

# INDIA RISK TRACKER

FEBRUARY 15TH, 2018

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VERY HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	VERY LOW
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## Delhi: Delhi traders to organise mega rally to protest against sealing drive in Delhi today (February 15<sup>th</sup>)

Traders associations have announced to hold a mega rally from Red Fort to Ghanta Ghar today (February 15<sup>th</sup>) to protest the ongoing sealing drive in Delhi. Market associations of Greater Kailash, South Extension, Defence Colony, Green Park, Green Park Extension and Chandni Chowk will take part in the rally with a demand that the government must immediately bring a bill in Parliament to stop sealing. The rally has been organised by the Confederation of All India Traders that claims to have 2,200 market associations as its members. According to the association, unfortunately, without realising the ground realities sealing operations are being intensified in the city. They further complained that they have even been given the opportunity to present their cases, forcing the traders to intensify their agitation.

Yesterday (February 14<sup>th</sup>), hundreds of traders staged a demonstration outside the Municipal Corporation's headquarter at Civic Centre while observing the day as My Valentine-My Shop. The protesting traders covered their mouth with black strips and held placards. The Chamber of Trade and Industries, another traders' organisation with 400 traders associations as its members, has also announced to protest with begging bowls from February 16<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>, yesterday. The traders will gather outside the residence of seven Delhi MPs everyday. And on February 25<sup>th</sup>, they will gather outside Prime Minister's residence, begging him to save their shops and trades. Traders are at loggerheads with RWAs over sealing. While the resident associations have opposed the proposed amendments in Delhi Master Plan 2021, traders alleged that the sealing has affected their bread and butter.

### ANALYSIS:

The sealing drive was initiated in December and the local authorities have sealed over 1,500 shops across the city. The major markets include those at Defence Colony, Hauz Khas E-block, Sundar Nagar, Lala Lajpat Rai, Chhatarpur, Karol Bagh, Old Rajender Nagar and New Rajender Nagar. North Delhi Municipal Corporation sealed two properties in Narela while the south corporation could not carry out the drive due to non-availability of police personnel. NDMC sealed basements of 10 establishments at Connaught Place for misuse of space and unauthorised construction. These include shops and service centres in B,C,E and F blocks. East corporation sealed four outlets in Mandavali and Shahadra for non-payment of conversion charges.

The traders will also hold a rally today (February 15<sup>th</sup>) at Chandini Chowk, Ghantagar. Traders from more than 1,500 trade associations across Delhi are expected to take part in the rally and will demand an Ordinance to prevent sealing in the city. Earlier this month, the traders had gone on 48-hour trade bandh against the sealing drive. Advised to maintain situational awareness and further protests have been planned and sporadic demonstrations are likely if a resolution is not arrived at.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Traders will take out a rally in Ramleela Maidan, Ghanta Ghar, Chandni Chowk today (February 15<sup>th</sup>), cater for traffic congestion and heavy security around these protest venue. Advised to stay away from protest sites for personal safety.
- Traffic congestion is likely in areas around major market areas like, in Ramleela

Maidan, Ghanta Ghar, Chandni Chowk, Sardar Bazar, Rajghat, be prepared for delays and plan commute accordingly.

- Large number of traders from across the city are expected to participate in the protest, advised to stay away to avoid incidental risks
- Continuously monitor information concerning the current situation and officially prescribed measures (Internet / radio / text messaging / telephone).
- Coordinate with local law enforcement with regard to travel plans within Delhi to get security recommendations.
- Monitor the local developments to stay abreast of the ground situation.

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## Haryana: Security to be increased in Gurgaon today (February 15th) as traffic congestion expected due to Amit Shah's rally

In anticipation of hundreds of motorcyclists passing through Gurgaon to attend BJP president Amit Shah's rally in Jind today (February 15<sup>th</sup>), police presence in the city will be increased all through the day. According to police, several BJP supporters from Palwal, Mewat and Faridabad are expected to pass through Gurgaon today, on their way to and from the rally in Jind. To ensure law and order is maintained in the city, and there is minimal impact on traffic, police have increased the number of personnel deployed on the roads, and also issued a traffic advisory to ensure there is no inconvenience.

