

The Telegraph



GOLDEN MOMENT

Vijay Sethupathi on a career milestone **T2**



JILL FOR JOE

How the First Lady could make or break Biden's campaign **P2**

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Why summers have gotten unbearable for the urban poor **P15**

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IN BRIEF

Mosque demolition clashes

■ **SRINAGAR:** Tensions flared in Jammu's Kathua district after authorities tried to demolish a mosque, allegedly built on government land, leading to clashes in which around a half-dozen policemen, including an officer, were injured. **NATION**

Kejriwal custody

■ **NEW DELHI:** A court here on Saturday sent Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal to judicial custody till July 12 in a corruption case related to the scrapped excise policy. It said his name had surfaced as one of the "main conspirators" and as the probe was still in progress, his further custodial interrogation might be required. **PTI**

City rain

■ **CALCUTTA:** The first spell of heavy rain this monsoon season, on Friday night, significantly cut the June rain deficit in Calcutta. The Met office recorded around 92mm in Alipore between 5.30pm on Friday and 5.30pm on Saturday. **METRO**

QUOTE

Will the CM of Bihar walk the talk?

JAIRAM RAMESH
after the JDU passed a resolution reiterating its demand for special category status for Bihar

Army tank sinks in swollen Shyok river

5 soldiers swept away near LAC

IMRAN AHMED SIDDIQUI

New Delhi: Five army soldiers, including a junior commissioned officer, drowned when their T-72 tank sank while crossing a river close to the China frontier in eastern Ladakh, defence ministry officials said.

Sources said the water level in the Shyok river, in the Nyoma-Chushul area, suddenly rose because of the melting of snow and swept the tank away late on Friday night.

The tragedy occurred near Daulat Beg Oldi (DBO), the world's highest airstrip, located strategically at an altitude of 16,000ft. The Chinese army is said to be entrenched 18km inside India-claimed lines, with tanks and artillery, on the Dopsang Plains near DBO since the May 2020 border intrusions.

DBO is also close to Aksai Chin. The airstrip provides logistical support to the Indian Army along the Line of Actual Control in what is a treacherous and hostile terrain.

A defence ministry official said the soldiers, who were from an armoured regiment, were crossing the river in the T-72 tank as part of a drill.

"The melting of the snow resulted in an increase in the water level of the Shyok river, which passes through the strategically key Dopsang region," he said.

The army's Leh-based Fire and Fury Corps said: "On



FLASHPOINT

■ Daulat Beg Oldi (DBO), the world's highest airstrip, is located at an altitude of 16,000 feet

■ Close to Aksai Chin, the airstrip was built after the 1962 war to check Chinese incursions

■ Flight operations were abandoned in 1965 as unsafe but resumed in 2008

■ DBO offers logistical support to the Indian Army along the LAC

■ Chinese army is said to be entrenched 18km inside India-claimed lines on the Dopsang Plains near DBO since May 2020

June 28 night, while de-inducting from a military training activity, an army tank got stuck in the Shyok river near Saser Brangsa due to sudden increase in the water level. Rescue teams rushed to the location.

"However, due to high current and water levels, the

rescue mission didn't succeed and the tank crew lost their lives. Indian Army regrets loss of five brave personnel while being operationally deployed in eastern Ladakh."

Defence minister Rajnath Singh said he was "deeply saddened at the loss of lives of five of our brave Indian Army soldiers" and expressed "condolences to the bereaved families".

Congress MP and the leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, paid "humble tribute to all the martyred soldiers" and expressed "my deepest condolences to the bereaved families".

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said: "In this hour of grief, the nation stands together in saluting the exemplary service of our valiant soldiers."

The DBO airstrip was built after the 1962 war to check Chinese incursions. Flight operations were abandoned in 1965 as unsafe but resumed in 2008. The airstrip is close to the newly built and strategic Darbuk-Shyok-DBO road that runs parallel to the LAC, meandering through elevations ranging between 14,000ft and 16,000ft.

The road connects Leh with DBO at the base of the Karakoram Pass, which separates China's Xinjiang Autonomous Region from Ladakh. China's army seeks to dominate the road as the Indian Army uses it to support its soldiers deployed on the LAC.

T20 CROWN: INDIA PUT LIPS TO CUP, FINALLY



Coach Rahul Dravid (centre) and the players celebrate with the trophy after India beat South Africa by seven runs in the T20 World Cup final in Bridgetown on Saturday night. (AP/PTI picture)

INDRANIL MAJUMDAR

Calcutta: Rohit Sharma was wandering aimlessly, still trying to fathom whether he had finally laid his hands on the World Cup.

Hardik Pandya wept, Rahul Dravid jumped out of his chair before sprinting to the ground, and both Virat Kohli and Rohit announced to the world that they were done playing T20 Internationals.

India's second T20 World Cup triumph had come after a 17-year gap, via a narrow seven-run margin in Bridgetown.

Arms raised, Jasprit Bumrah's celebratory jig had seemed to herald the end of South Africa's chase as early as the 18th over.

Rohit's team had suddenly sensed an opportunity after being crippled by South Africa's batting crusade against a

famed spin attack for most of the middle overs on Saturday. The chase of 177, the highest in a T20 World Cup final, had abruptly gone wobbly after looking a cinch a couple of overs earlier.

Bumrah went wide of the crease and landed it outside off. The ball angled in between Marco Jansen's bat and pad to clip the bails. South Africa needed 21 runs off 14 balls at that stage.

They wilted under pressure as Arshdeep Singh gave away only four in the next over.

With 16 needed off the final six balls, Suryakumar Yadav produced an acrobatic catch at wide long off, clawing the ball back into play from over the ropes and grabbing it with both hands to send David Miller back.

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Guv poser for Hemant return

ANIMESH BISOEIE

Jamshedpur: A day after Hemant Soren's release from jail on bail, loyalist Champai Soren continues to remain Jharkhand chief minister with speculation mounting on what is preventing his predecessor from reclaiming his throne.

Officially, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha sources said Champai had offered to step down on Friday evening itself but was dissuaded by Hemant, who is "likely to decide next week" whether to take over from Champai or let him continue till the Assembly elections later this year.

Off the record, the sources said Hemant may be apprehensive about effecting a change of chief ministers now and thereby bringing into play a Raj Bhavan with which the JMM government has a trust deficit.

JDU ups the ante on special status for Bihar

J.P. YADAV

New Delhi: Nitish Kumar's JDU on Saturday appointed Sanjay Jha, a leader amiable to the BJP, as party working president but stepped up its demand for special status or a package for Bihar.

The party also pushed for the inclusion of the state's 65 per cent quota legislation in the 9th Schedule of the Constitution, a demand that could put the Narendra Modi-led government in a tricky situation.

The developments transpired at the JDU's national executive body meeting in Delhi, the first since the formation of the new NDA government at the Centre in which the JDU is a key ally.



Nitish Kumar leaves after the JDU's national executive meeting in New Delhi on Saturday. (PTI picture)

The Nitish Kumar government had last year passed a law to increase the total quota volume in government jobs and state-run educational institutions for Dalit, backward and tribal communities from 50 per cent to 65 per cent, following a caste-based survey. Patna High Court struck this quota policy down as unconstitutional earlier this month.

The law's inclusion in the 9th Schedule would shield it from legal scrutiny, a request the Modi government and the BJP would find difficult to accommodate as it can trigger a demand for a countrywide caste census and resurrect the Mandal-politics bogey veering around reservation propor-

tional to a caste's population. "Bihar wants that like Tamil Nadu (which has a 69 per cent quota volume, protected under a 1994 Act under the 9th Schedule), its new reservation law should get constitutional protection," JDU spokesperson Rajib Ranjan told *The Telegraph*.

Led by the Congress, the Opposition INDIA bloc has been demanding a countrywide caste census with the slogan "jitni abadi utna haq", that is, rights based on the population share of each group. The BJP has dismissed the demand as "divisive". As the first mover for Opposition unity, Nitish had led the countrywide caste-census pitch.

"This national executive is concerned that the new reservation law passed by the Bihar legislature based on the caste-based survey has been struck down by the Patna High Court," the resolution passed by the JDU's national executive said.

"This (cancellation of the law) will immediately affect the ongoing admissions in the state universities and also obstruct the state government's promise of giving 5 lakh jobs in a year," it said, adding that the Bihar government had decided to file a review petition in the Supreme Court.

"At the same time, this executive appeals to the government of India that in accordance with the request made by the Bihar government, the new law should be included in the 9th Schedule of the Constitution."

The meeting also reiterated Nitish's old demand for the grant of special category status to backward Bihar. The JDU, with 12 MPs, is the third-largest constituent of the ruling NDA after the BJP and the TDP (16 MPs) and is trying to extract a financial bonanza for Bihar by leveraging the BJP's dependence on ally support.



Sunita Williams breaks into an impromptu dance as she enters the International Space Station on June 7. (PTI picture)

Nasa clears air on 'stranded' astronauts

New York: Two Nasa astronauts who travelled at the start of June to the International Space Station (ISS) were originally scheduled to return home a couple of weeks ago, completing a test flight of Boeing's Starliner spacecraft.

Instead, the astronauts, Butch Wilmore and Sunita Williams, will remain on the space station for several weeks longer as Nasa and Boeing engineers continue to study misbehaving thrusters on the vehicle.

But don't call the astronauts stuck or stranded, officials said on Friday. And there's no talk of a rescue mission.

"We're not stuck on ISS," Mark Nappi, programme manager at Boeing for Starliner, said during a news conference on Friday. "The crew is not in any danger."

Steve Stich, manager of Nasa's commercial crew programme, also tried to allay worries.

"The vehicle at station is in good shape," he said. "I want to make it very clear that Butch and Sunita are not stranded in space. Our plan is to continue to return them on Starliner and return them home at the right time."

Stich then added that the right time would be after additional analysis on why five of Starliner's 28 manoeuvring jets behaved oddly as the spacecraft approached the space station.

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Canopy collapses bare lapses

G.S. MUDUR

New Delhi: The structural failures that have triggered the back-to-back airport canopy collapses in Jabalpur, Delhi and Rajkot demand detailed investigation, sections of structural engineers said on Saturday, challenging the narrative blaming the failures on excessive rainfall.

Each airport canopy collapse — Jabalpur on Thursday, Delhi on Friday and Rajkot on Saturday — was preceded by or occurred during heavy rainfall. But engineers say the excessive rainwater would by itself have, at its worst, exacerbated the underlying issues of concern that resulted in the catastrophic structural failures.

Authorities have sought



Parked vehicles damaged by the collapse of a canopy at Delhi airport on Friday. (PTI picture)

to link the failures to heavy rainfall. The Jabalpur airport director Rajeev Ratna Pandey, for instance, told the PTI news agency that the canopy had collapsed after water

accumulated over it because of the rain. "It ripped under the weight of the water and the water fell with great force on a car."

Structural engineers, however, believe there are lessons to be learned from each of the three failures.

"Rain or water load should not be a challenge for either steel or concrete structures," Sangeeta Wij, a former vice-president of the Indian Association of Structural Engineers (IASE), an apex professional body, told *The Telegraph*.

Large structures are typically constructed from steel sections with fixed or hinged joints and one possible line of investigation, she said, would be to focus on the joints. There are multiple ways to execute

the joints — through welding, bolts or connectors.

"Joints need to be executed with perfection — execution needs to match the original design intent. And lack of appropriate execution can make the joint vulnerable," she added.

Under heavy rain or strong wind conditions, Wij said, a vulnerable joint may be unable to absorb the ballooning effect from the wind and could cause structural instability that could lead to a collapse.

Poor maintenance is another possible source of trouble, said another structural engineer who is an associate professor of civil engineering in a government academic institution.

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GOVT SCHOOL STAFF POOL IN MONEY TO INSTALL ACs FOR PUPILS

Class condition: Only if air-conditioned

ALAMGIR HOSSAIN AND SUBHASISH CHAUDHURI

Behrampur/Calcutta: A "cool" ₹3.75 lakh spent by teachers and other staff at a government-aided school in Murshidabad is expected to bring back hundreds of students who were skipping class because of the stifling heat.

The school has now installed eight air-conditioners, bought with the staff's money.

Another government-aided school, in Nadia, had already set a precedent, with teaching and non-teaching staff pooling their own cash to get an AC for their 52 pupils. When schools reopened



Students at an AC classroom at the Doharpar Primary School in Habibpur, Nadia. Picture by Abhi Ghosh

after the summer vacation at the beginning of June, south Bengal was in the grip of a severe heat wave.

It was ample reason for about half the 900 students at Rasora Ambika High School in Kandi,

Murshidabad, to stay away. After the teachers learnt the reason for the truancy from the children's parents, the school, which teaches pupils from Classes V to XII, shifted the classes to morning. It didn't help.

So, the 17 teachers, 5 para-teachers, and the non-teaching staff stitched together ₹3.75 lakh and installed air-conditioners in each of the eight classrooms.

Headmaster Diptendu Dhar said some last-minute work remained to be done, and the AC classrooms would become functional from Monday.

"The teachers and (non-teaching) staff have a 'credit society' where their deposited money ac-

crues significant interest. Everyone agreed to use the interest in buying ACs," Dhar said.

"But the interest amount was insufficient; so the teachers and para-teachers contributed between ₹50,000 and ₹10,000 each."

Jaganmoy Chakraborty, an assistant teacher, said: "Our classrooms had turned into furnaces and students were falling sick. The fans didn't help much. The children were getting dehydrated and some suffered heat stroke-like conditions. If students have to come to school in this situation, it's our responsibility to protect them from the heat."

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Being direct is the crux of a UK campaign

AVINASH KALLA

London: Mr Sunak, I think you made a fair job of being a chancellor, but you are a pretty mediocre Prime Minister. Sir Keir, I think your strings are being pulled by very senior lit members of the Labour Party. Are you two really the best we have got to lead this great country? asked an elderly gentleman at the last television debate between the British PM and his main challenger.

Direct, as direct as one can think. This question and many like this, though non televised, form the crux of campaigning in Britain.

Uninteresting to the foreign eye, but a system that has matured since 1802 when the first elections for the House of Commons were held, elections and campaigns are organised, systematic and smooth. A week prior to the voting day, one can get in and out of the country without getting an iota of a hint that elections are being held.

Singer Taylor Swift's three-day long Eras tour in London got around 200,000 fans including the Royal family members, Hollywood celebrities, British stars and even Labour Leader Keir Starmer to the Wembley Stadium. As poll pundits say

over four weeks in the election campaign these many people wouldn't have turned up to listen to both Starmer and Sunak in their election meetings. It took me five days to spot the first support placard, an indicator that people proudly confirm who they will be voting for.

Powered by placards, leaflets, letters of endorsement, reminders of the petitions that they have placed in Commons for their constituents, MP's power their campaigns.

The campaign is a monotonous drill, charted well in advance and executed meticulously. I got the first-hand experience of the campaign of four-time Conservative MP and Padma Shri recipient Bob Blackman.

It usually worked in three shifts 10am-12 noon, 1pm-3pm and 4pm-6pm through the first four weeks of the campaign seasons focusing primarily on canvassing and delivery for the candidate and in the last week they add a phone call in the evening shift.

During canvassing, the candidate along with his councillors who represent the party in local bodies does door knocking and visits each house that the back-end team has marked for them.

A volunteer carries, map



British citizens during an election campaign in London

and master voting sheet, which has the details of each voter charted to perfection. The affiliation of each household and in some cases voting preference of individual voters is noted. In most cases it is also noted when the household reviewed the last phone call or communication from the MP or his team member and for what.



A team member approaches each house with a letter/leaflet with a comment from the lead, who is directing them. They make a pitch seeking support for the candidate and at times are countered with complaints, that they direct to the local represent-

atives who are present with them.

"We engage and resolve the issue, make a note of the serious ones and pass it to the campaign office," informs Zach, a volunteer who is an IT professional leading the canvassing in the Kenton area. He said voters are very forthcoming. "They tell their preferences clearly." When I countered, "How sure are they of the feedback being genuine?" "They speak their mind out and there is no fear or compulsion, their choices are clear and as our feedback and interactions are continuous for years we are sure of the feedback," he says.

For a constituency of approximately 76,000 votes, Blackman has a team of 250 volunteers and an election expenditure cap of £18,000 or roughly ₹19 lakhs, that loosely translates into £4.2 or ₹450 per person in the constituency.

His campaign manager who doesn't wish to be named shares that each constituency has a different expenditure limit based on the population. Usually, a constituency varies between 65,000 to 1,15,00 voters.

In the camp office for Blackman, a team of seven to eight volunteers are coordinating the leaflet distribution. Each day nine tables have a

stack of around 20,000 letters and leaflets they have to deliver.

He has seven leaflets reminding people of what he has done and what he intends to do.

By the end of the campaign, we would have done a quarter of a million letters, leaflets delivered and Bob or his team would have at least knocked on each of the 32,000 plus households in the constituency proudly informs the campaign manager who doubles up as a local counselor.

The drill is so robust that each candidate knows where they standing? We know the tide is against Conservatives and hence our messaging is all around Bob and it will be a referendum on his four terms says his manager when asked why Conservatives are missing from most of the communication.

The exercise is almost identical in their rival camp he informs, just that Labour is highlight of the campaign and not the candidate. While the campaign was somewhat of a shocker, even shocking is the fact that July 4, the voting day isn't a holiday. It's work as usual for the Brits as they go about electing their new leader.

