizenship laws that have roiled the North-east and opened old fault lines of ethnicity and religion.

In the Capital, protesting students were lathi-charged by police at Janta Mitta Islamia university, after which 50 people were detained and large gatherings banned in the area.

The protesters in Shillong marched towards the governor's house and hurled stones at the mansion against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) passed by Parliament on Wednesday.



### UN terms new law discriminatory; US panel concerned

**NEW DELHI:** The United Nations human rights office on Friday described the Citizenship (Amendment) Act as "fundamentally discriminatory in nature" and called for it to be reviewed, even as a United States panel that monitors religious freedom again expressed concern about the law.

The government has said the CAA, approved by Parliament on Wednesday, was aimed at protecting minorities from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan, though the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights noted that the law "does not extend the same protection to all minorities".

## Rahul's remarks on rape cases stir heated exchange

HT Correspondent

htcorrespondent@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) members of Parliament on Friday, the last day of the current Winter Session, sought an apology from Congress leader Rahul Gandhi who, taking a jibe at the government's ambitious Make in India campaign at an election rally in Jharkhand a day before, said this wasn't happening and instead, "whenever you look, it is Rape in India".

Both houses witnessed disruptions over the comment. In the Lok Sabha, some BJP members, including Union minister Sarit Bajaj, suggested that Gandhi's remark was an invitation to rape women in India.

"This is the first time in history that a leader and the son of the Gandhi family is giving a clarion call that Indian women should be raped. Is this Rahul Gandhi's responsibility?"

### PRODUCTIVE SESSION FOR HOUSE

**NEW DELHI:** The Modi government firmly pushed big ticket reforms and legislation with deep social implications in the Winter Session of Parliament, taking advantage of a fragmented Opposition that couldn't muster enough members to challenge.

Outside the Lok Sabha after the House was adjourned since the CAA, Gandhi charged his remarks and mounted a counter attack on the BJP and the Prime Minister.

"The main issue today was that the BJP and PM Modi have..."

## FM HINTS AT STIMULUS FOR MORE SECTORS OF ECONOMY

**NEW DELHI:** Hinting at more policy measures to boost the economy, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said she will start pre-budget consultations from Monday and will respond to sector-specific issues accordingly in the Union Budget that is scheduled to be presented in Parliament on February 1 next year.

Addressing a press conference on Friday, Sitharaman lauded the massive stimulus announced by the government to boost the economy in response to sector-specific needs. "If need be, I will do more. As of now no other sector has approached me as yet with their specific problems," she said.

"As regards to sectors, till now, I think, across the board, those who (have) spoken to us and demanded some kind of intervention, we responded to them. I'll be very keen to see if these steps are really meeting the expectations. If not, we'll see if we need to do more," Sitharaman said.

MOODY'S CUTS INDIA'S GDP GROWTH FORECAST... p21