A total of 150 traffic police personnel, two ACPs, and nine traffic inspectors will be deployed in the city today. In addition, between 5 am and 10 am, as well as between 4 pm and 9 pm, the entire police force will be on the streets since most supporters are expected to make their journeys during this period. One Hydra, six cranes, and four ambulances will also be kept ready at four different points in the city.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president Amit Shah's mega motorcycle rally in Haryana's Jind district comes after the Manohar Lal Khattar-led state government convinced Jat agitation leaders to withdraw their protest against the rally. The National Green Tribunal (NGT) will also keep a close watch on the Yuva Hunkar rally as one lakh motorcycles will hit the roads of Jind district. While hearing a petition that sought more environment-friendly modes of transport to be used in the rally, the BJP government in Haryana assured the NGT that only motorcycles with valid Pollution Under Control (PUC) certificates will be allowed in the rally. Meanwhile, the Akhil Bhartiya Jat Arakshan Sangharsh Samiti (ABJASS) has decided to call off its proposed blockade of the bike rally. Jat activists claim they will launch a fresh agitation ahead of the 2019 Lok Sabha polls if the state government decided to renege on its promises.

### ANALYSIS:

Office-goers and other daily commuters may have to start off early to be able to reach their destinations well in time today morning (February 15<sup>th</sup>), when hundreds of BJP supporters on bikes pass through the city to participate in party chief Amit Shah's public meeting in Jind. According to the police, around 300-400 bikers mainly from Faridabad will take to Golf Course Extension Road and Sohna Road, the two most crowded stretches in the city during peak hours, which may cause massive congestion.

- The bikers will come through Gurgaon-Faridabad Road, take a left turn near Ghata mor and head towards Vatika Chowk along Golf Course Extension Road.

- At Vatika Chowk, the bikers will turn right and ride along Sohna Road to reach Subhash Chowk, where they will turn left towards Hero Honda Chowk.
- After crossing the NH-8 at Hero Honda Chowk, the bike rally will move towards Basai, via Hero Honda Road, crossing Pataudi Road.
- Finally, they will take the Basai Road and cross Dwarka Expressway, before heading for Jhajjar en route to Jind.

The bikers are likely to take the same route back home to Faridabad in the evening after the public meeting gets over in Jind.

A large number of BJP supporters from other neighbouring districts, including Palwal and Nuh, will go to Jind for the public meeting but police said rallies from those districts would be diverted from the southern peripheries of Gurgaon to minimise congestion in the city. These apart, hundreds of bikers from the four Assembly constituencies falling in Gurgaon district are also likely to go to Amit Shah's meeting. But most of them are to assemble outside the main city area and thus unlikely to create much problem for normal commuters. Gurgaon police said an advisory had been issued to city residents and commuters, asking them to avoid the (above mentioned) roads in the morning and evening hours to avoid congestion. Moreover, to ensure smooth flow of traffic, a large contingent of police personnel will be deployed at all important crossings and possible choke-points along the route of the bike rally.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Cater for increased security and traffic disruptions while travelling to Gurgaon today (February 15<sup>th</sup>).
- Commuters are advised to avoid the (above mentioned) roads in the morning and evening hours to avoid congestion
- Security has been heightened, carry valid identification and co-operate with authorities during checks.
- Follow the orders issued by officials, keep sufficient lead time on hand while travelling in the vicinity.
- Be prepared for delays and plan your commute accordingly. Keep sufficient lead time in hand while travelling in the vicinity.
- If travelling to the concerned areas, consult local traffic advisories for latest updates on road diversions and closures.
- Advised to stay away from the rally site as large number of members are expected to be present.
- Follow the local traffic advisories for any route closures or diversions.
- Monitor the local developments to stay updated on the ground situation.

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### **Maharashtra: Congress to hold anti-inflation agitation at 21 Mumbai railway stations today (February 15<sup>th</sup>)**

The Congress' Mumbai unit will stage agitations at 21 suburban railway stations today (February 15<sup>th</sup>) to highlight the increasing prices of petrol and diesel and inflation which has hit the common masses hard. The agitations will be led by Mumbai Regional Congress Committee (MRCC) President Sanjay Nirupam, with party's municipal corporators, former and sitting legislators, parliamentarians and former ministers.