President confronts doubters at rally

Biden: I know I'm not young



US First Lady Jill Biden in Raleigh, North Carolina, on Friday. (Reuters)

Jill could make or break President

KATIE ROGERS

Washington: President Joe Biden knew immediately after stepping off the stage in Atlanta on Thursday night that the debate had gone wrong. In those first stricken moments after a raspy, rambling and at times incoherent performance, he turned to his wife, Jill Biden.

Whatever was going to happen next in Joe Biden's last presidential race, after perhaps the worst moment of his long political life, was always going to come down to her. His wife of 47 years had entered his life all those decades ago, reluctant to get into politics but fully embracing his dreams and his belief that he would one day reach the White House.

Now, her 81-year-old husband looked at her after a disastrous 90 minutes onstage. The First Lady's message to him was clear: They'd been counted out before, she was all in, and he — they — would stay in the race. Her thinking, according to people close to her, was that it was a bad night. And bad nights end.

"To say they've been in foxholes together doesn't even begin to explain their bond," said Elizabeth Alexander, the First Lady's communications director.

So Jill Biden spent the 24 hours after the debate putting her decades as a political spouse to the test, projecting confidence and normalcy while effusively praising her husband. But, like the President, she is an intuitive political messenger who can sense the mood of a crowd. She knows that along with the cheering supporters, there are legions of people suddenly accusing her of forcing an old man to put one weary foot in front of the other.

If Joe Biden were to seriously consider departing the race, allowing a younger candidate to replace him, the First Lady would be the most important figure in reaching that decision. "Jill is the final and most important voice. She knows him and loves him with a passion. She also knows everything about him. Most big decisions are made with Valerie and Jill in the end," said John Morgan, one of Joe Biden's top donors.

New York Times News Service

MICHAEL D. SHEAR AND MAYA KING

Raleigh, North Carolina: President Joe Biden on Friday tried to beat back doubts about his fitness following a disjointed debate performance the night before, firing up a crowd of supporters with an energetic speech that accused former President Donald Trump of being a "one-man crime wave".

Speaking to a boisterous crowd of 2,000 people, Biden, 81, directly confronted questions about his age and insisted that he would never have run for re-election if he didn't think he was up to the job of being President.

"I know I'm not a young man, to state the obvious," he said. "I don't speak as smoothly as I used to. I don't debate as well as I used to. But I know what I do know. I know how to tell the truth. I know right from wrong."

Delivering his remarks from a Teleprompter, the President appeared to find the energy and clarity that had eluded him in the Atlanta debate.

With the stakes sky high as Democrats around the country openly discussed whether he should abandon his bid for a second term, Biden repeatedly cast the election as a choice between right and wrong, morality and criminality, an honest man and a convicted criminal.

But the President and his supporters knew he needed to rebound quickly from the damage the debate had done to his campaign.

"I know what millions of Americans know," Biden said. "When you get knocked down, you get back up."

Biden largely ignored the party anxiety swirling around him. Instead, Biden kicked off what aides described as a messaging blitz aimed at repairing the obvious political damage less than five months from Election Day.

Biden's best surrogate, former President Barack Obama, weighed in with a social media post aimed at calming Democrats down.



Joe Biden at a campaign rally in Raleigh, North Carolina, on Friday. (Reuters)

"Bad debate nights happen. Trust me, I know," Obama wrote on X, referring to his widely planned first debate in 2012 against Mitt Romney. "But this election is still a choice between someone who has fought for ordinary folks his entire life and someone who only cares about himself."

But questions remain. Could that Biden have handled the rigid rules of the debate, which mandated no notes, no teleprompter and no audience for 90 minutes? And even if he had shown up on Thursday night, could he appear day after day for the remaining four months of the campaign?

The Republican answer was no even before Thursday's debate. That part of Trump's attacks on Biden is certain to only intensify in the days ahead. And some Democrats who had long worried in private that the answer was no showed that they were more willing to say so publicly, at least for now.

Biden and his wife, Jill, planned to attend a campaign meeting in East Hampton, New York, the Long Island beach town where the real estate firm Zillow prices the median home at \$1.9 million. Later was a fundraiser in Red Bank, New Jersey. Biden flashed more vigour in North Carolina and New York, saying he believes with "all my heart and soul" that he can do the job of the presidency.

New York Times News Service

NYT asks Biden to quit race

TONY DIVER

London: The New York Times has called on Joe Biden to stand down from the presidential race and relinquish the Democratic nomination to a "stronger candidate" who would have a better chance of beating Donald Trump.

In an article by its editorial board, the newspaper accused Biden of a "reckless gamble" by continuing his re-election bid after a disastrous appearance on the debate stage with Trump on Thursday night.

At the debate, Biden repeatedly struggled to deliver his lines, made factual mistakes and froze in response to moderator questions.

"There are Democratic leaders better equipped to present clear, compelling and energetic alternatives to a second Trump presidency," The New York Times said.

"There is no reason for the party to risk the stability and security of the country by forcing voters to choose between Trump's deficiencies and those of Biden."

It added that standing down would be against Biden's "personal and political instincts" but that Thursday's debate "cannot be written off as a bad night".

The decision of The New York Times to condemn Biden's candidacy is a major shift in the media landscape for the US President, four months before the election in November.

The article came after Democrat lawmakers and strategists called on Biden to reconsider his re-election campaign, and stand down ahead of the Democratic convention in August.

Such a move would allow delegates at the convention



The New York Times building in Manhattan, New York. (File picture)

to vote freely on who should succeed him. Contenders would likely include Kamala Harris, the vice President, and Gretchen Whitmer and Gavin Newsom, the governors of Michigan and California.

The New York Times has generally been supportive of Biden's presidency, although its management has clashed with the White House over its reporting of the issue of the President's age.

Biden was said to be furious about the newspaper's coverage of the Robert Hur report, which revealed that he had struggled to remember the dates he served as vice-president during an evidence session in October.

The Wall Street Journal and Washington Post — the other two broadsheet newspapers with significant influence in Washington, both issued articles from their editorial boards calling for Biden to think seriously about his candidacy, but stopped short of asking him to stand down.

The Economist, a free market British newspaper with significant readership in the US, said Biden should leave the race immediately. The Telegraph also called for Biden to step down after his performance in Thursday's debate.

The Daily Telegraph, London

9 die in Nepal landslides

Kathmandu: Landslides triggered by heavy rainfall on Saturday killed at least nine people including an entire family while they were sleeping in Nepal's mountainous districts, officials said.

The landslides buried houses in three separate areas about 250km west of Kathmandu. Five members of the same family were killed when their house was swallowed by a landslide at Malika village in Gulmi district.

AP/PTI

Nasa clears 'air' on astronauts

FROM PAGE 1

Starliner's computers, which were autonomously guiding the spacecraft, were able to compensate with the remaining thrusters.

Four of the five thrusters now appear to be working properly; the other thruster will not be used during the trip home. Mission managers expect that Starliner can undock from the space station and take Wilmore and Williams on their return trip from space, but they do not fully

understand what caused the problem.

Fatal disasters in Nasa's history, including the loss of the Challenger and Columbia space shuttles, have taught mission managers to be cautious and curious when something is not quite right.

"I think they're doing their due diligence," Wayne Hale, a retired Nasa flight director, said in an interview. "Being in no hurry to come home, it makes a great deal of sense to take the time to gather as much information as possible so that they can make sure that the problems are all fixed. That makes a great deal of sense, to take your time."

Nappi offered a similar appraisal during Friday's news conference, saying it was prudent to use the time for additional analysis. "It would be irresponsible for us — if we have time and we want to do more — not to do it," he said.

Beginning next week, engineers will conduct ground tests at Nasa's White Sands Test Facility in California using a thruster identical to the ones on Starliner. The firings will reproduce the ones that Starliner performed in space.

That will probably take a couple of weeks, Stich said. "Then we'll give engineers a chance to go look at that thruster," he said. "This will be the real opportunity to examine a thruster, just like we've had in space."

Engineers will not be able to directly examine the troublesome thrusters on the spacecraft now in orbit

because they are located on what is known as the service module. That part will be jettisoned during the flight home, burning up in the atmosphere.

"The test will help us understand thruster performance and may give us 100 per cent confidence that everything we've seen on orbit is fine," Stich said. "It's just one more piece of data that we can have before we actually deorbit the vehicle."

Former Nasa officials such as Hale noted that the mission managers' brushing aside of the engineers' concerns had contributed to earlier fatal accidents.

During the launch of Columbia in January 2003, a piece of insulating foam from the external fuel tank broke loose and struck the shuttle's left wing. Hale, who was about to begin a new position as the launch integration manager for the shuttle programme, called contacts at the defence department, asking whether it had the ability to visually inspect the shuttle for damage.

But managers higher up in the Nasa chain of command were not curious and told Hale to retract the request for help. He complied.

What no one knew at the time was that the foam strike had punched a hole in the wing. As it returned to Earth, Columbia disintegrated, killing the seven astronauts aboard.

"Looking back on it, certainly in the Columbia case, there were not enough questions asked," Hale said. "There was not enough time

taken. And the lesson clearly has been learned that you take the time that's available to get to the most complete answer and answer all the questions that any of the experts might have."

While Nasa and Boeing study the spacecraft, Stich said, Wilmore and Williams would be able to hop into Starliner to head home in the case of an emergency on the space station. Indeed, when a dead Russian satellite unexpectedly broke apart in orbit on Thursday, they briefly took refuge in the vehicle, and would have used it if the space station had been struck by a large piece of debris.

The capsule is certified to spend 45 days docked at the space station because of limitations to the current design of Starliner's batteries. But so far, the batteries have performed well, and the stay can be extended beyond 45 days, Stich said.

Starliner is not Nasa's only problem to solve at the moment. A spacewalk was cut short on Monday when water leaked out of an umbilical cord that connects to a space suit while the astronauts were in the airlock. Engineers still do not understand what happened.

"We have to go think about it some more," said Bill Spetch, Nasa's operations integration manager for the International Space Station programme.

The next spacewalk, which had been scheduled for Tuesday, will not occur until at least late July, Spetch said.

New York Times News Service

ADVT

DEAR WEEKLY LOTTERY
₹1 CRORE WON BY
KOLKATA RESIDENT



Mr. GOPAL BHUNIA from KOLKATA, WEST BENGAL has won Rs. 1 Crore as first prize in Dear Weekly

Lottery in the draw held on 27.04.2024. His winning ticket number is 88G 74634. He has submitted his prize-winning ticket along with the prize claim form to the Nodal Officer, Nagaland State Lotteries located at Kolkata. "Life requires lots of financial support to lead our life in a better way. Dear Lottery provides attractive scheme which offers lots of prizes. I have tried my fortune through Dear Lottery by purchasing few tickets. I have won One Crore rupees of prize money which will give good financial support in future," said the winner.

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Workers of the New Doars tea estate block the Saarc Road near Chamurchi in Banarhat on Saturday. Picture by Biplab Basak

Tea workers block road to Bhutan for wages

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Jalpaiguri: Traffic on the Saarc Road that connects Bhutan with Jalpaiguri came to a halt for around six hours on Saturday when residents of a tea estate owned by an undertaking of the government of India staged a blockade for the immediate payment of their wages.

Hundreds of workers of New Doars, a tea estate owned by Andrew Yule & Company Limited, braved the rains and started the road blockade in front of the garden's gate in the Banarhat block of the Jalpaiguri district around 8.30am.

"We are yet to receive eight weeks' wages and are at our wit's end. We don't know how to run our families. Today, we raised the blockade to draw the attention of the administration and the company to our plight," said Sonali Manki Munda, a woman worker who joined the protest.

Vehicles stopped plying along Saarc Road, which connects Samtse, the headquarters of the Samtse district of Bhutan, with NH31 at Banarhat because of the blockade.

Although the rain continued, the workers didn't budge from their demand and continued the blockade. The garden has around 1,000 workers.

"The manager and other officials told us that they would be able to pay only a week's wages and that too, on next Tuesday. This morning, some of us met the manager again but he failed to give us any assurance," said a worker.

After a couple of hours, the demonstrators allowed the container trucks carrying essential items to Bhutan to pass the spot of the blockade.

Dhupguri subdivisional officer Pushpa Lepcha, Banarhat block development officer and police officers reached the spot. They persuaded the agitators to lift the blockade around 2pm.

"A tripartite meeting has been convened on July 2 to discuss the issue," said Lepcha.

The Trinamool Congress said the delay in the payment of the wages in the New Doars garden betrayed the apathetic attitude of the central government towards tea garden workers. "The Narendra Modi government has done nothing for the tea industry. Now, even workers of central government undertakings are not receiving their wages in due time," said Chandan Bhowmik, a TMC leader.

Mamata: Courts are like temples; CJI: Judges are not deities CM calls for 'pure' judiciary

SAIBAL GUPTA AND TAPAS GHOSH

Calcutta: Chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Saturday called for an absolutely pure and honest judiciary, which should be free from political biases.

She was speaking at the "East Zone-II Regional Conference" organised by the National Judicial Academy here. Chief Justice of India D. Y. Chandrachud and Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court T.S. Sivagnanam attended the conference.

"It is not my intention to humiliate anyone but it is my kind submission. Please see to it that there are no political biases in the judiciary. The judiciary must be pure, absolutely pure..." said the chief minister, who has been critical of several judgments in the recent past.

Mamata's comment came in the backdrop of her criticism of Calcutta High Court's decision to cancel the recruitment of 25,753 teachers and non-teaching employees to state-run schools. She had alleged that BJP leaders were influencing the judiciary.

The chief minister was also critical of former Calcutta High Court judge Abhijit Gangopadhyay, who resigned from his position to join the BJP. Gangopadhyay subsequently won the Lok Sabha election from the Tamuk constituency on a BJP ticket.

"The judiciary is an important temple for us. It is just



Mamata Banerjee with Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud during the National Judicial Academy's conference in Calcutta on Saturday. (PTI picture)

like *mandir* (temple), masjid (mosque), gurdwara and *gir-jaghar* (church). It is our supreme authority to deliver justice to the people. I believe the judiciary should serve all the people without thinking about their caste, creed and community," said the chief minister.

Justice Chandrachud, who was the main speaker of the event, on the other hand, harped on "constitutional morality" which, according to him, should stem from constitutional obligations and not from personal conscience.

"I am reticent when people call courts a temple of justice. Because that would mean the judges are deities which they are not. They are instead servers of the people, who deliver justice with compassion and empathy," CJI Chandrachud said at the conference titled 'Contemporary Judicial Developments and Strengthening Justice Through Law and Technology'.

The chief minister also criticised the Centre for not financing fast-track courts. She said: "We have 88 fast-

track courts. Earlier, the Government of India provided (financial) assistance for fast-track courts, but they stopped doing this seven to eight years ago. We are the only state that is running 88 fast-track courts, of which 55 are for women."

Mamata said the Bengal government had given ₹1,000 crore for the development of the judiciary and provided land for constructing a new high court in Calcutta's Rajarhat area.

The Chief Justice of India

emphasised the necessity of technological support to enhance the efficient delivery of justice to citizens. He mentioned the use of AI-assisted software to aid in translating approximately 37,000 Supreme Court judgments delivered since independence from English into all Constitution-recognised regional languages.

Other justices of the Supreme Court and Calcutta High Court and judges of courts in the Northeast were present at the programme.

Birbhum hawkers form team to resist eviction

SNEHAMOY CHAKRABORTY

Calcutta: Over 200 hawkers and vendors at Rampurhat in Birbhum district formed a group to guard their stalls round the clock and resist any attempt by the authorities to evict them.

"Despite the chief minister's order to stop the eviction drive for one month, the local administration announced that we would be evicted. That is why we formed a team to guard the area and ensure no eviction takes place," said Shahjada Hossain, an INTUC leader and a trader who runs a shoe shop in Rampurhat town.

"We don't trust the local administration, so we decided to guard the area at night to ensure no one can bring a bulldozer to demolish our shops," he added.

The hawkers and traders, who run businesses on footpaths in Rampurhat town, gathered on Saturday morning at Panch Matha More (a five-point intersection).

"The local administration campaigned on Friday evening that the drive would continue. We are all poor people and have no other option to survive," said Chandan Chakraborty, a hawker.

The traders alleged that



Hawkers stop a bulldozer allegedly brought by the railways in Rampurhat on Saturday. Picture by Prankrishna Hazra

following the state government's initiative, the railway authorities brought a bulldozer on Saturday to demolish temporary shops on the railway premises.

The traders blocked the road to prevent the bulldozer from advancing and decided to guard the area overnight.

"Earlier, the government was with us, and the railways did not dare to evict us. Now, as the government has ordered eviction from its land, the railways are trying to use this as an opportunity," said a trader.

A section of traders questioned the legality of the eviction, claiming they were given trade licences by the municipality to run their

businesses on footpaths. "If we were illegal, how did the municipality give us trade licences? We have electricity connections in our names. Then how can they remove us from our current location?" asked Shahjada Hossain.

The district administration held a meeting in Bolpur and confirmed that there would be no eviction drive for a month.

"We don't know what the railways did in Rampurhat. But we will suspend any kind of eviction for a month according to the instructions of our chief minister. We will now conduct a survey to find a suitable place for hawkers and vendors," said Birbhum district magistrate Bidhan Ray.

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If air-conditioned...

FROM PAGE 1

Jayanta Singha, president of the school's managing committee, lauded the teachers.

"It's a praiseworthy effort by the teachers. At a managing committee meeting, we had proposed raising some money (from outside) but the teachers said they would manage everything," he said. "They really treat their students like their own sons and daughters."

Since it's an aided school, government permission was necessary to install the ACs.

After the school managing committee adopted a resolution last week to install the machines, it informed the district school inspector and officials at the education department headquarters in Calcutta. They gave their nod.