They alleged, that despite downward trends in global crude oil prices, the rates of petrol

and diesel just are not being reduced in India. In Mumbai, for instance, petrol now stands at around Rs 81 per litre, the highest in the country, which has hit the common citizens hard. Besides the high oil prices general inflationary trends with spiralling prices of all essentials including eatables, had made life miserable for the ordinary citizens, especially the middle and lower-middle-classes and the working class. In order to highlight the plight of the masses, the city Congress will protest against the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for the first time at all major suburban railway stations on Western Railway, Central Railway and its Harbour Line. Some of the stations to be included in the protests are Borivali, Malad, Andheri, Santacruz, Bandra, Dadar on both CR and WR, Mumbai Central, Ghatkopar, Mulund, Sion, Matunga, Vikhroli, and several others covering all the six Lok Sabha constituencies of Mumbai, which are currently represented by BJP or Shiv Sena MPs. If the government fails to heed the voice of the people, the agitation shall be intensified in the next phase soon.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Cater for delays on Western Railway, Central Railway and its Harbour Line today (February 15<sup>th</sup>).
- Protests will be held at all major suburban railway stations, advised to stay away to avoid incidental risks
- Commuters using suburban railway to travel are advised to arrange alternate means of transportation
- Large number of participation is expected situational awareness to be maintained at all times.

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### **Karnataka: JD(S) announces mega rally in Bengaluru on February 17<sup>th</sup>; PM to hold four Karnataka rallies in 23 days**

The JD(S) announced its grandstanding with a mega rally on the outskirts of Bengaluru on February 17<sup>th</sup>. The rally, which was scheduled to happen in Davanagere, as announced by JD(S) state president, has been shifted to Bengaluru to compete with the BJP's show of strength of February 4<sup>th</sup> in the city.

On February 17<sup>th</sup>, they are expecting a crowd of nearly 10lakh people. The party will be hosting its rally in Yelahanka on a 140-acre private property. At the same event, the JD(S) will announce its first list of 140 candidates in the presence of former PM H D Deve Gowda, and its pre-poll alliance partner Bahujan Samajwadi Party (BSP) supremo Mayawati.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to start a campaign in Karnataka from next week, addressing four rallies in 23 days. Karnataka, which is likely to go to polls in the middle of this year, is one of five states where the Congress is in power. Modi will begin his campaign drive from Mysore, the home district of chief minister Siddaramaiah, on February 19. He would then address a rally in Davengere, the central Karnataka district known for its textile industries, on February 27. The Prime Minister is then scheduled to fly to Lingayat-dominated Bijapur of Mumbai-Karnataka region, comprising of 50 assembly seats, on March 4 and then to Raichur of the Hyderabad-Karnataka region, which consists of 31 assembly seats, on March 13. BJP president Amit Shah would also play a key role in expanding the saffron footprint in the southern state in the

coming days. From February 20, he is scheduled to spend three days in the coastal Karnataka, which is known for the strong presence of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and other Sangh-affiliated outfits. During his tour, Shah would address a workers' rally near the Kukke Subramanya Temple in Dakshina Kannada district on February 19 and a fishermen convention in temple town of Uduppi on February 20. Shah's itinerary includes a visit to the house of a Bajrang Dal activist who was hacked to death in January. It would be for the first time that both Modi and Shah will be holding rallies in different parts of Karnataka at the same time

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Cater for increased security and travel disruption around Yelahanka on February 17th, avoid rally route where possible
- Heavy traffic towards the Bengaluru airport on February 17<sup>th</sup> due to the proposed rally, advised to keep sufficient lead time on hand.
- It is recommended to stay away from the protest site to avoid incidental risks, large number of members are expected to join
- Be prepared for delays and plan your commute accordingly.
- Advised to maintain situational awareness as the rally is sensitive in nature.
- If travelling for business, consult a security expert for travel recommendations.
- Stay away from large congregations to avoid incidental risks.
- Consult the local traffic police advisory for possible route changes.
- Follow the local developments closely to stay updated on the situation