The bill included the cost of the eight ACs and the expenses on modifying the windows and doors and upgrading the electrical infrastructure, a senior teacher said.

Pupils at the government-aided Doharpar Primary School in Habibpur, Nadia, had already had a pleasant surprise when classes resumed after the vacation on June 10. Their teachers had pooled



Students of Rasora Ambika High School at Kandi in Murshidabad district in a classroom where AC has been installed to beat the heat

around ₹25,000 of their savings and added to it ₹20,000 worth of government money, allocated for infrastructure development, to buy an AC.

"We have two classrooms and two sections. The AC has been installed in a big hall, which has been partitioned so that classes can be held for pupils of both sections in the hall," headmaster Dipankar Sarkar said.

"We are now thinking of buying another AC. We can't let the students suffer in this ex-

treme heat, so we did whatever we could with our own money." Sarkar said the AC had helped bring back children who were skipping classes because of the swelter.

"The temperature became unbearable this year. Students fell ill; many skipped classes. So, we came up with the proposal (for an AC) that the authorities approved," he said.

The school now plans to install a smart TV, computers, and water purifiers for the children, a teacher said.

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One more arrest over Bangladesh terror link

ABHIJEET CHATTERJEE

Durgapur: The Special Task Force (STF) of Bengal police on Friday arrested another person in connection with alleged links with Bangladesh-based terror outfits.

STF sources said Sheikh Anwar, 27, a resident of Kulshona village in Mangalkote, East Burdwan district, had been arrested from Chennai where he used to work at a laundry.

The STF said it had got the name of Anwar, a Class III dropout, after interrogating Mohammad Habibulla and Heraz Sheikh, who had been arrested earlier. Anwar had met Habibulla and Heraz at a religious gathering in Katwa in 2020.

Anwar was brought to Durgapur on transit remand and produced in the ACJM court on Saturday. The court remanded him in police custody for a fortnight.

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CBI cracks whip on passport officers

IMRAN AHMED SIDDIQUI

New Delhi: The CBI has registered 12 cases against 14 officials, including passport assistants/senior passport assistants posted at Passport Seva Kendras in Mumbai on charges of large-scale "collusive corruption" by allegedly issuing the identity document in lieu of money and compromising national security, sources said.

"The agency has unearthed a corruption racket involving middlemen and officials of the centres in Lower Parel and Malad in Mumbai. The agency has also booked 18 agents and middlemen in its 12 FIRs," said a CBI official.

According to him, these officers were in regular contact with passport facilitation agents and conspired with them to obtain undue advantage for issuing passports based on inadequate or incomplete documents or by manipulating the personal particulars of passport applicants.

The alleged corruption was detected during a joint surprise check with the vigilance department of the external affairs ministry at the Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs) on June 26, sources said.

An analysis of mobile phones, social media chats and UPI payments showed some suspicious transactions worth several lakhs.

The accused PSK officials are in the ranks of junior and senior passport assistants and were allegedly acting in connivance with various passport facilitation agents and touts and received illegal gratification in their own or their family members' bank accounts, agency officials said.

Bihar status

FROM PAGE 1

Bihar goes to the polls towards the end of next year and Nitish appears to be trying to strengthen his position with the demand.

The TDP, too, wants a similar concession for Andhra Pradesh.

The resolution pitching for special status or a financial package for Bihar underlined that the JDU's participation in the central government had increased the party's "responsibility" and the "expectations of the people of the state".

"In today's situation, the need for grant of special status to Bihar or a special (financial) package is being felt for Bihar's development and welfare of the people," the resolution said.

"JDU believes in the politics of coordination and assistance. The coordination and participation with the BJP is two decades old and has become synonymous with a natural alliance in the form of the NDA."

By appointing Jha, a leader widely believed to be the key driver behind Nitish's sudden exit from the INDIA bloc, the JDU has sought to send a message to the BJP that it is keen on better coordination but expects to retain the position of dominant partner in Bihar in return.

In terms of numbers in the Assembly, the BJP has already emerged as the dominant partner and it's widely believed to be likely that the party would claim the chief minister's post when the state goes to the polls.

A senior BJP leader from Bihar and former Union minister Ashwini Choubey has already let this out, saying: "The BJP will have its chief minister in 2025 and it (the party) should contest the (Assembly) elections on its own."

Talking to reporters, JDU general secretary K.C. Tyagi claimed that Nitish had announced before the party executive that he would not remain tied to the BJP "forever". At the same time, Tyagi asserted that "the 2025 elections would be fought under the leadership of Nitish only".

Tyagi said Jha's appointment would bring "more unity" in the functioning of the party.

Jha, who was with the BJP before joining the JDU in 2012, told reporters: "Bihar must get central assistance. We will pursue the demand with the central government and are hopeful it will be considered."

How political equations between the BJP and the JDU pan out will be known closer to the Bihar polls in the seat-sharing deal.

5 cops injured in clash with locals in Kathua

Mosque demolition resisted

MUZAFFAR RAINA

Srinagar: Tension flared up in Jammu's Kathua district after the authorities tried to demolish a mosque, allegedly built on government land, leading to clashes in which around half a dozen policemen were injured.

The clashes broke out as the 52-day-long annual Amarnath yatra started in the Valley with the first batch of pilgrims leaving the twin base camps — Baltal in Sonamarg and Nunwan in Pahalgam — for their journey to the cave.

Locals in Nagri of Kathua district said a group of officers, assisted by a strong contingent of security forces, arrived early on Saturday at Paddri to demolish a mosque.

"They had brought bulldozers to demolish the mosque. But locals came out in large numbers to protest the move. The construction of the mosque had started around a decade ago but it was built in piecemeal. Nobody objected to it all these years," Lal Hus-

sain, a member of the tribal Gujjar community, said. "People resisted the move and did not allow them to demolish the mosque," he added.

An official said the locals attacked the police with stones, forcing them to abandon the demolition drive. Five policemen, including an officer, were injured, the official said.

Videos showed the mob chasing the cops through farmland and attacking them with stones. Additional security personnel have been rushed to the spot and they remain stationed there. Locals fear the

government might resume the demolition drive.

Jameel Choudhary, leader of Dodhi (milkmen) Gujjar Association, said he spoke to Jammu divisional commissioner Rakesh Kumar about the incident and asked him not to target the religious place.

"He told me that the mosque was built illegally (on state land). I told him that he could be right but why target only one community? I told him there are several temples built on state land in the area and if they demolish even one of them, we will voluntarily level the mosque," Choudhary told The Telegraph.

He claimed the drive seems to be politically motivated as Gujjars had voted against the BJP in the recent Lok Sabha polls.

Officials said the injured policemen were taken to the district hospital for treatment.

Kathua district was recently rocked by a militant attack, which resulted in a gunfight and two militants and a CRPF man were killed. One civilian was also injured in the incident.

Security forces have conducted multiple search operations in Kathua.

Thousands of pilgrims on Saturday started their journey to the Amarnath cave amid tight security.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi wished the yatis well.

"This yatra associated with the darshan of Baba Barfani infuses immense energy in the devotees of Lord Shiva. May all devotees prosper with his blessings. Jai Baba Barfani," Modi said in a post on X in Hindi.



Pilgrims en route to the 3,880-metre-high cave shrine of Amarnath from the Baltal base camp in Ganderbal district of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday. (PTI picture)

Canopy collapses bare lapses

FROM PAGE 1

"Imagine a situation where a joint section is rusted or damaged in some other way. Heavy rain might then push the damage beyond its tipping point," the engineer, who requested anonymity, told this newspaper.

"Rainwater is not directly responsible but it could act on an already weak area. Adequate maintenance and timely repair could prevent such failures."

Wij and others in the structural engineering community are hoping the airport canopy failures would prompt greater inspection about what to prioritise during construction projects that they say are increasingly executed through engineering procurement construction (EPC) contracts and in exceedingly tighter time schedules.

"Sometimes, under EPC contracts, the focus seems to



The damaged roof of Delhi airport's Terminal-1 on Saturday. More than 20 IndiGo flights that were to operate from the terminal were cancelled on Saturday. (PTI picture)

be first on the cost, then on aesthetics, and then on structural safety," said Wij.

Some engineers say the absence of regulatory oversight on the practice of structural engineering keeps a window open for "unscrupulous engineers" to prioritise the contractors' demands over structural safety.

The IASE, in a quarterly

newsletter titled Crosfall (Confidential Reporting of Structural Failures and Lessons Learnt), has since July 2022 analysed several incidents — the failure of a precast arch over an expressway, the collapse of a canopy over a railway platform, and the collapse of a 95m bridge, among others.

"In our country, more often than not, the system of review

of structural designs and drawings by senior structural engineers is missing," an anonymous engineer had flagged two years ago in Crosfall.

The analyses in Crosfall have identified poor structural design, a mismatch between design and execution, and hasty construction among the causes of the various failures studied.

"Most developed and developing countries have set up regulatory bodies such as engineering councils for their structural engineers. Engineers need to pass an exam and obtain licences, and undergo periodic training to maintain their licences," Wij said.

"We don't have this. A much-awaited Engineers Bill will bring greater accountability and recognition to the profession, ensuring greater emphasis on structural safety."

Governor poser for Hemant's return

FROM PAGE 1

Ranchi-based political columnist Faisal Anurag, who has had a close association with Hemant and his father and party patriarch Shibu Soren, spelled out the reason why he believes Hemant might allow Champai to remain chief minister till the polls.

"As far as my political understanding goes, I don't see Hemant becoming chief minister in July," he said.

Anurag cited how Hemant had on Saturday morning suggested the BJP-led Centre might advance the Jharkhand Assembly polls, due in December, to hold it simultaneously with elections in Haryana and Maharashtra, expected in October-November.

"If the Jharkhand elections are held early in October-November, the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) would likely be enforced from September," Anurag said.

"There will be barely two months (July and August) left for proper government functioning (or launching welfare schemes). Hemant, aware of the present stance of the governors in the country, would not risk allowing Champai to resign and staking claim himself," he added.

"Because, there will always be the prospect of the governor delaying the process (of Hemant being sworn in) without citing reasons, which might jettison the government in limbo in the run-up to the elections."

Under the rules, Champai has to tender his resignation to governor C.P. Radhakrishnan, and Hemant has to furnish a letter to the governor showing the support of enough MLAs and staking claim to become chief minister.

The JMM, however, has history with the governor on this count.

After the Enforcement Directorate arrested Hemant on

January 31 night — following his resignation when he realised his arrest was imminent — the Raj Bhavan had made Champai wait till February 2 to take oath as chief minister. The matter was resolved only after the JMM and ally Congress wrote to the governor against further delay in government formation.

Hemant would not want a possible repeat in the few weeks left before the MCC comes into effect — a period during which, JMM sources said, the state government wanted to launch several welfare measures.

Several BJP-appointed governors have had regular run-ins with non-BJP state governments, such as those in Bengal, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

The JMM has already had several tussles with Radhakrishnan during his year-old term, particularly with the governor sitting on several bills passed by the Assembly that dealt with issues such as

identifying domicile status or increasing reservations for disadvantaged communities.

"As of now, Hemantji is keeping his cards close to his chest. Things will become clear in the first week of July," an aide said.

Addressing his supporters outside his home in Ranchi on Saturday morning, Hemant repeated his allegation that the case against him was a BJP conspiracy.

Hemant had been arrested in connection with an ED probe into money-laundering angle to an alleged land scam in Ranchi. Hegot bail from Jharkhand High Court on Friday.

"It has come to my knowledge that they are making plans to advance the Assembly elections in Jharkhand... I dare them to conduct the elections even tomorrow and they will be wiped out," Hemant added.

The Election Commission, widely accused of kowtowing

to the Narendra Modi government, has a free hand to advance Assembly elections by up to six months before the term of the existing House ends.

In a message to Jharkhand's sizeable tribal voters, Hemant said: "The BJP is naming tribals as chief ministers in neighbouring states but they are just rubber stamps."

The BJP has appointed tribal chief ministers Vishnu Deo Sai (Chhattisgarh) and Mohan Charan Majhi (Odisha).

The JMM-led ruling alliance in Jharkhand has 47 MLAs — 29 from the JMM, 17 from the Congress and one from the RJD — in the 81-member Assembly. The lone CPIML member, Vinod Singh, supports the ruling coalition.

The BJP has 26 legislators and its ally AJSU has three. The NCP has one MLA, and there are two Independents besides a nominated member from the Anglo-Indian community.

Now, canopy crashes at Rajkot airport

IMRAN AHMED SIDDIQUI

New Delhi: A canopy collapsed at the passenger pickup and drop area outside Gujarat's Rajkot airport amid heavy rainfall on Saturday, the third such incident in the past three days, raising concerns over public facility infrastructure in the country.

There were no reports of injuries or casualties.

On Friday, a taxi driver was killed and eight people were injured after a portion of the roof at Delhi airport's Terminal-1 collapsed on parked cars following heavy rainfall, a day after a portion of the canopy at the new terminal building of Jabalpur airport in Madhya Pradesh had fallen and crushed a car below. However, no injury was reported.

Opposition leaders have alleged "corruption and criminal negligence", flagging how Modi had inaugurated or laid the foundation stones for new terminals at 15 airports ahead of the April-June general elections. They alleged that incomplete terminals had been inaugurated prematurely with votes in mind.

Civil aviation minister Ram Mohan Naidu Kinjarapu on Friday had said the roof crash had occurred over a part of Terminal-1 at the Delhi airport that had been built about 15 years ago, and not over the new part inaugurated by Modi just ahead of the Lok Sabha polls.

Government sources said that this part of Terminal-1, the old departure forecourt, was constructed in 2008-09 when the UPA was in power but did not explain whether there had been lapses in maintenance.

Sources in the civil aviation ministry on Saturday said the canopy at the passenger pickup and drop area outside Rajkot airport terminal collapsed during maintenance work intended to remove accumulated water amid



The portion of the canopy that collapsed at the Rajkot airport on Saturday. (PTI picture)

heavy rainfall.

The ministry, however, is yet to issue a formal statement on the latest incident.

Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera in a post on X said: "Rajkot Airport: Inaugurated on July 27, 2023. Roof collapsed on June 29, 2024."

The BJP, which often attacks India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru for the problems in the country despite being in power for a decade, on Saturday said Nehru should not be blamed for the canopy collapse outside Rajkot airport as "he did not build airports on the scale that was required."

"Rajkot airport's canopy cloth tearing away because of heavy wind and rain is not the same as infrastructure collapsing. And no, we shouldn't blame Nehru for it, because he did not build airports on the scale that were required. Left to him, we would all be travelling in bullock carts, certified by DRDO. Besides, just yesterday MoCA has ordered security review of small and big airports in the country," BJP's IT cell chief Amit Malviya wrote on X.

The tragic incident at the Delhi airport resulted in the indefinite suspension of operations from Terminal-1, which handles around 200 daily flights.

The cause for the collapse is yet to be ascertained but the airport officials blamed the roof crash on heavy rain and strong winds.

Seers bat for 'chosen ones' as CM

K.M. RAKESH

Bengaluru: Two seers representing the influential Vokkaliga and Lingayat communities in Karnataka have demanded that Congress leaders from their respective sects be made the next chief minister.

Kumara Chandrashekararathna Swami, the head of Vishwa Vokkaligara Mahasamsthana Mutt, first raised the cause of deputy chief minister D.K. Shivakumar as the next chief minister.

His appeal was heard in the right places because he made it at a public meeting while sharing the dais with chief minister Siddaramaiah, Shivakumar and other Vokkaliga seers at an event commemorating the 515th birth anniversary of Bengaluru founder Kempe Gowda.

Chandrashekararathna Swami contended that Siddaramaiah, who had served as the chief minister for over a year during his second stint, should pave the way for Shivakumar, who is a Vokkaliga.

Not to be left behind, prominent Lingayat seer Srisaile Jagadguru Channa Siddhartha Panditharadhya Swamy on



DK Shivakumar

Friday urged the Congress to consider leaders from the community for the chief minister's post.

Unlike the Vokkaliga seer who pitched for Shivakumar alone, the Lingayat pontiff recommended state ministers M.B. Patil, Eshwar Khandre and S.S. Mallikarjun for the job. He reminded the Congress that Lingayat voters had supported the party in the Assembly and Lok Sabha polls.

The entry of the two seers and the shrill pitch for leadership comes at a time a section of the Congress wants three deputy chief ministers representing the major communities.

Housing and minority affairs minister Zameer Ahmed



MB Patil

Khan, public works minister Satish Jarkiholi and cooperation minister K.N. Rajanna are among those who have been openly backing the demand for three deputies, allegedly to undercut Shivakumar's importance.

For long the principal troubleshooter, Shivakumar received a huge setback when his brother D.K. Suresh lost from the Bengaluru Rural Lok Sabha constituency, their home turf. The defeat against the BJP's C.N. Manjunath, a cardiologist and son-in-law of former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, came at a time many expected Shivakumar to ratchet his demand for the top job.

After having led the party to a thumping victory in the 2023 state polls, Shivakumar had stood his ground to be made the chief minister. It took days of negotiations and meetings with the top leadership to make him yield to Siddaramaiah as part of a power-sharing deal.

Congress leaders have swung into the party's defence and blamed the BJP for instigating the seers to raise the pitch on the leadership issue to create disarray in the ruling party.

Prajwal remanded in custody till July 8

Bengaluru: A court in Bengaluru on Saturday remanded former JDS MP Prajwal Revanna, who is facing charges of rape and sexual abuse of several women, to judicial custody till July 8.