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### **National: 300 terrorists in Pakistan ready to infiltrate into India, according to Army**

Over 300 terrorists are waiting in Pakistan and are ready to infiltrate into India to mount terror attacks, according to the Indian Army . 185-220 terrorists in the south and 190-225 terrorists in the north of Peer Panjal ranges are ready for infiltration. Lieutenant General Devraj Anbu stated that the Pakistani Army has a direct role in planning terror attacks in Jammu & Kashmir, at the Northern Command headquarters in Udhampur, 200 km from Srinagar.

#### **ANALYSIS:**

After a 36-hour-long operation last week, the Army had cleared Jammu's Sunjuwan Army of all four terrorists of Jaish-e Mohammad, who had launched a pre-dawn attack on the camp on Saturday (February 10). Before they died, the terrorists had gunned down five soldiers and a civilian. Ten people were injured. The attack was one of the worst since the 2016 attack in Uri, in which 19 soldiers were killed. According to Lt Gen Anbu, the Indian retaliation against the terror attack on the Sunjuwan camp, operating along the LoC (Line of Control) is quite complex and challenging. Around 192 Pakistani soldiers have been killed in retaliation by Indian forces after Pakistan attacked Indian posts. The information regarding Pakistan terrorists attempting to infiltrate India is a matter of grave concern as it increases the threat of sabotage, radicalization and smuggling of narcotics apart from terrorist attacks.

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## National: Valentine's Day moral police harass and harangue couples

Moral police' turned out in full force in parts of India against the celebration of Valentine's Day yesterday (February 14<sup>th</sup>). In Hyderabad, members of Bajrang Dal created ruckus outside a mall and vandalised the properties of several shops inside the mall. In Ajmer, members of Shiv Sena Hindustan harassed a couple at the Maharana Pratap Smarak. In Ahmedabad, self-proclaimed 'moral police' chased couples. Members of the Bajrang Dal, affiliated to the RSS, harassed couples at the Ahmedabad's Sabarmati Riverfront. They were later detained. The right-wing group had yesterday also taken out a rally against Valentine's Day in Nagpur. It had warned couples against visiting public areas, threatening to get them married.

Moreover, Lucknow University had declared a holiday yesterday, not for Valentine's Day but for 'Mahashivratri'. It also barred students from coming to campus on the day. In Bengaluru, the Karnataka Rakshana Vedike organised the 'marriage' of two sheep in favour of Valentine's Day and also urged the state government to provide Rs 50,000-one lakh to couples who marry for love.

### ANALYSIS:

Organisations like the Bajrang Dal have been protesting against the celebration of Valentine's Day, alleging that celebration of days like these promotes *love jihad*. The maximum incidents were reported in Ahmedabad, where about two dozen activists of the Bajrang Dal, carrying sticks and shouting slogans like *Jai Shri Ram*, came to the riverfront road on Ahmedabad on motorcycles and began chasing young couples who were standing or sitting along the road. The scared youngsters were seen running to safety as fast as they could. A few Bajrang Dal men even walked down to the walkway of the riverfront and began chasing away couples from there as well. Policemen, who were stationed at the entrance of the Riverfront Park rushed to the spot and detained a few Bajrang Dal activists. After he was detained, Nikunj Parekh, Vice President of the city's Bajrang Dal unit, said that they will continue to protest against Valentine's Day.

The Bajrang Dal has equated Valentine's Day celebrations with love jihad. Meanwhile, before the Bajrang Dal arrived on the Sabarmati riverfront, city bajrang Dal president Jvalit Mehta was detained by the police. Jvalit and a few Bajrang Dal men were detained and packed off in a police van to the headquarters from Usmanpura Char Rasta. Despite the precautionary measures taken by the authorities, incidents of harassment on couples were reported in Ahmedabad, Ajmer, Hyderabad and Nagpur.