Prajwal was produced before the 42nd additional chief metropolitan magistrate court judge after his four-day Special Investigation Team (SIT) custody ended on Saturday.

On Monday, Prajwal was remanded to judicial custody till July 8. But, he was later sent to SIT custody till June 29 by the magistrate court judge, after the police sought a body warrant through the special public prosecutor.

Four separate cases have been registered against the 33-year-old grandson of the former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, all of which are being investigated by the SIT. Prajwal lost in the recently concluded Lok Sabha polls. PTI

Forex kitty jumps by \$816m

MUMBAI: India's forex reserves jumped by \$816 million to \$653.711 billion for the week ended June 21, the RBI said on Friday. In the previous reporting week, the overall reserves had dropped by \$2.92 billion to \$652.89 billion. The all-time high for the reserves is at \$655.81 billion achieved on June 7. For the week ended June 21, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, decreased by \$106 million to \$574.134 billion, the data released on Friday showed. PTI

Goyal on exports

MUMBAI: India's goods and services exports are expected to cross \$800 billion this fiscal despite global challenges, commerce minister Piyush Goyal said on Saturday. In 2023-24, the shipments stood at \$778.2 billion (goods \$437.1 billion and services \$341 billion). Goyal also expressed hopes to making a progress on the talks in the proposed free trade agreement (FTA) with the UK after the new British government takes charge. The UK's general election will be held on July 4. PTI

Tanishq expansion

NEW DELHI: Titan Company on Saturday said it is launching its jewellery brand Tanishq in Bangladesh as part of expansion plans in the international market. On Friday, the Tata Group-managed firm signed an agreement with Rhythm Group to make Tanishq available across the Bangladesh market, according to a joint statement. The joint venture will commence with the opening of the manufacturing facility in Narayanganj, in Bangladesh, it added. PTI

“Don't trade what you do not understand”

Sundararaman Ramamurthy, MD and CEO of BSE, at YIFi Conclave 2024



XXCE

Setty picked for SBI top job

OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Mumbai: The Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB) on Saturday recommended Challa Sreenivasulu Setty for the position of chairman of State Bank of India (SBI).

Setty is the managing director of SBI, in charge of international banking, global markets and technology verticals.

He will succeed Dinesh Kumar Khara, who will retire on August 28 when he turns 63, the upper age limit for the position of SBI chairman.

FSIB is mandated to recommend persons for appointment as whole-time directors and non-executive chairpersons on the boards of financial

services institutions apart from advising certain other matters relating to personnel management in these institutions.

A statement from the institution said it had interviewed three candidates.

“FSIB interfaced with three candidates on June 29 for the position of chairman in SBI. Keeping in view their performance in the interface, their overall experience and the extant parameters, the Bureau recommends Challa Sreenivasulu Setty for the position of chairman in SBI,” the statement said.

The SBI chairman is usually appointed from a pool of serving managing directors of the lender.

FSIB will recommend the name to the Appointments



Challa Sreenivasulu Setty

Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), which will take the final decision in this regard. The committee is headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The other two managing directors of SBI who were reportedly in the race were Ashwini Kumar Tewari and Vinay M Tonse. Setty was the senior most among them.

FSIB is led by Bhanu Pratap Sharma, former secretary in the department of personnel and training (DoPT).

The members of the bureau include the financial services secretary, the secretary in the department of public enterprises and an RBI deputy governor.

Other members are Animesh Chauhan, former chairman and MD of the erstwhile Oriental Bank of Commerce, RBI's ex-executive director Deepak Singhal, and Shailendra Bhandari, former MD of erstwhile ING Vysya Bank.

Setty joined the SBI board as a managing director in January 2020.

Prior to this assignment, he headed the retail and digital banking vertical. He also led various task forces and com-

mittees formed by the government of India.

A Bachelor of Science in agriculture and a certified associate of the Indian Institute of Bankers, he started his career with SBI in 1988 as a probationary officer.

He has held key assignments in SBI, including as deputy managing director — stressed assets resolution group, chief general manager and general manager in the corporate accounts group, deputy general manager in mid-corporate group and vice-president & head (syndications) in SBI, New York branch.

In October 2020, Khara took charge as the chairman for a period of three years. Subsequently his tenure was extended till August 2024.

Panel formed to find new GDP base year

OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

STAYING UPDATED

New Delhi: The ministry of statistics and programme implementation (MoSPI) has constituted a 26-member Advisory Committee on National Accounts Statistics (ACNAS) to recommend a new base year for GDP data, according to an official notification.

Chaired by Biswanath Golder, a former professor at the Institute of Economic Growth, ACNAS will also explore the alignment of GDP with key indices such as the wholesale price index (WPI) for inflation, the consumer price index (CPI) for consumer inflation, and the index of industrial production (IIP) for factory growth.

The committee's tenure is set for five years or until the completion of the next base year, whichever is later.

Its mandate includes reviewing existing databases, advising on new data sources to improve National Accounts estimates, and providing guidance on the methodology for compiling and presenting statistics for economic analysis.

At present, indices such as the IIP, WPI, and National Income are benchmarked to FY12, with the previous base year being FY05. The CPI, a widely used price benchmark, also uses 2012 as its base year.

The base year serves as a reference point for measuring changes in economic variables and comparing the relative performance of indicators over time, with real GDP

Real GDP growth is calculated based on FY12 prices

Indices such as the IIP, WPI, CPI and National Income are benchmarked to the fiscal year 2012 too

The base year serves as a reference point for measuring changes in economic variables

growth currently calculated based on FY12 prices.

Economists said regular updates to the base year are essential to keep indices aligned to shifts in consumption patterns, sector weights and the inclusion of new sectors.

They recommended such updates at least once every 10 years for accurate GDP calculation. They suggest that FY23 could be a suitable base year for data revision, noting the absence of significant droughts or structural shocks to the economy during that period. Plans are also underway to revamp economic indices.

Experts indicate that price indices are outdated and the product basket composition needs updating. For example, the CPI still includes items such as horsecart fares, VCD players, and dung cakes in its basket of 299 products and services. The RBI relies on the CPI as a key price gauge for monetary policy management.

Awareness to help cut derivatives loss

A STAFF REPORTER

Calcutta: Investor education could be the key to managing the losses in derivatives trade.

BSE managing director and CEO Sundararaman Ramamurthy on Saturday said there could be a lack of understanding among investors about derivative products such as futures and options.

“People may be trading options not because they know about them but because somebody has told them options can make money,” Ramamurthy said at YIFi 2024 organised by Young Indians on Saturday.

A study by Sebi shows 89 per cent of individual traders (9 out of 10 individual traders)

in equity futures and options segment have incurred losses, with an average loss of ₹1.1 lakh during FY22. At its board meeting on Thursday, Sebi approved stricter norms for entry and exit of individual stocks in this segment.

Ramamurthy said that besides conducting webinars and providing statutory warnings, more work can be done towards raising investor awareness. There are already some regulatory checks in place like real time client level portfolio-based margining or risk reduction modes where if some broker has utilised 90 per cent of capital he cannot take further positions, but can only reduce positions.

FIEO for interest sop to all

Calcutta: Exporters have written to commerce minister Piyush Goyal, expressing concerns over the extension of the Interest Equalisation Scheme (IES) for only two months and exclusively for MSMEs.

The Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) president Ashwani Kumar highlighted that the scheme has so far benefited not only MSMEs but also merchant exporters and large manufacturing firms at a lower rate of 2 per cent for 410 tariff lines, covering labour-intensive products.

Exclusion of these categories from the extended scheme will severely impact labour-intensive exports, he said. PTI

Iffco withdraws plea in Triumph case

New Delhi: Fertiliser cooperative Iffco has withdrawn its plea to restrain Triumph Offshore from issuing any share or securities to lenders for paying loans.

Iffco had approached the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) in March seeking to restrain Triumph Offshore and Swan Energy from issuing any share/securities to lenders for paying loans and passing any such resolution without its approval.

The move came after Iffco (Indian Farmer Fertiliser Cooperative) exited from Triumph Offshore by selling its entire 49 per cent stake to joint venture partner Swan Energy for ₹440 crore. PTI

In its petition, Iffco had argued that it was pre-paying the debt and it may result in the dilution of its shareholding in Triumph Offshore.

A two-member bench of the NCLT allowed Iffco to withdraw its plea.

“Counsel for applicants seeks permission to withdraw the application. They have also filed an affidavit. In view of the same, permission is granted,” said the NCLT order passed on June 27.

Triumph Offshore was established as a joint venture to set up a floating storage and regasification unit (FSRU) with Swan Energy holding the majority stake of 51 per cent. PTI

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GOOD MORNING

EVENT

Art exhibitions showcasing Pensive Moons (recent water colours) by Bholanath Rudra, The Salts of Many Seas by Ali Akbar P.N. and Dawn to Dusk: A Silent Symphony by Ujjal Dey, Emami Art, 11am to 7pm.

YESTERDATE

June 30, 1855

On this day, about 10,000 Santals had gathered in Bhognadhi village, in present-day Jharkhand, and sent out parwanas, or orders, to East India Company officials and zamindars, asking them to reply within a fortnight.

This was the beginning of the Santal Uprising, which many feel should be considered the first war of Independence in British India. The Santals, settled in Damin-i-koh, which later came to be known as Santal Pargana, were protesting against their severe exploitation by the zamindars, money-lenders and the colonial authorities.

According to Santal lore, Thakurji, the revered spirit of the Santals, appeared before brothers Sidho and Kanhu, and asked them to protest. The Santals, growing in number, and joined by the Bhuiyan and Paharia tribes and lower caste communities, began to march to Calcutta. The uprising was crushed by the British forces reinforced by the Nawab of Bengal who sent war elephants. But the courage of the Santals was not forgotten.

After the uprising, the British passed the Santal Parganas Tenancy Act, 1876, to protect tribals from exploitation.

Chandrima S. Bhattacharya
For suggestions on dates/events mail us at: yesterday@abp.in

WEATHER

YESTERDAY

Maximum: 31.6°C (-1.3)
Minimum: 27.2°C (+0.4)
RAINFALL: 92.5mm
HUMIDITY: Max: 98%, Min: 85%

THE FORECAST

Maximum 31°C Minimum 26°C

EXPECTED: Generally cloudy sky
SUNSET 6.25pm SUNRISE 4.55am

Fight over whether shop owners could park vehicles on a stretch cleared of hawkers' stalls

Scuffle over space in New Market

SUBHAJOY ROY

Calcutta: Shop owners and footpath traders came to blows in the New Market area on Saturday over who had the right to the road.

In this case, the fight was over whether the shop owners could park their two-wheelers on a stretch from where the hawkers had been recently evicted.

The clash around noon snowballed into more trouble as shop owners from Shreeram Arcade, New Market and the roads surrounding New Market shut their shops and blocked roads twice in two places — once on Chowringhee Road and again in front of New Market police station on SN Banerjee Road.

The skirmish reflected the tension simmering across Calcutta's shopping hubs, be it New Market, Hatibagan or Gariahat.

Taxpaying shop owners everywhere complain about hawkers blocking the visibility of their stores and access, reducing their footfall and eating away from their business. The hawkers allege that many shops also keep their wares on pavements.

"For years, we have complained about how hawkers have made it difficult for us to run our businesses. They have taken over almost the entire width of the footpath outside my store. Customers who used to come in cars have stopped visiting as they cannot park their cars anymore," said the

owner of a store on Bertram Street in the New Market area.

The hawkers there occupied the part of the road earmarked for parking cars, the shop owner said.

The owner of a garments store on Gariahat Road echoed him. "When it rains, hawkers hang plastic sheets over their stalls. This completely blocks the visibility of my shop," the Gariahat trader said.

Many of the hawkers pilfer power. The wires they use are cheap and sparks leading to small fires are frequent on the pavements of Gariahat, alleged shop owners.

"All the stalls have lights. They draw the electricity from a meter that could be several metres away.... It can cause an accident any time," he said.

A fire that started in a hawker's stall and had spread to a building through the overhanging plastic sheets gutted several rooms of two adjoining homes and destroyed several stores in Gariahat in 2019.

In north Calcutta's Hatibagan, hawkers' stalls have nearly eclipsed the sight of shops along the pavements. The hawkers have hardly left any space on the pavement for pedestrians to walk.

In the New Market area, Saturday's trouble had its root in a dispute over whether shop owners from Shreeram Arcade would park their two-wheelers on a stretch of Humayun Place or hawkers would set up their dadas (stalls) there.



Police officers try to pacify agitated shop owners and hawkers at Shreeram Arcade on Saturday. Picture by Pradip Sanyal



The stretch of Humayun Place from where hawkers' stalls were removed on Wednesday and shop owners started parking their vehicles in the space. Picture by Bishwarup Dutta

Humayun Place is the road between Shreeram Arcade and the erstwhile New Empire cinema.

A police officer said the hawkers used to set up their stalls on the road just outside Shreeram Arcade till Wednesday afternoon, when police began a drive to remove stalls on the road. Humayun Place was cleared of hawkers within an hour on Wednesday evening.

The police's drive followed a meeting chaired by chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday where she vented out her anger at the police, government officials and politicians for allowing indiscriminate

encroachment of pavements and roads.

The hawkers on Humayun Place had not set up their stalls since Wednesday evening. They objected when the shop owners started parking their two-wheelers in that space.

"The northern side of Humayun Place has a Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) approved parking bay where cars and two-wheelers used to remain parked earlier. But the parking stopped a few years ago as hawkers started to set up stalls on the road. The shop owners again started to park their two-wheelers after Wednesday's drive cleared the road of hawkers," said an of-

ficer of Kolkata Police's South traffic guard.

The opposing demands of shop owners and hawkers led to the skirmish on Saturday.

The deputy commissioner of police (central), Indira Mukherjee, met the shop owners from New Market and neighbouring roads after the second round of roadblocks on Saturday.

"The shop owners in the area told us they were feeling scared to open their shops. We promised them all help from the police. We have also created a post at the junction of Bertram Street and Humayun Place to prevent any trouble," said Mukherjee.

Salt Lake kiosks spring back to life

SNEHAL SENGUPTA

Salt Lake: Stalls smashed by eviction teams on Wednesday are back in business in parts of Salt Lake.

More than 30 hawkers reopened their stalls by erecting bamboo poles and hanging black plastic sheets on an 800-metre stretch of the pavement in front of the Geological Survey of India (GSI) building opposite DL Block, not far from the Karunamoyee intersection.

Many of the hawkers stacked crates of fruits and vegetables on the road.

Some roadside eateries set up tables and chairs for their customers not only blocking the entire 4-foot wide pavement but also a part of the road.

In GD block, part of Salt Lake's Sector III, pavement-grabbing stalls dismantled by eviction teams from the Bidhannagar Municipal Corporation and police sprang up once again at their old spots.

"We have been selling fruits from the pavement for 50 years. Where will we go? The civic teams had razed my stall

but we decided to come back after speaking with our hawker union leaders," said Chaitali Ghosh who runs a fruit stall opposite DL block.

The first residents of Salt Lake had moved into their Sector I homes in 1970. The plot distribution for Sector II, where Ghosh has her stall, began in 1979.

The eviction drives started after chief minister Mamata Banerjee said she was ashamed of the state of Salt Lake.

"I am ashamed of Salt Lake (lajja lagey). Why don't the councillors of the Bidhannagar Municipal Corporation work? They are the elected body. They don't sweep the roads. Should I step in? They don't look after the lights, roads and water supply. Neither do they take care of the problems faced by people," Mamata had said on Monday at the meeting where she publicly admonished civic body chiefs and administrative officials over a host of issues, including encroachment of public spaces and government land.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10 ►



Hawkers' stalls in front of the Geological Survey of India building in Salt Lake on Saturday. Picture by Sanat Kr Sinha

INITIATIVE PROMISES TO BRING MANY DONORS UNDER THE SAME UMBRELLA

Food ATM: A mission to end hunger

DEBRAJ MITRA

Calcutta: A motley group of Calcuttans has started a drive to collect unused food from restaurants, hotels and caterers and give it to people who often struggle to make two square meals.

Individuals and a handful of organisations have been feeding the poor for the past few years, especially since the pandemic. But the latest initiative promises to bring many donors under the same umbrella and up the scale.

Kolkata We Care, billed as a "food ATM," will begin from the CIT Road (Sundari

Mohan Avenue) outlet of restaurant chain Sanjha Chulha.

A freezer at the eatery has been earmarked for the project. Excess food from parties, restaurants and hotels will be transported to the eatery before they are distributed.

"We keep getting calls from hotels, restaurants and caterers about excess food. They want to give it to needy people. Many establishments already do it on their own. This drive aims to bring such individual initiatives under one roof. We will take a lot of care in ensuring that the food is fresh," said



The food ATM on CIT Road
Imran Zaki, one of those behind the drive.
"The outlet on CIT Road

is the first. We are planning to set up similar ATMs at several other places in Calcutta, like Gariahat and New Ballygunge," said Zaki.

Several NGOs and clubs — that work for people living in slums and shanties across the city — are on board for the project. Individually, they keep feeding people regularly. The new food initiative will extend a helping hand to such organisations.

Volunteers of the NGOs and clubs will monitor people who come to receive the food. There is no provision to eat at the spot. People will be asked to carry the food home. "I have been feeding

needy people for five years now. But I have limited resources. If many people come together, the scale inevitably goes up," said Asif Ahmed, owner of Sanjha Chulha.

Oasis, an old favourite on Park Street, will also send food to the project.

"We have a lot of excess food every day. By excess food, I mean food that does not make it to the plates of diners. That food will be taken to the food ATM," said Pratap Daryanani, the owner of Oasis.

Vinod Kohli of Kohli Catering Services is also on board.

"When we have an order for 500 people, the actual headcount is often around 450. The food is fresh but preserving it is a problem. The food ATM offers a genuine solution to this problem," said Kohli.

One of the organisers said multiple individuals and corporate organisations had pledged support to the initiative, as have educational institutions.

"Some of them already prepare fresh food for the needy," said Zaki.

The Kolkata Municipal Corporation and police are assisting the organisers in the initiative.

The Telegraph CLASSIFIED

The Telegraph AIR SURCHARGE ASSAM: 8.00; NAGALAND: 8.00; MEGHALAYA/ ARUNACHAL/ MIZORAM/ MANIPUR: 1.00; MUMBAI AND BEYOND: 5.00; TRIPURA: 6.00; DELHI AND BEYOND/ CHENNAI AND BEYOND/ BANGALORE/ PORT BLAIR: 7.00.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Pawan Ray, S/O-late Dukhi Ray, R/O 203B Sristi Nivas 2nd Floor, Block -B Podrah, Howrah-711109 WB, have changed my name to Dhanraj Prakash Ray for all future purpose vide affidavit sworn before the 1st Class Judicial Magistrate Court, Alipore. DR1500709R1500709

LOST & FOUND

Notice Notice is hereby served to all concerned that 2 (two) Deeds of Conveyance being No. 1) 1357/2000 (Flat) and 1355/2000 (Car-Parking) registered before ADSR, Sealadah dated

31.03.2000 of my property at Premises No. 14/7, P. Majumdar Road, Haltu, P.S. Kasba, Kolkata-700078 are lost from my custody dated 15.06.2024 I have lodged a GD before Kasba P.S. vide No.GDE3115 dated 24.06.2024 in this regard. If any person found the above referred Deeds/ then it is requested to hand over the original deeds mentioned above within 15 (fifteen) days from this date otherwise all acts done by anyone other than me, on the strength of these deeds will be treated as null and void before the Court of Law. Atanu Ghosh, Mob: 9674313680 AS10045312-00046217

This is to inform that General Public that following share certificate of Bata India Limited, having its Registered Office at 27B, Camac Street, 1st Floor, Kolkata 700016 registered in the name of the following Shareholder/s have been lost by them. Sl. No.: 1, Name of the Shareholder/s: Saibal Kumar Chattopadhyay, Folio No. 0098566, Certificate Nos.729910, DR1500709R1500709-00045312

Distinctive Number/s from 128052233 to 128052932, No. of Shares 700. The Public are hereby cautioned against purchasing or dealing in any way with the above referred share certificates. Any person who has any claim in respect of the said share certificate/s should lodge such claim with the company or its Registrar and Transfer Agents Link Intime India Private Limited, 247 Park, C-101, 1st Floor, L.B.S. Marg, Vikroli (W), Mumbai 400083, Tel: 8108116767 within 15 days of publication of this notice after which no claim will be entered and the company shall proceed to issue Duplicate Share Certificate/s.

Saibal Kumar Chattopadhyay Name of Legal Claimant Place: Kolkata Date: 30.06.2024 DR1500709R1500709-00045312 Graduation, IMT Ghaziabad certificate Roll No- 82100464 & ICFAI certificate from my custody. GD entry-428 on 10/6/24 Rabindra Sarobar PS. If found pls call Niloy Dey- 9331281695 DR1500709R1500709-00045312

NOTICE

P.L.A. No. 289 of 2023 In The High Court At Calcutta Testamentary and Intestate Jurisdiction In the Goods of: Prabhudayal Shaw alias Prabhudayal Shaw, son of Late Chhotu Lal Show alias Chhatulal Shaw, lastly residing at 2, Raja Naba Krishna Street, Post Office Hatkhola, Police Station Shyampur, Kolkata-700005, within the Municipal limits of the town of Kolkata and also within the aforesaid Jurisdiction of this Hon'ble Court a Hindu inhabitant deceased.

To Rajeev Kumar Shaw 2, Raja Naba Krishna Street PS- Shyampur, Kolkata-700005 (missing since 28 years) Sir, If you, as mentioned above, are claiming to have any interest in the estate of the deceased abovenamed are hereby cited to come within 8 (Eight) weeks from the date of publication of this citation and to show cause as to why Probate

of the last Will and Testament dated 9th day of March, 2012 of the deceased abovenamed should not be granted by this Court unto Sri Dilip Shaw son of Late Prabhudayal Shaw, residing at 2, Raja Naba Krishna Street, Post Office Hatkhola, Police Station-Shyampur, Kolkata-700005 being one of the executor of the Last Will and Testament executed by the deceased under pain and contempt of the Law and further to do and receive as to Law and Justice shall appertain and what you shall do herein you shall duly certify with these presents to our said Justices. You are hereby informed that free legal services from the High Court Legal Services Committee, as per eligibility criteria, is available to you and in case you are eligible and desire to avail of the free legal services, you may contact the above Legal Services Committee. Witness: Mr. T. S. Sivagnanam, Chief

Justice at Calutta aforesaid, the 26th day of April, in the year Two Thousand and Twenty Four. S/d For Registrar 19/06/2024 00049718 AG73AG073 NOTICE is hereby given that my clients Sri Kapil Kumar Jaiswal and Smt.Kiran Shaw are intending to purchase ALL THAT basu land measuring 2Cottah 15 Chittack 1 Sq.ft.with structure situated at 11A,Neu Bagan Lane, P.S.Shyampur, Kolkata-700003 from its owners Sri Asim Kumar Sinha, Ashok Sinha and Nandini Sinha of 11A, Neu Bagan Lane, P.S.Shyampur, Kol-3,if anybody having any right,title and interest,in respect of the said property,he/she/they may contact the undersigned with the documentary proof within Ten(10)days from the date of this publication,failing which it will be presumed that there is no such claim and no claim shall thereafter be entertained. Rita Mallick,Advocate 9831383643 / 7278564827 AG89AG09-00046025

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Monsoon's first heavy spell soaks city

June rain deficit reduced

DEBRAJ MITRA

■ June 1 to 27: 50mm
■ June 28 to 29: 92mm

Calcutta: Monsoon's first heavy rain significantly reduced the June rain deficit in Calcutta.

The city on Friday night received its first spell of heavy rain since the onset of monsoon on June 21.

The Met office recorded around 92mm of rain in Allipore, the official record-keeper for Calcutta, between 5.30pm on Friday and 5.30pm on Saturday.

The rain deficit in June was over 81 per cent in Calcutta till Friday. The spell of heavy rain narrowed the gap to 54 per cent, said a Met official.

On Saturday, Calcuttans woke up to a cloudy sky after a rainy Friday night. Rain that looked imminent since morning started in the afternoon. The showers picked up intensity around 2.30pm, wrapping the city in a haze and slowing traffic.

In Calcutta, rain is likely



Commuters caught in rain on Park Street on Saturday morning. Picture by Pradip Sanyal

for the "next four to five days". Districts like South 24-Parganas and North 24-Parganas are likely to get more rain than Calcutta.

The sky is likely to remain cloudy. The conditions will keep the day temperature under control, the Met official said.

Around 9.30pm on Friday,

be true. The rain that started as a drizzle soon picked up steam. It came down in more than one spell.

Entire Calcutta got rain on Friday but some places were not as drenched as some other places were.

"The northern and north-western parts of the city got less rain than the south and southwestern parts," said a Met official.

Multiple districts in south and north Bengal were battered by heavy rain on Friday night.

The next few days are also likely to be rainy.

"Yesterday's low-pressure area now lies over northwest Bay of Bengal adjoining north Odisha-Gangetic West Bengal coasts with the associated cyclonic circulation extending up to 7.6km above mean sea level," said a Met bulletin on Saturday.

Threat calls did not stop, says realtor

KINSUK BASU

Calcutta: The Barrackpore realtor whose car was sprayed with bullets a fortnight ago alleged on Saturday that he has been receiving threat calls from two suspected extortionists.

The first is Subodh Singh, a Bihar-based gangster lodged in Patna's Beur jail.

Singh had called within an hour of bullets being sprayed on Ajay Mandal's Volvo S-90 on June 15. He was with police officers when he got the call. He called once again later.

The second is Anish Thakur. A native of Bihar's Vaishali, Thakur was arrested in August 2021 for his alleged involvement in the 2020 murder of BJP youth leader Manish Shukla in Titagarh on Calcutta's northern outskirts.

Mandal, who runs several businesses, said Thakur called him around 8pm on June 26.

Singh called about an hour later, he said.

"Anish asked me to meet him the next day at the Barrackpore court where he was scheduled to be produced. 'Kal hamara court ka date hain (My court production is scheduled to tomorrow). Aap court mein aakey bhet kijiye (You meet me at the court)', he said," Mandal told Metro.

Mandal, who had received extortion calls from Singh before the June 15 attack and even after, said it was nerve-racking to receive the calls even after police provided him with two security guards.

"I told Anish that Subodh has been calling me up. Now you are doing the same. What am I supposed to do? I have police security. I'm just fed up," Mandal said.

An alleged sharpshooter, Thakur was arrested in Chennai a year after his name surfaced during the probe into Shukla's murder. He is now in Dum Dum correctional home.

Senior police officers said when a criminal in judicial custody wants to extort money he would usually ask the vic-

tim to meet him in court during his production.

Mandal did not meet Thakur at Barrackpore court.

The same night (June 26), almost an hour after Thakur's call, Mandal said he received a call from Singh.

"What happened chacha? You now have security cover and have forgotten us?" Subodh said over the phone, Mandal recalled. "There was no mention of any amount. But obviously, he wants money or why would he call me up?"

Mandal said only Subodh had once told him that around ₹2 crore was required for the release of some of his gang members lodged in jail. But he did not spell out any figure because he wanted Mandal to lead a syndicate that would control the real estate market around parts of Sodepur, Barrackpore and its adjoining areas.

A day after receiving the calls Mandal said he met the police commissioner of Barrackpore. "I asked him to take sanryas from business now? What do I do?" Mandal said.

Barrackpore police commissioner Alok Rajoria said: "Yes, he (Mandal) has received calls. We are investigating the matter."

Since the June 15 attack at the busy Rathatala crossing on BT Road, Mandal said he has cut down on his trips to different construction sites.

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Corrigendum Notice

The date of submission of tender paper published vide NIT/Est/late/2024-25/01 dt. 21.06.2024 has been extended up to 09.07.2024 @ 2.00 PM and will be opened on 09.07.2024 at 3.30PM. Submission of hard copy is on 09.07.2024 upto 2.00 PM and the date of opening of price bid is on 12.07.2024 at 3.00 PM. All other terms and conditions will remain same as per original tender. Kindly visit institute's website & GPP Portal.

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निविदा निरस्तीकरण आदेश

आदेश क्र./ 3427/व.ले.लि./2024-25 कोटा, दिनांक 26.6.24

निविदा सूचना क्र. 20/व.ले.लि./2023-24 दिनांक 21.02.2024 सिस्टम नं. 153173 (द्वितीय आर्मंत्रण) 'अरपा पैसाइलर बैज परियोजना के शीर्ष स्थल में आर.डी. 0.00 मी. से 2500 मी. तक पहुंच मार्ग का निर्माण कार्य' अनुमोदित लागत राशि ₹. 203.73 लाख को निविदा को प्रमुख अभियंता (निविदा प्रकोष्ठ) जल संसाधन विभाग रायपुर (छ.ग.) के पत्र पृ.क्र. 4262962/निविदा प्रकोष्ठ/2024/नवा रायपुर दिनांक 07.06.2024 (जी नं. 08035 दिनांक 25.02.2024) एवं निविदा सूचना क्र. 21/व.ले.लि./2023-24 दिनांक 21.02.2024 सिस्टम नं. 153176 (द्वितीय आर्मंत्रण) 'दवनपुर जलाशय योजना का जीर्णोद्धार एवं नहर मरम्मत कार्य' अनुमोदित लागत राशि ₹. 217.17 लाख को निविदा को प्रमुख अभियंता (निविदा प्रकोष्ठ) जल संसाधन विभाग रायपुर (छ.ग.) के पत्र पृ.क्र. 4263014/निविदा प्रकोष्ठ/2024/नवा रायपुर दिनांक 07.06.2024 (जी नं. 08035 दिनांक 25.02.2024) के परिपेक्ष्य में उक्त निविदा निरस्त की जाती है।

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17/10/24 [Limited Seat]

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17/10/24 [Limited Seat]

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Lynch cry at hostel: 14 sent to cop custody

Man beaten to death on theft suspicion

OUR BUREAU

Salt Lake: A 22-year-old man was beaten to death by his neighbours at Polenite in Mahish Bathan on the fringes of Salt Lake on suspicion that he had stolen a cellphone.

Prasen Mondal was declared dead at a private hospital in Salt Lake on Saturday. This is the second such lynching in the city in two consecutive days.

On Friday, Irshad Alam, 37, who worked as a TV mechanic in the Chandni Chowk area was allegedly dragged into a students' hostel in central Calcutta on suspicion of stealing a phone and beaten to death.

Fourteen residents of Udayan Hostel on Nirmal Chunder Street in central

Calcutta were produced at the Bankshall court on Saturday. They were sent to police custody till July 4.

Public prosecutor Arup Chakrabarty said among the 14 two were former students and the rest were from various universities. The attackers allegedly did not allow the police team that went there to enter the hostel for at least two hours.

After Irshad was rescued and rushed to hospital, he was declared dead.

On Saturday, the cops arrested three men who are Mondal's neighbours on murder charges. They have been identified as Tapan Sarkar, his son Harshit and Sridam Mondal, another neighbour.

According to an officer of

the Bidhannagar Commissionerate, the men had called Mondal out of his home.

"They accused him of being a mobile thief. Mondal said he did not steal anything. However, the argument soon snowballed into a fight."

The three men dragged Mondal to an area overgrown with bushes and kept hitting him till he passed out, he said.

Several residents who were alerted by Mondal's cries managed to stop the men from hitting him. They convinced Tapan to take him to the hospital.

"We detained Tapan at the hospital after he could not give any logical reply about Mondal's injuries," another officer of the Bidhannagar Commissionerate said.

CU proposes steps to curb mass copying

SUBHANKAR CHOWDHURY

Calcutta: Calcutta University has proposed to send its team of invigilators to curb complaints of mass copying in the semester examinations of postgraduate courses in affiliated colleges.

The interim vice-chancellor tabled the proposal in a meeting of the faculty council of arts, commerce, library science and home science held on June 20 to discuss complaints of mass copying flagged by teachers.

According to a CU official,

VC Santa Datta said as the absence of proper invigilation was at the heart of the complaints of mass copying, a team of invigilators from the university be sent to invigilate the examinations.

On June 11, the Calcutta University Teachers' Association (CUTA) wrote to the VC stating that the "malpractices were adversely affecting the fame" of CU.

The teachers said instances of mass copying came to their notice when the answer scripts were examined.

"It was difficult to distinguish one answer script from

another because the contents were identical," said a professor of Rajabazar Science College.

Mahalaya Chatterjee, president of the CUTA, who attended the meeting of the faculty councils, said: "The vice-chancellor proposed that the university send its invigilators to curb complaints of mass copying in colleges. However, we are unsure whether the university has adequate staff to carry out the exercise..."

It was also suggested that the students of colleges pursuing postgraduate programmes write the examination at the

university and the university's students write their exams in colleges under the away centre model.

"We want the university to come up with a model that is effective and is backed up with adequate human resources. It has to be applied across all the faculties", said Chatterjee.

Chatterjee, in the letter to the VC, reminded her that they had also approached her (VC) in February for a meeting to curb the menace of copying.

On the same day, a meeting of the faculty council of science and technology was also held. "It was proposed that the

task of setting the questions and evaluation of examination scripts be left entirely to the colleges as part of the autonomous model. While awarding the degree it will just be mentioned that the concerned college has awarded the degree," said Sanatan Chatterjee, the secretary of the teachers' association.

Now all certificates say that the CU has awarded the degree.

A university official said the VC objected to this proposal. "We need some time to make a concrete decision," VC Datta told Metro.

Dance drama by acid attack survivors

JHINUK MAZUMDAR

Calcutta: A group of acid attack survivors presented a dance drama to raise awareness about acid attacks, their plight, and how hard they have to work to turn their lives around.

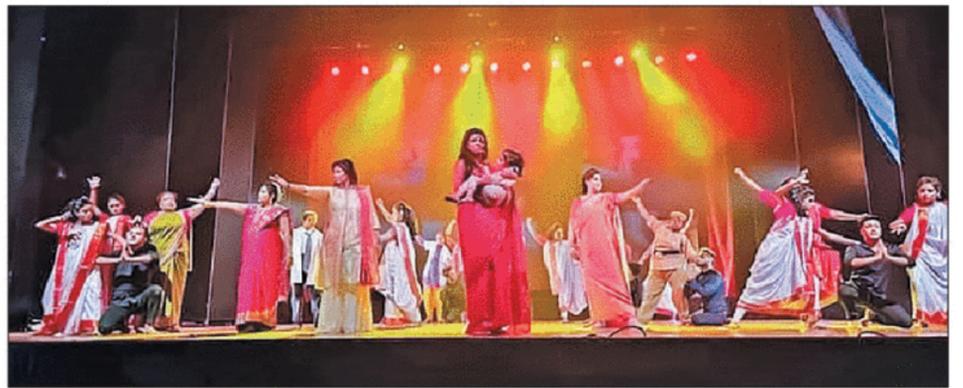
Six women who have been victims of acid attacks, including two who lost their eyesight, enacted their life's struggles and will to make a comeback.