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## REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

### Bangladesh: DNCC drive against English billboards in Dhaka tomorrow (February 16)

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) will launch a drive against English-only signboards at 11:00am tomorrow (February 16) to enforce a High Court ruling that was issued four years ago stipulating that all sign boards should include Bangla. On February 07, the DNCC began implementing the ruling at Gulshan 2 circle by removing signboards that did not include Bangla. During the raid, a DNCC mobile court fined 18 companies Tk10,000 each for their violation of the High Court ruling.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- There are likely to be mild altercations between traders / bill board owners during the exercise, advised to maintain situational awareness and exercise caution in Dhaka, Bangladesh tomorrow (February 16). Advised to stay away from large crowds to ensure personal safety.
- Monitor local developments to stay updated regarding the situation.

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### Nepal: PM Deuba likely to resign today (February 15)

Following a national address on television, Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba is likely to step down today (February 15). Prime Minister Deuba had been evading his resignation so far, maintaining that he would step down only after the Election Commission submits the final results of the parliamentary election to the president. According to reports, Prime Minister Deuba is preparing to step down after addressing the nation today (February 15).

#### ANALYSIS:

There are a total 59 members including three nominated by the government in the upper house. Similarly, 165 of the total 275 members of the lower house are elected under the First Past the Post (FPTP) electoral system and the remaining 110 under the PR system. The EC had delayed the announcement of the parliamentary poll results after the major political parties remained sharply divided over the ambiguous constitutional provisions. But as the EC decided to withhold the PR results of HoR until the result of National Assembly elections were out, prompting the CPN-UML to accuse the EC of toeing the line of the Nepali Congress (NC)-led government. Meanwhile, a standing committee meeting of the UML decided yesterday (February 14) to propose the party's Chairman K P Sharma Oli as the new prime minister on behalf of the left alliance comprising the UML and the Maoist Center. Prime Minister Deuba's resignation today (February 15) is coming in the wake of the UML alleging that he was unnecessarily prolonging his stay in the government over ambiguous constitutional provisions. The prime minister had stated earlier that he would step down soon after the electoral processes of province, HoR and National Assembly. However, the prime minister has been deferring his retirement for a while now, it is recommended to a wait and watch until a formal announcement is made.

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## Sri Lanka: Building collapses in Grandpass in Colombo yesterday (February 14), seven dead

An old building in Grandpass collapsed at around 3:15 pm yesterday (February 14). As per reports, seven people have so far been reported dead. Two people who were injured in the incident were admitted to Accident Ward of the National Hospital in Colombo. The condition of the injured victims is said to be critical. A search operation is underway to find any other persons trapped under the rubble. Heavy traffic was reported in **Grandpass area in Colombo** due to the accident.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Advised to cater for heavy traffic near the Grandpass area in Colombo today (February 15), advised to take alternate route where possible. *To deter building collapses, organisations and apartment authorities are advised to:*  
Inspect roofs and structures that support it
- Reinforce buildings that need additional support.
- Install a steel roof covering on low sloped roofs.
- Identify low sloped roofs and train employees to watch for stress indicators.

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## Pakistan: NTUF to hold multiple demonstrations in Sindh today (February 15)

The National Trade Union Federation (NTUF) and allied union, Sindh Agriculture General Workers Union yesterday (February 14) announced to hold protest demonstrations in Sindh today (February 15) for the implementation of Sindh Industrial Relation Act 2013, which was passed four years ago. The NTUF will hold protest demonstration outside the Karachi Press Club, besides holding protests in several cities of the province, including Karachi, Hyderabad, Mirpukhas, Sanghar, Tando Muhammad Khan, Larkana, Khairpur Nathan Shah, Thatta, Sujawal, Umerkot, Mithi, Hala besides other cities.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Situational awareness to be maintained and advised to exercise caution across Sindh, Pakistan today (February 15) as demonstrations have been planned by NTUF.
- Advised to stay away from large crowds to ensure personal safety.
- Cater for delays due to increased security in Sindh, Pakistan today (February 15), advised to co-operate with authorities and follow all instructions.
- Monitor local news portals, travel advisories and be in touch with your colleagues at host location to stay updated regarding the situation.

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