It is not easy to be accepted because at times family members "shudder" at their sight, one of the women who participated in the production, said.

Shahnara Khatoun Sheikh, 36, was attacked by her extended family members while she was sleeping. She lost the eyesight of her left eye as the acid was thrown on her head.

The woman underwent surgeries and now does tailoring to earn a living.

"When these women are up on stage the people who see them can understand the impact of acid attack in real life. They show a mirror to the society where acid is freely available and many among us do not realise the extent of damage it can cause to innocent lives," said Aparajita



Some of the acid attack survivors perform at Rabindra Sadan

Bose, unit head, Brave Souls Foundation, Calcutta.

The organisation works with acid attack survivors for their education, health, surgeries, litigation and employment.

Bose said such stage production boosts their confidence to face an audience instead of shying away from people.

"There was a time when I would be scared to see myself in the mirror because of the marks but gradually that went away. There would be people

in the audience who would shudder at the sight of us but perhaps they would understand our struggle and spare a thought about us," said another victim Kakoli Das.

Yodha is an hour-long production by the Jadavpur Mudra Cultural Trope that celebrated 35 years with this production in Rabindra Sadan on Sunday.

It is the story of a girl found on the roadside by a couple. The man is stabbed by traffickers from whom he saves the

girl and his wife brings her up by herself.

The girl grows up to be a successful dancer but ultimately becomes an acid attack victim when she tries to uncover a racket of traffickers.

It was then that other acid attack survivors, inspire her to turn her life around instead of losing the battle to acid and public shame.

The dance drama sent out messages against trafficking and forced prostitution — both crimes against women. The

production had 35 artists on stage. "We have had people congratulating us because we gave a platform to acid attack victims. They told us that it made a deeper impact something that only play-acting would not have been able to achieve," said Mousumi Bhattacharya, a member of the cultural troupe and the narrator in the dance drama.

"We are not just raising awareness but with every show, the women get a remuneration," said Bhattacharya.

कार्यालय, जिला मत्स्य पदाधिकारी-सह-मुख्य कार्यपालक पदाधिकारी, साहेबगंज

तालझापी अंचल के राजस्व तालाब/जलकरों का खुले आम डाक द्वारा अत्यकालीन बंदोवस्ती की सूचना।

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मौजू/अध्यक्ष तालझापी मत्स्यकृषि सहयोग समिति लि. तालझापी सुरक्षित जमा निधिगत राशि एवं बंदोवस्ती दिनांक 10.07.2024 तक अपने पूर्ण अहर्ता को साथ बंदोवस्ती देने हेतु दावा पेश कर सकाएगी है।

अन्यथा जिला मत्स्य कार्यपालक, साहेबगंज उक्त जलकरों का बंदोवस्ती खुले आम कर दी जायेगी। बंदोवस्ती की विधि विन प्रकर 8-ए-अम डाक की विधि 19.07.2024 दिनांक की विधि 29.07.2024 तृतीय डाक की विधि 09.08.2024 सुविधित की गई है।

1. खुले आम में बाग लेने वाले इच्छुक व्यक्ति अपना आधार कार्ड मूल प्रति के साथ बाग लेने एवं वार्षिक सुरक्षित जमा राशि का पत्र प्रेषित करन प्रतिभूति राशि के रूप में जमा करवाकर डाक में बाग लेने की अनुमति दी जायेगी।

2. उच्चतम डाक/डाक द्वारा जारी गयी राशि के आलोक में तीन वर्ष की पूरी राशि एकमुश्त जमा करना होगा।

3. बंदोवस्ती के उपरान्त उच्चतम डाक/डाक को बाग राशि का निबंधन शुल्क एवं रदाय शुल्क नियमानुसार जमा करना होगा।

4. खुले आम से संबंधित विस्तृत जानकारी अधीनस्थानी के कार्यालय से प्राप्त किया जा सकता है।

5. यदि बंदोवस्ती अवधि के दौरान नियमानुसार किसी तालाब/जलकरों में सुरक्षित जमा राशि में बदोवस्ती होती है, तो बंदोवस्तीकारी को बदोवस्ती राशि जमा करना होगा।

6. अधीनस्थानी को यह अधिकार सुरक्षित होगा कि बिना कारण बताये डाक को अर्थात् अर्थात् पत्र पेश कर सकाएगी है। वर्ष 2024-25 से 2026-27 तक कुली डाक द्वारा अत्यकालीन बंदोवस्ती हेतु तालाब/जलकरों की सूची।

Table with 6 columns: क्रम, तालाब/जलकर का नाम, बाग नं०, रकबा, वार्षिक सुरक्षित जमा राखत, अनुमति. Lists various water bodies and their details.

Office of Civil Surgeon Cum Chief Medical Officer, Ranchi. Revised Expression of Interest (E.O.I) for Specialist Medical Officer's for providing specialized services at Sadar Hospital Ranchi.

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EDUCATION NORTH IS YOUR NORTH STAR

India has emerged as an educational hub with the presence of several schools and renowned academic institutions. This has been driven in no small measure by the quest for knowledge and learning, which has been a fundamental part of Indian culture and tradition.

North India is widely considered as the educational hub not only for the country, but also for the neighbouring nations. The region has witnessed an educational renaissance of sorts, with institutions now also offering hostel and residential facilities for their students.



India's rich educational and intellectual legacy

Historically, education systems have responded to the needs of the society. Right since the ancient and medieval ages, India has been a leader with several celebrated universities of the calibre of Takshshila and Nalanda that attracted students from all over the world.

In today's modern day and age, India has continued to remain at the forefront of schooling and learning, with strong strides taken in the fields of programming and coding, robotics, automation, etc. Such a learning environment has created a generation of students who are bound to frame more firmly India's position of eminence on the global map.

North India's robust educational focus

With a proactive vision for the future, the Central administration has expressed its intent to make the country an educational behemoth. Essentially, the government framework seeks to create an environment where an educational ecosystem can flourish, where students are exposed to a world-class pedagogy, where the children are offered a range of sporting and co-curricular activities that help further their passions and interests,

and where learners receive an educational learning experience in the company of world-class faculty and like-minded peers and seniors.

The challenges of the 21st century, borne out of a fast-paced and complex world, are considerably different in scale, scope and pace. Educational institutes in North India are truly creating a platform where the youth leaders of tomorrow would be adaptable individuals who are purpose-driven with a strong moral compass, who have a robust spirit of curiosity that enable them to embrace bold steps towards the future and contribute to meet national interests, while also contributing to global development.

North India – a hub for education

North India is widely considered as the educational hub not only for the country, but also for the neighbouring nations. The region has witnessed an educational renaissance of sorts, with institutions now also offering hostel and residential facilities for their students.

There are a number of colleges that provide top-notch education, with a curriculum that emphasises on the process of continuous learning and improvement of the student. Beyond the classroom, they also offer world-class activities that provide opportunities galore

for students for self-expression and creative fulfilment. So head to North India

for your education and build your academic foundation for a successful future!

START PREPARING FOR CUET!

The CUET results- all set for release!
Time to start your preparations for next year.

The CUET, which stands for Common University Entrance Test, is hosted every year by the Government for students to pursue the knowledge stream of their choice and gain admission to higher educational institutions in India. The CUET entrance exam, which was created to evaluate a candidate's ability and subject knowledge, is essential for students hoping to gain admission to the schools and universities of their choice.

How to study for CUET?

Many students find that preparing for the CUET is a difficult endeavour, but it is very possible to succeed if you have the correct plan and techniques. Here are some crucial CUET preparing pointers to assist you effectively:

1. Exam structure / content

Look into the CUET exam pattern and thorough syllabus for the degree you want to apply to. Before taking the test, it is essential to comprehend the format and time management. As much as you can, try to answer different kinds of questions.

2. Creating a tight study schedule

Making a study plan

enables you to efficiently manage your time so that you can allocate enough hours for every subject. Section the CUET syllabus such that every topic is covered in detail.

3. Study guidebooks

Make sure you study from reputable books or advanced learning materials that fully cover the CUET syllabus. But prioritize the NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training) books above all others, and start your studies there alone. After completing the NCERT books and feeling prepared to tackle additional questions, you can look at internet resources like practice exams and past year's papers.

4. Consistent practice

Since practice makes one perfect, as we all know, students must practice frequently in order to become proficient in the questions that will be on the CUET exam. Solve as many question sheets as you can to be prepared and have extensive knowledge.

5. Managing your time

It is crucial to value your time as a student. Effective time management enables you to finish a job within the allotted time. Effective time management teaches you to acquire important abilities and knowledge. It is essential to create a plan and stick to it to ensure that you keep time for all the subjects.

6. Staying updated

Being updated with the official

website for the CUET entrance exam helps you know what changes are in the syllabus, eligibility requirements, application procedures, and exam dates.

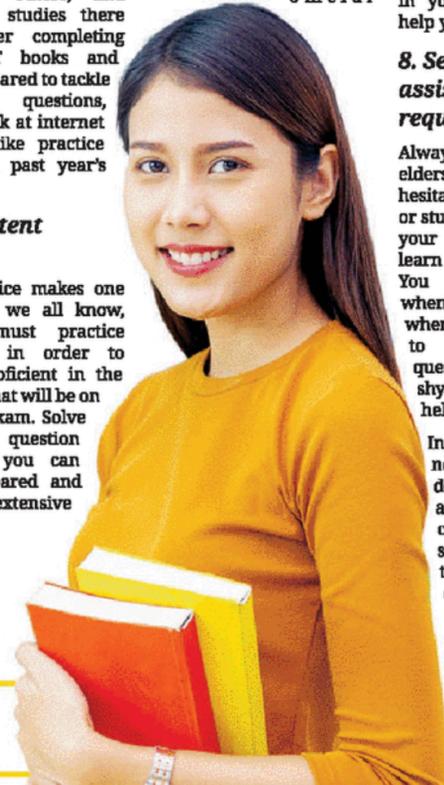
7. Taking good care of your health

Students frequently have health issues during exams as a result of the overwhelming pressure to study. To avoid such things, make sure you get enough rest, eat healthy food, and do some physical activities in your daily routine to help you relax.

8. Seeking assistance when required

Always ask for help from elders or friends without hesitation. Asking for help or studying in a group with your friends helps you learn and grow together. You understand better when you study in a group where you feel motivated to solve complex questions. So, never feel shy or hesitate to ask for help.

In essence, you need to have in-depth knowledge and a deeper comprehension of the subjects you learned to ace the CUET exam. Try not to let anxiety get in the way of your study for the test. Have faith in yourself and answer every question.



For all enquiries related to CUET, please visit the website: exams.nta.ac.in/CUET-UG/

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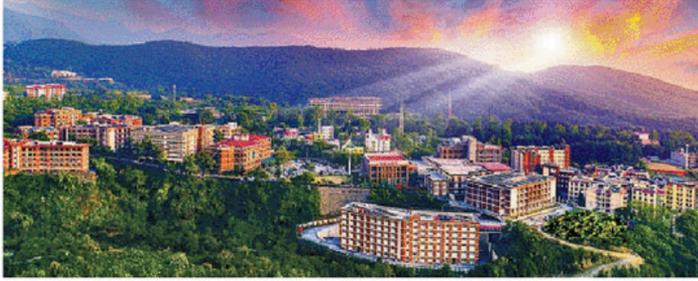
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DIT University, founded in 1998 by the visionary Late Shri Naveen Agarwal, has grown into a leading private institution known for its academic rigour, innovative curriculum, and transformative learning atmosphere.

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DIT University caters to students' academic aspirations by offering a comprehensive array of undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programmes in disciplines such as Science, Engineering, Architecture, Design, Pharmacy, Management Studies, Nursing, Health Care, and Computing.

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DIT University is associated with

innovation and research excellence. The college promotes an inquiry and discovery culture by emphasising cutting-edge curriculum, experiential learning, and state-of-the-art laboratories. Distinguished academic members share essential knowledge, while students acquire practical experience that prepares them for real-world difficulties.

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DIT University is proud of its exceptional placement record, which includes a solid alumni network of nearly 19,000 people globally. Palo Alto offered the highest package of 58 LPA last year, indicating industry heavyweights' confidence in the institution's graduates. The University, with 400+ corporate campus visits and 1,450+ job opportunities, provides

a springboard for career success, with generous incentives awaiting qualified individuals.

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For individuals desiring to begin on a journey of academic excellence and personal growth, DIT University stands as a beacon of hope, guiding them into a future filled with promise and opportunity.

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Management, Computer Applications, Education, Nursing, Law, Arts, Agriculture, Paramedical, Library Science, Commerce and Science. All the departments are approved by the concerned regulatory bodies.

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The core principles of employability, educational access, continuity of learning, technology integration and specialized skill training facilities have been incorporated in the

curriculum structure, equipping students with practical, real-world capabilities and enhancing employability in the industry.

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State-of-the-art Centers of Excellence have been established with the help of leading industry partners such as Wipro, Infosys, TCS, Caggemini, Cognizant, Suzuki, Boyce, Bosch, Hero, Hyundai Microsoft, and Maven Silicon to provide real-

life experience to the students.

University achievements

Bhabha University has more than 35,000 alumni who have passed out from various streams.

A total of 850 webinars, 260 seminars, 150 national conferences and 1,980 research papers were published in Bhabha University in the last few years.

380 books were published and 98 patents were made by the faculty

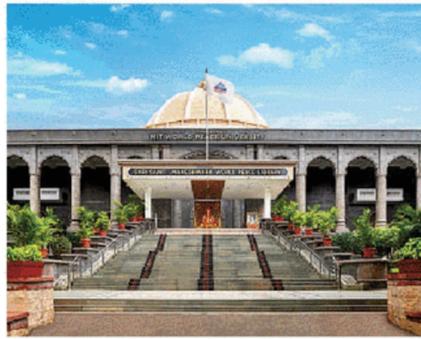
of Bhabha University.

Exciting employment opportunities

Hundreds of students are studying in the world's renowned institutions for postgraduate education offered by the University and in the last 3 years, more than 1,000 students have been appointed in many global multinational companies. Students have also been selected in nominated institutions like RDO and ISRO under the guidance of University teachers.

UNLEASH YOUR FILMMAKING POTENTIAL

The Dadasaheb Phalke International Film School at MIT-WPU has revolutionized film education with its unique BA Filmmaking programme, designed to cater to all your audio-visual learning needs.



The Dadasaheb Phalke International Film School at MIT-WPU ensures students are industry-ready by imparting versatile skills that extend beyond traditional filmmaking. The programme, bridging Film Studies and Filmmaking, readies students not just for Bollywood but also the global audio-visual entertainment industry.

Comprehensive curriculum

The undergraduate programme is crafted to match the standards of top film schools globally.

The comprehensive curriculum covers art, design, literature, music, theatre, and the complete spectrum of filmmaking—screenwriting, direction, cinematography, acting, sound design, editing, and production management. Students explore all facets of filmmaking in the first two years before specializing in their fifth semester. Every graduate walks away with an end credit and a completed film project.

Hands-on experience with industry veterans

Veteran actors Nana

Patekar and Randeep Hooda have already graced the campus, underlining the school's commitment to hands-on education. Within a year, students have contributed to projects by TVF and FilterCopy and excelled on the sets of leading ad film production houses in Pune, Mumbai and Hyderabad.

Admissions now open

Admissions are now open for the 4-year BA (Hons) Filmmaking programme at MIT-WPU. Visit the website for eligibility criteria and further details.

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SGT offers more than 180 programs across 18 faculties including Medical and Non-Medical streams. The University aims to empower the students to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially, and professionally, preparing them to thrive in an ever-changing world.

With the establishment of distinctive centres such as the National Reference Simulation Center, the Center for Cosmology & Science Popularization, the Entrepreneurship Development Cell, the Atal Community Innovation Center, and the Center for Pedagogy & Andragogy Sciences, the University has expanded further for the comprehensive development of the students and faculty

members.

SGT has established a name for itself in the academic community by consistently producing highly skilled and employable professionals with its meticulous academic curriculums that challenges students intellectually along with providing flexibility for exploration and interdisciplinary studies.

Hands-on learning

With the University's strong industry connections and cutting-edge laboratories, students are provided with hands-on learning experiences through various internships, research projects, study abroad programs and community engagement initiatives with highly

qualified and experienced professionals of national and international repute.

SGT has partnered with well-known international organizations like Apple, IBM, SAP, Oracle, SMC India, UNESCO Bioethics, Laerdal-Jhpiego, and many others to provide opportunities and allow students to apply their theoretical and practical knowledge in real-world settings to develop employment skills. The University offers leadership development programs, workshops and seminars to help students cultivate essential leadership skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and decision-making.



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UNUSUAL LESSONS

The poor should know about the economics of poverty. This is what the economist, Esther Duflo, believes, but she did not stop there. She also wrote for children. Her *Poor Economics for Kids* is about poverty and its economy; its readers are children and young people. In a recent interview, Ms Duflo said that everyone should know about poverty, so the writing should be such as to allow readers outside her field to follow the discussion. Children absorb the subject best because they are open-minded, eager to learn new things and quick on the uptake. The economist's unusual idea was prompted by the fact that there are few discussions about poverty for younger children.

The author accords children a respect rare in Indian society. Going by her perception, the value of the book does not lie in what it 'says' alone. The 'story' of poverty must reach youngsters so that they can think about it and, more important, search for possible solutions. They need the intellectual stimulus to seek ways out of it: so far, being poor has often come across as an unfortunate or unpleasant condition. This is a different approach: *Poor Economics for Kids* assumes children's agency, spurring them on to exercise their imagination to defeat a major form of worldwide suffering. All of them, rich and poor, can read the book. That makes its purpose both unflinching and humane: laying bare the scaffolding of inequalities that are experienced but never explained while

creating awareness, sensitiveness, compassion and positive thinking. It is being published in different languages with slight modifications. The English book is for teenagers, with a discussion at the end of each chapter meant for them, while the French one is for little children, the concluding remarks meant for their adult guardians. It communicates through stories, for that became the best means of illuminating experience since ancient people sat around their fires and literature was born. The Bengali book has just stories, without concluding

remarks. "The poor" in the tales are not a homogenous mass as in most economics books, but are different persons — shy or voluble, angry or funny, brave or timid. But they are all poor, and they all share the imagination to find ways out of poverty.

Such a book could be a unique step towards learning, thinking and action. But for it to be effective in India, children from underprivileged backgrounds must have access to it in the first place. Their imagination alone will not suffice in a country where the sharp inequalities in standards of schooling and learning make a level field elusive, even intellectually. Some enabling changes must come from governments; youthful innovations and ambitions need space and security to grow. Unemployment, job losses, migrations in search of jobs all make up the enormous odds against which youngsters must fight. But positivity through reading can always be a powerful tool in this struggle.

By writing on poverty for children, the economist, Esther Duflo, seeks to provide them with the agency to find solutions to it

SCRIPSI

'Boredom is your window on... time's infinity, which is to say, on your insignificance in it... It puts your existence into its perspective, the net result of which is precision and humility. The former, it must be noted, breeds the latter. The more you learn about your own size, the more humble and compassionate you become to your likes, to that dust aswirl in a sunbeam or already immobile atop your table. Ah, how much life went into those flecks! Not from your point of view but from theirs. You are to them what time is to you; that's why they look so small.'

JOSEPH BRODSKY

For as long as I can remember, the monsoon is always expected in Delhi in the last week of June. No one believes that it'll actually turn up then; there are wet seasons when the monsoon trades in its starring role for a couple of guest appearances. There was a year — 1987, I think — when it rained three times, briefly, and the city felt and smelt like a prickling armpit. The monsoon is that erratic uncle, always imminent, who still ambushes you when he does arrive. Like two days ago when Delhi received nine inches of rain in a single morning. That's almost a third of the thirty inches the city expects to receive through the whole rainy season. It felt like consolidated compensation for being air-fried through forty 40-degree days. My terrace became a shallow pool which flowed into the house: the rains kayoed the drains.

The uncovered *nala* or gutter running past the front of the house filled till it flooded the colony road. From my residents' association WhatsApp group, I learnt that gutters aspired to be 'stormwater drains'. I learnt from a neighbour on my morning walk that the massive stormwater drain that serviced the All India Institute of Medical Sciences had apparently collapsed and turned the road running past the hospital into a river. Looking at the photographs of submerged vehicles the next day, I thought of the bus that used to drown every year under Minto Bridge throughout my childhood. Either that or the *Statesman* published the same photo every year on a pre-determined day just to let *Dilliwallahs* know that the monsoon had properly arrived. Since I took a bus to school and back every day, I used to grouchily wonder if the children got out alive.

A certain amount of *pro forma* talk about global warming is *de rigueur* now after a weather event if only because no one talks about the climate crisis in the normal course of things. The massive downpour was an occasion for newspapers to feature expert meteorological commentary on the bleeding obvious: rain now fell in concentrated downpours or not at all. But even granting the stupidity of our political masters and the indifference of their subjects, it's hard to understand why cities like Delhi don't harvest the monsoon. To let precious monsoon rain run off into drains or leach into roads in a city as chronically water-stressed as India's capital is worse

mukulkesavan@hotmail.com

Some rain must fall into each life

Day of deluge

MUKUL KESAVAN



than criminal; it's a form of suicide.

One of the perks of the retired *bhadralok* life is that you don't have to commute, so unless the weather invades your house (as it did mine on Friday), you experience rain disruptions as belated spectacle rather than first-hand frustration. The truth is that in the digital world, most of us experience the world at one remove. On social media, there seem to be more people trying to get to the bottom of an alleged rainwater leak in the temple in Ayodhya than the state of their own roofs. As the harried resident of a newly-built flat beset with what contractors and architects laughably call teething pains, I have nothing but sympathy for the champions of the *bhavya mandir*. As all newbie flat-owners know, buildings can only be pronounced built after the first rains. The Ram temple isn't so much a finished structure as an ongoing project, a political rainmaker.

The election defeat in Faizabad, the constituency that contains the temple, must have hurt the Bharatiya Janata Party. To have made Ayodhya the cynosure of all eyes on January 22 — literally, since every 24x7 news channel had its cameras trained on Narendra Modi cosplaying principal *bhakt* — to have refurbished that dusty town and turned it into the om-

phalos of Hindu India, and then to lose — how sharper than a serpent's tooth it must be to have a thankless child. The question for the BJP is, how does it, metaphorically speaking, rainproof Ayodhya?

The other rain-affected event I watched indoors was the T20 World Cup happening in the new world. Watching the semi-final against England in Guyana, the rain breaks seemed designed to create suspense in a game that India otherwise won easily. Not that I need any weather-related tension to enjoy beating England. My view is that there is no such thing as a boringly one-sided win against England or, for that matter, Australia. The more lopsided the better. Rohit Sharma's pulverising of a Mitchell Starc over was the highlight of the win against Australia and I wasn't pleased to see Australia getting to within 24 runs of India's total.

The performance against England was better for my nerves. I can watch Rohit Sharma and Surya Kumar Yadav bat forever in this short, low form of the game. There's a calmness to them, in between the hitting, that gave me what I came for: the big hits without the heart attacks. I used to think of Rohit Sharma as the poor man's Inzamam-ul-Haq but as he has become more consistent, I've come

around to believing that he's nearly as good as the great man himself. The main reason to watch T20 is the batting; that's what it's designed to showcase which is why those low-scoring matches in the US were so dull. When the Australians christened their T20 competition the Big Bash League, they got it exactly right. But watching Kuldeep Yadav and his bowling comrades reduce the English innings to ruins spoke to my inner, *anti-angrez* yob.

I'll watch the final between India and South Africa with the dispassion of the perfect spectator. T20 tournaments mean nothing to me so long as India doesn't lose to England or Australia and that hasn't happened. Should the seasonal motif of rain seriously interrupt the final, and should the Duckworth-Lewis target favour South Africa, I'll cheer the Proteans on. Indian fans are constantly (and ridiculously) moaning about India not having won a big ICC tournament for years. Given how magnificent the Indian Test team is in the only form of the game that matters, this is mad. Besides, the South Africans have never won a World Cup of any kind. It's about time they did. And what of the Indians? Well, as I discovered last Friday, into each life, some rain must fall.

DELHI DIARIES

Mister Popular

Settling into his new role as the leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi seems to have already caused consternation in the saffron camp. Bharatiya Janata Party leaders, who till now had dismissed him as 'pappu' and 'shehzada', are dismayed by the significant amount of attention that he is getting in Parliament. While the BJP's high command is still coming to terms with Rahul's rise as a seasoned politician, privately, many BJP members have been singing his praises. "So far, he has conducted himself very well as [the] LoP," a senior BJP parliamentarian acknowledged. On Friday, minutes after the House was adjourned over the Opposition's demand for a discussion on NEET irregularities and other national-level exam fiascos, some BJP members were spotted exchanging pleasantries with Rahul. As Rahul and other Opposition leaders walked across the treasury benches towards the canteen in the new Parliament building, some BJP members even went to meet him. Rahul greeted them with a smile and they extended their arms to shake his hand. Later, some BJP members were left wondering about the scene in the House if Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, too, wins the election from Wayanad, a seat which has been vacated by Rahul.



Growing popularity

will meet the same fate as that of Patnaik.

Flight path

Responding to a demand that is more than a decade old, the Tamil Nadu CM, MK Stalin, recently announced the building of a new international airport in Hosur, one of India's fastest-growing cities that is located close to Bengaluru. An industrial hub, Hosur has a maintenance aerodrome that is just 80 kilometres from the Bengaluru airport.

Pre-empting opposition from Karnataka, the Tamil Nadu government is reportedly in talks with the Bengaluru airport, which has an agreement with the Centre that disallows the construction of another airport within a 150-km radius. Further, the government in Karnataka led by the Congress, an ally of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, has been cold towards extending the Bengaluru metro rail to Hosur for fear of the tech city losing its economic edge to the less congested Tamil counterpart.

Prodigal son

MV Nikesh Kumar recently quit his role as the editor-in-chief of Reporter TV to join politics. The son of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) veteran, MV Raghavan, who turned a rebel and launched his own Communist Marxist Party, Nikesh is likely to rejoin the CPI(M). Having unsuccessfully contested as a Left candidate in the 2016 polls, Nikesh's return to the CPI(M) fold has led critics to question the rationale of once again embracing the party that his father detested.



Little things

Sir — It is the small things that matter. A simple gesture can determine how a person feels about gender equality. Recently, activists have coined the term, 'microfeminism', which comprises the little ways in which one can practise feminism in daily life. From

assuming that a person in charge, a CEO for example, is a woman to asking men to mind the babies while women take a breather, microfeminism helps women balance the scale. While asserting rights at micro levels is important, can one really hope for any change given that bigger issues, like the ever-widening pay gap, have been so easily overlooked?

Seema Sahni, New Delhi

Unplanned move

Sir — Being an experienced politician and administrator, the chief minister of West Bengal, Mamata Banerjee, is aware that removing the hawkers' stalls to free up the streets is not an easy task ("CM meet call sets off buzz on eviction drive", June 27). A major section of the Trinamool Congress's vote bank comprises people from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The unemployment caused by the eviction of the hawkers will become a poll plank for the TMC's opponents. Banerjee has earlier spoken against the 'bulldozer raj' of the Yogi Adityanath-led government. Her current actions are nothing short of the same.

D.P. Bhattacharya, Calcutta

Sir — Preventing hawkers from encroaching on pavements is a welcome step. However, there should be a uniform eviction drive throughout the city. While hawkers' stalls have been removed from certain areas of Calcutta, those in other parts of the city have remained open for business. This is disconcerting.

Mrinal Kundu, Howrah

Sir — The TMC seems to have prioritised its voter base over the convenience of the general public by backtracking on its decision to remove hawkers from the streets ("Mamata stalls hawker drive", Jun 28). The state government might



Plan better

not have sufficient funds to rehabilitate the displaced vendors. The municipalities should plan adequately to avoid the hassles caused by unbridled development.

Tapan Dutta, Calcutta

Sir — Mamata Banerjee lashed out at municipality heads and bureaucrats over several issues, including the encroachment on footpaths by hawkers. However, following the action against the hawkers, Banerjee changed tack by saying that the hawkers' eviction was not the goal of her government. This

seems to be a move to secure her vote bank.

S.S. Paul, Nadia

Sir — Following Mamata Banerjee's tirade against encroachment on government land during a meeting with bureaucrats and top officers, unauthorised hawkers were forcibly removed from parts of the city. This is disheartening as the hawkers were not allegedly served with eviction notices. The display of brute force and the absence of proper planning regarding the relocation of the vendors must be criticised. This harks back to the futile Operation Sunshine during the Left regime.

Arun Kumar Baksi, Calcutta

Speak freely

Sir — Asaduddin Owaisi sparked a row when he ended his oath in the Lok Sabha saying, "Jai Palestine". He can face disqualification from Parliament for displaying allegiance to another country. This is disconcerting. Owaisi's slogan simply implied his solidarity with the Palestinians who are suffering due to the prolonged war. His other slogans, which praised B.R. Ambedkar and god, are also being scrutinised. The leaders of the saffron brigade often chant the names of various deities during their speeches. The outcry at Owaisi's slogan seems hypocritical.

Zakir Hussain, Kazipet, Telangana

Plug the leaks

The Rashtriya Janata Dal chief, Lalu Prasad, has called for a probe into the construction of the Ram *mandir* after reports emerged of rainwater leaking from the roof into the *sanctum sanctorum*. Rejecting the excuses of the temple trust, Lalu pointed out that the sewers of the Rampath, the road leading to the temple, had also subsided and a wall of the new Ayodhya Dham railway station had collapsed.

"They have not spared Lord Ram. The temple's chief priest had asserted that it was impossible to complete the construction work even by July 2025, but it was inaugurated in a hurried manner to exploit the emotions of the people in the polls," Prasad said. He pointed out that while the voters have already taught the BJP a lesson — it lost the Faizabad seat — a probe is required to nab the culprits. He also wondered whether the *godi* media would make a beeline for Ayodhya to report on the leakage.



Scary pattern

Janata Dal (United) leaders in Bihar are a worried lot in the

wake of the poll debacle faced by Naveen Patnaik's Biju Janata Dal in Odisha. Their concern stems from the fact that a veteran bureaucrat yields considerable sway over the chief minister, Nitish Kumar, and his close associates. There are growing murmurs that the said bureaucrat controls everything in a very clever manner — he stays in the shadows and thus ends up exercising more power than any of his predecessors. Several JD(U) leaders speculate that the concerned official dances to the tunes of the BJP leadership at the Centre, and even played a key role in Kumar's switch from the Mahagabandhan to the National Democratic Alliance earlier this year.

"There is something fishy in this arrangement... Maybe the BJP bigwigs have his reins in their hands," a JD(U) leader said. Another pointed out that Naveen's over-dependence on his close aide and bureaucrat-turned-politician, VK Pandian, did him in. The general consensus in the JD(U) is that if Nitish wants the party to do well in the assembly polls, he will have to stop relying on bureaucratic help and start making shrewd decisions on his own. Else he

Footnote

The Tamil superstar, Vijay, knows how to grab the limelight just when his absence becomes conspicuous. Known for churning out huge commercial hits, Vijay recently launched his political outfit, the Tamizhaga Vettri Kazhagam, and is expected to enter the fray in the future. At a recent event attended by students, Vijay took a swipe at the DMK government for its failure to curb drug abuse. He also urged students to consider politics as a career option and not leave it to people with no educational background.



Strokes of Being: Illness to wellness, and able to work **P16**

The Telegraph graphicIC

“Those on the front lines of climate disruption are the least responsible for this disaster”
Camille Etienne, French environmentalist

CALCUTTA SUNDAY 30 JUNE 2024

INSIGHT

HEAT CRIME

The urban poor contribute the least to climate deterioration, and yet they bear the brunt of it. **Anasuya Basu** spoke to experts to understand why this happens and also interviewed residents of two slums of Calcutta to find out how they fared through this scorching summer

Last year, an incident at a swank mall near Calcutta's Park Circus area triggered the debate on inequality of heat. Fed up with nature's rage and frequent power outages, residents of slums contiguous to the mall picketed it. They knew it was owned by the same group that owned the discom responsible for the city's power supply.

“Those who contribute the least to global warming or greenhouse emissions are the worst sufferers of climate change,” Ulka Kelkar, an economist with 24 years of experience in climate change research, told **The Telegraph**.

She added, “While the rich have access to gadgets to minimise their discomfort, the poor with no such access are deprived of the natural assets of green and blue by the rich to create their own comfort zones of air-conditioned malls and offices.”

The Delhi-based Centre for Science and Environment recently published a heat tracker for Calcutta. It recorded annual and diurnal trends in temperature, humidity and overall heat index from 2001 to 2023. The data is supposed to help in the planning and implementation of heat action plans, specifically for the city to cope during summer and prevent heat lock-in.

Avikal Somvanshi, who is co-author of the heat tracker report, says, “Calcutta is quite dense and tightly built. It is already saturated in terms of people density as well as ‘built structure’ as compared to Delhi or Hyderabad. This is creating urban heat islands.”

An urban heat island is a patch that is several degrees warmer than its surrounding peri-urban or rural areas. Urban slums would qualify as heat islands.

According to NGOs, experts and many others in the know, of the 4.5 million people living in Calcutta, about 1.5 million live in slums. The temperatures of these are four to five degrees higher than the surrounding areas and for no fault of their own.

Somvanshi says, “The difference in average day and night-time temperatures is six degrees in Calcutta, while it is double in other cities.”

There are two major contributors to what is known as the heat island effect.

Contributor 1. Concretisation. Brick and mortar absorb heat during the day. During the night they release heat. The amount of heat the concrete releases is significant enough to heat up the city.

Contributor 2. Waste heat from air conditioners and tailpipe emissions. This heat gets trapped between tall buildings. “At night, it is this waste heat that is very big, so big that it is keeping temperatures way higher than it should be. The city is burning on its own during the night,” says Somvanshi.

And while nature does not discriminate, who is bearing the brunt of this man-made oppressive heat? The answer would be the urban poor. Earlier when one walked down the bylanes and back lanes, typically, there would be a cool breeze blowing through them. Now with the air conditioners on the balconies and verandahs, the exhaust heat fills up these back lanes.

According to Somvanshi, the urban poor who would take advantage of nature and the natural way of cooling are now being deprived of that by the rich who are polluting the breeze. He says, “Waste heat is getting dumped on the slums.”

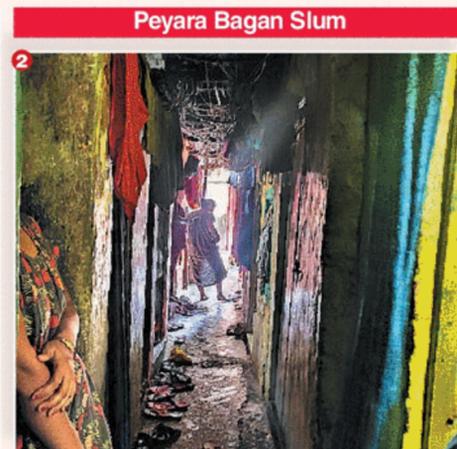
It is not as if nothing can be done to mitigate all this. Kelkar talks about how in places such as Ahmedabad and Kanpur, climate-resilient housing with white roofs is used to reflect out the heat. In Bihar, where there is barren land, people are being incentivised to plant trees.

Somvanshi says the exhaust has to be managed using technology. Besides, cool roofs, deconcretisation, disallowing heat-trapping structures of glass and concrete, planning infrastructure and looking for technology to recover heat are some of the ways to cool the city down.



1 Krishna Das and her daughter-in-law in their 10 feet x 10 feet home. Krishna, a house help, skipped work for a week this May. She was at the RKM Seva Pratishthan looking after her seven-year-old grandson. The boy had fever and was throwing up. Krishna could ill afford the hospital fees and would have opted for a state government hospital except that she did not want to take chances with the child's health. The doctors discharged the boy with stern warnings that he be kept indoors during the day.

Krishna shares her home with her two sons, one daughter-in-law and two grandsons. The room has one bed, which is shared by three adults. The rest of the family sleeps on the floor. There is a cooking range, an LPG cylinder and a refrigerator in the same space. From the asbestos ceiling hangs a ceiling fan. A tiny window and one door opening on to a dark dingy lane are all that is there to ventilate. Little wonder then that the boy would prefer to be outdoors, even when the day temperature is over 40° Celsius.



2 A dingy bylane that runs through the slum. The one-room, two-room tenements open into it. Some of Krishna's neighbours like Sulekha Haldar have built a loft that doubles as a spare bedroom. Sulekha's daughter, who is a graduate and works as a loan recovery personnel, is recuperating from typhoid in a furnace-like loft with a small hole that passes for a window. In summer, they avoid switching on the ceiling fan which only seems to whip up the trapped hot air. Some others like Sarathi and Baisakhi Aich have fitted their one-room tenement with an AC. The exhaust from it also heats up the bylane.

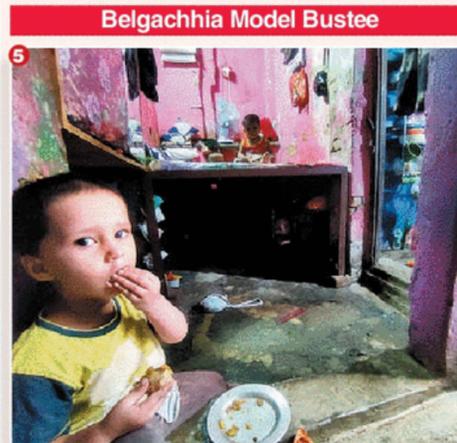


3 At night, Krishna and her neighbours spill out on the road or into the neighbouring park, Maddox Square, or onto this cement platform. “We feel the heat more at night. It is impossible to sleep; we are drenched in sweat. How many times can we bathe? We keep splashing cold water,” says Subala Pandit. Fortunately, the community tap shared by 20 households spouted enough water this year. All residents agreed that the daytime didn't cause as much distress as the nights. Said Krishna, “We work the whole day and look for respite at night. But now nights are so hot that we cannot sleep.”



4 Naseema Bibi lives practically on the road with her two daughters and their children. When she and her daughters retire for the night, their legs stick out of the jhopdi. Naseema earns a living selling alu-kabli; her station, outside the

gates of an English medium school for girls. A table fan is their only reprieve from the heat. The local imam says, “You have to see for yourself how these people live and suffer. No human being should be living like this.”



5 Sujata Khatum's son sits on the threshold of their home with his snack; it is a tad cooler there than in the room. Nine family members share two rooms.



6 Khairul Nissam, 70, lives by herself. This bylane has been fitted with a portable pump to draw a little extra water. On this particular day, there is a wedding in the mohalla and the slim bylane is all lit up and festive and hotter than usual. Khairul's neighbours help her fill her buckets.

In the last month of a financial year, it is not unusual to hear people complain about being tight on money, what with tax-saving investments and premiums to be paid. Not so for me this year. First, because I ended up saving an amount against a premium I no longer needed to pay. Second, because I was to take off for Darjeeling.

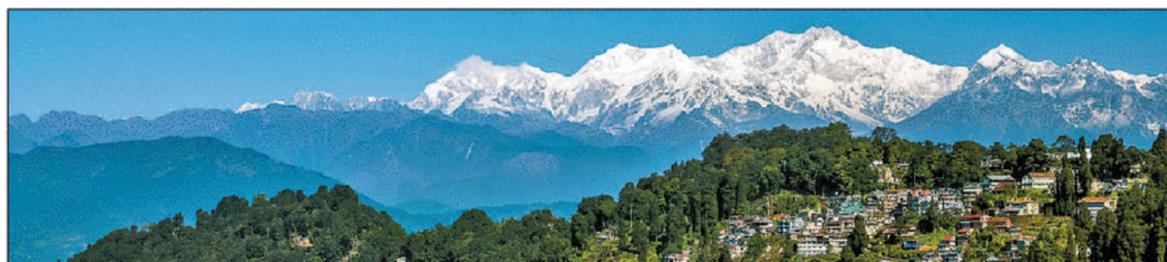
It was to be my maiden trip to the Queen of the Hills, and that too months ahead of retirement.

I grew up outside Bengal, came to Calcutta for higher studies and never left. And in all these years, I have lived with the feeling that I hadn't earned my right to be called a true blue Bengali since I hadn't completed the “Dipuda” circuit.

Dipuda stands for Digha, Puri and Darjeeling, three done-to-death holiday destinations for anyone in Bengal. I had been to Digha and Puri but somehow the Darjeeling trip had never materialised. I almost honeymooned in Darjeeling, but finally landed up in Puri. As the plane took off from Dum Dum, I settled down to think back in wonder. I had the aisle seat, so I could not look out of the window. I had first landed at Bagdogra over three decades ago en route to Silig-

SETTINGS Up there, Peak Disappointment

A trip to Darjeeling doesn't quite count unless you have sighted the Kanchenjunga. But the mighty mountain never tires of playing hard to get



uri. In subsequent years, I have passed through New Jalpaiguri Junction on the way to Chalsa, Dhupjhora, Samsing. But Darjeeling remained stubbornly off the map for me.

On reaching Bagdogra a little after 9.30 in the morning sometime in mid-March, we — a cousin, her daughter and I — hired a cab to Darjeeling. On the way, the driver-cum-owner of the cab, Nitesh, suggested we go via Mirik to make the most of the day. And so it hap-

pened that Nitesh ended up chalking out our itinerary and driving us around.

Walking into Alice Villa that afternoon, a few minutes from the iconic Mall, felt like walking into a slice of history. Escorted by a staff member down the long, red-carpeted hallway lined with sofas, I wondered how the heritage cottage might have been pre-Independence. The wooden stairs to the first floor had

an old colonial charm but I couldn't imagine film stars staying there. But they did. In *Amader Katha*, Bijoya Ray writes that during the shoot of Satyajit Ray's *Kanchenjunga* (1962), the legendary actors Chhabi Biswas and Pahari Sanyal had been lodged here while the rest of the crew stayed at Hotel Mount Everest. Little did I know then that that would remain my only “connection” with Kanchenjunga. Post lunch at Fiesta,

a restaurant on the Mall, my companions pointed to where the third highest peak of the world is located. Looking beyond colourful sweaters, shawls, mufflers and pine trees, all I saw was a white wall. Difficult to even imagine a majestic mountain there, forget five peaks — in Tibetan, Kangchen-dzo-nga means five treasures of the snow. Although we had no intention of doing touristy things, we did go to Glenary's but sans the mandatory

selfie. We also paid homage to Keventer's (whose roof displays a signage that reads “Kev's”), Ghoom Monastery, Batasia Loop, Peace Pagoda, Lepchajagat, Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, etc., etc. We ticked everything on the list except Tiger Hills. For three days I kept scanning the horizon, looking wistfully at the fog which showed no sign of dissipating. A few days before our trip, an acquaintance had quipped, “It seems

there's some deal between Glenary's and Kanchenjunga. We could see her from Glenary's but she had vanished by the time we reached the Mall.” The mighty mountain didn't deign me even that.

My cousin, for whom it was the nth trip since her childhood, had told me that the weather in Darjeeling was unpredictable. I wished it'd play out in my favour at least for a second. A friend consoled me saying she had never caught a glimpse of Kanchenjunga and she had been to Darjeeling five times. I could well appreciate the pain of the character from Ray's *Kanchenjunga*, industrialist Indranath Roy Chaudhury played by Chhabi Biswas — he itinerantly complained about how the Kanchenjunga continued to play hide and seek with him. It was only in the last few seconds of the film that the elusive mountain emerged in all its glory.

I returned a “Bengali”, yet not fully so. One day after that, I spotted a photo of the mountain on a friend's WhatsApp status. “From Sikkim?” I asked. “From Lepchajagat,” she replied. Lepchajagat is a small village located 19 kilometres away from Darjeeling.

Swachchhasila Basu

this MONTH

The Paris Poop Protest might not happen, now that it is uncertain whether the French President and the mayor of Paris will be swimming in the Seine. The two politicians had vowed to do so to prove that the river is Olympics-fit. The protest takes its name from a website whose name translated into English means — I sh*t in the Seine on June 23. The catchphrase is: “Because after putting us in shit it's up to them to bathe in our shit.” People are angry that the government spent billions of dollars to clean the Seine instead of investing in welfare schemes.

Union minister for heavy industries and steel H.D. Kumaraswamy gave officials of Hindustan Machine Tools or HMT a month's time to submit a report on possible ways of reviving the company. HMT is possibly most remembered for its watch-making division inaugurated in 1961. One of the most popular styles was called HMT Janata, after the people, of course.

Bed. Cover. Signature...

Chandrima S. Bhattacharya revisits Pratyay, an assisted living space, this time to watch recovered mental health patients take another step towards life beyond its restrictions

The hall on the first floor of Pratyay, an assisted living space in Calcutta for recovered mental health patients, has been converted into a workshop. A bedcover is being made, which becomes a dramatic event.

The stage is set. The cloth is pinned at the edges of a giant table. A wide black circle, with a blank centre, has already been painted on it. The efficient Sabitri Hembram is standing guard like a sentinel, when in comes Tukai, the young artist.

Like an athlete, he leaps onto the high table, plants himself firmly on its edge and begins to draw with a chalk on the blank space. It is a tour de force. In what looks like one continuous movement, flowers blossom and leaves unfurl. Tukai dips his brush in bright yellow paint, after Sabitri hands him the tub, and paints the flowers and the leaves in bold yellow lines. The effect is stunning. The small audience that has gathered around him breaks into a small applause. Tukai takes an invisible bow. He has been doing this every day for some time now.

Bedcovers are piling up. Next to Tukai, Shankhamil Chatterjee, or Shankha, is printing another bedcover with an intricately patterned block. The sharp black lines stand out against the off-white fabric. Sabitri watches him quietly, ready with whatever he needs.

The bedcovers will be part of an exhibition-cum-sale that is going to be held on the Pratyay premises from July 5 to 6 to celebrate Pratyay's second anniversary. Anjali, a mental health rights NGO based in Calcutta, is organising the exhibition.

This will be a big step for Pratyay. It was inaugurated on July 7, 2022, by chief minister Mamata Banerjee as a state government halfway home for recovered mental health patients. Anjali manages Pratyay and runs all its operations. The aim of this space is to enable residents to leave it, to live independently outside an institution. For this, earning a living is an essential step.

However, finding work is one of the toughest things for someone who has been stamped mentally ill once, even if she has now been



HOPE BLOOMS: (Top) Tukai and Sabitri Hembram at work; paintings by the residents of Pratyay. Photos, courtesy Pratyay

certified recovered.

Currently, 21 individuals stay at Pratyay, a former wing of Lumbini Park mental health hospital at Tiljala. Many of the residents are functional individuals now, able to take care of themselves, take responsibility and carry out orders.

In the last two years, with Anjali working as a facilitator, 38 residents have been placed in various jobs. "They have been placed as caregivers, security guards, domestic help, peons, packers and movers and music teachers, and in laundries, blockprinting units, canteens, media and shops," says Ratnaboli Ray of

Anjali. From Pratyay, 26 persons have gone back to their families. Most importantly, 10 residents have moved out of Pratyay, says Ray, and are living independently after finding jobs. This is the good news.

However, the larger society still does not accept the idea of recovery of mental health, says Ray. Any institutional space outside Pratyay becomes hard to negotiate for its residents. Hardest perhaps is the job market and its institutions. "The demands of the market, patriarchal and ableist, are in conflict with the labour rights of the disadvantaged," says Ray.

At the same time, she points out that Pratyay residents have to train themselves for the workplace. Long years of staying indoors — and support from the institutions that have been their home — may not have prepared everyone to join a profession.

"Being 'normal' entails being responsible workers, which can become a burden," says Ray. "We are trying to familiarise them to work hours at Pratyay," she adds.

Which is why Pratyay has turned into this huge, buzzing workplace. Residents are being given clear work roles, work hours are being logged, efficiency of execution stressed.

As part of the block-printing team, Ashwini Das diligently washes away the starch from fabric to ensure brighter printing.

But the bedcovers are not the only stunners. At the exhibition, they will share space with block-printed saris, dupattas and tote bags. Some of the blocks have been based on the drawings of the residents. And there are the drawings and paintings themselves. A number of framed paintings will be on display.

Flowers abound, not only for Tukai, but also for the others. Some flowers are bright, joyful, colourful, simple, perhaps childlike. Some are dark and uneven. Some may resemble viscera or a mass of things that cannot be defined. Family portraits form another series. They are heart-breaking; the residents yearn for their families. "Nothing is tutored. Sometimes keywords or prompts are given," says Ray.

A series of portraits, faces etched on black, is arresting. Artist Nabendu Sengupta, who has been a facilitator for the residents, explains the initial process undertaken for making prints of the images. "We used the laminated boards that are used as switchboards and painted them with letterpress ink. Needles were used to make the drawings," he says. Sengupta is also helping to nudge Pratyay into another exciting new direction: ceramic objects.

Ray says that for her, of immense significance is the signature underneath a painting. "It is an art in itself," she says. The writing of one's name is also the first claim to identity.



CELEBRITY CIRCUS
BHARATHI S. PRADHAN

Against the tide

Luv and Kush must be on the other side of the room," remarked a family member.

On the other side of the city would have been more appropriate as Sonakshi Sinha's robust celebrations last Sunday were followed by question marks on the absence of her twin brothers. Luv-Kush missing from the wedding album was bound to draw attention, making it that much more difficult for the parents who are always under scrutiny. It was tough for the brothers too, as they couldn't openly air their perspective, sensitive to the fact that what they say shouldn't hurt dad Shatrughan, a public figure.

The red-carpet absence of the bride's brothers apparently had two reasons. One was the suddenness of her announcement, the feeling of being left out of participating in how, when and where she'd wed her beau. Kush had gone through a diametrically different wedding in 2015, with Promi as the central wedding planner (right down to the sari she sent out to select invitees) and Shatrughan ensuring the VIP presence of the Prime Minister and other high-profile guests like Yashwant Sinha.

But Sonakshi and Zaheer had their own plans, like wanting to wed on the same day that they met seven years ago. Sonakshi also sent caring personal invites to uncles, aunts and cousins. While the passing disappointment of her own family could be understood, a 37-year-old career woman planning how she wanted to get married had to be equally acceptable. Which was how her parents saw it when they accepted her decisions.

Apparently, one reason for anxiety was a rumour about the groom's antecedents. With carefully curated news stories about his family business, nobody tread grey areas like the groom's father's proximity to a politician whose ED enquiries had vanished in the "washing machine". Nor was there a whiff of the groom's father's stint in Dubai, which was rumoured to have ended rather abruptly. Was there the hand of a superstar who had connections at the highest level in the UAE?

On the other hand, there has been no subterfuge in Sonakshi's relationship with Zaheer. She's been a regular at Otters Club where he's a member. And the whole world has been privy to her Insta reels and posts. After Zaheer and she had gone scuba diving at Havelock Island, she had posted, "Say hello to @paditv's newest Ambassadors!!! Our love for the ocean took us to the beautiful Andaman Islands to do our Advanced Open Water course... As Ambassadors our mission is to introduce more people to the ocean and its preservation all while discovering new depths ourselves!"

The "we" and "our" were unmissable, they were out there swimming together. So, other than feeling left out of her plans, there was no room for shock or surprise that Sonakshi and Zaheer were officially a couple. Seven years is long enough for investigations and interventions, and for anxieties to be expressed.

Miffed moods between siblings are not unique to any family. Shatrughan himself has had his moments of tension with his three older brothers, much after he'd gained fame in films

and in politics. He and his siblings were mature men with families of their own when they had their little "katti" parties. But they made up too, and all of this is in the public domain.

After a recent visit to India, US-based brother Ram Sinha had just returned home when Sonakshi disclosed her plans, so he couldn't come back. But Dr Bharat Sinha and son were there last Sunday. Lakhani bhैया was indisposed but wife Geeta and daughter Preeta (who flew back from the US) attended all the celebrations. Kush too turned up briefly for the civil marriage earlier in the day while wife Taruna with her family partied the night away with the bridal couple.

Undeniably, Sonakshi is radiantly happy and everybody will come around. After all, concern over a sibling's moves comes from a place of caring. Besides, blood is thicker than water.

Bharathi S. Pradhan is a senior journalist and author

There was no room for shock that Sonakshi and Zaheer were officially a couple



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