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PHONE : 0353-2521544 • FAX : 0353-2521545 • E-MAIL : nbechoofindia@gmail.com/contact@echoofindia.com

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State urges hill parties to withdraw strike; talks were positive : CM

"They raised voice for Gorkhaland but we did not agree: Mamata

KOLKATA, AUG 29 /-/- Chief minister Mamata Banerjee today held talks with political parties of Darjeeling hills and requested them to withdraw the indefinite ban, which entered the 76th day. Talks were cordial and positive. Dialogue has started and it will continue. The next meeting will be held at Uttarkanya secretariat in north Bengal on September 12," she said after the meeting at the state secretariat here. "They (the hill parties) raised the Gorkhaland issue but we did not agree. They can raise their voice. It is a democratic set-up," Mamata added. She said major political parties in the hills including Gorkha Jannukti Morcha, Gorkha National Liberation Front and Jan Andolan Party participated in the dialogue. All the parties agreed that peace and normalcy should be restored in the hills and "we



Chief minister Mamata Banerjee at the meeting with representatives of hill parties at Nabanna. GJM convener Binay Tamang (second from left) is also seen —Shyamal Maitra

requested them to withdraw the ban," the chief minister said. Earlier today, GJM convener Binay Tamang today denied reports of rifts within the party. Tamang said he has no differences with party supremo Bimal Gurung and the Gorkhaland

issue will be the focus of talks with the West Bengal government, which he attended later in the afternoon. Tamang's comment comes in the backdrop of Gurung's allegation that there is a conspiracy by some hill leaders to frame

him. "I have no differences with our party president Bimal Gurung. An audio clip was circulated in the media, but it is not clear against whom he has made those allegations. Every decision was taken after the approval of the party's central committee. I don't want to react on whatever my party president has said, but yes some of us have felt insulted," he said. In an audio message on Sunday night, Gurung had warned the leaders that if they discussed with the state government,

any other issue other than 'Gorkhaland', they would not be allowed to return to the hills. When asked whether the issue of a separate state of Gorkhaland will come up in the talks, Tamang said: "For us the issue of Gorkhaland is of prime importance and will come up in the talks. We want peace to be restored in the hills." He, however, said even if the talks are successful, there were little chances that the indefinite shutdown, which today entered its 76th day, will be called off as the final

decision will be taken by the party's central committee. "Even if the talks are fruitful, decision to call off the strike cannot be announced today. The final decision in this regard has to be approved by the party's central committee," Tamang said.

Modi to visit China, Myanmar next week

NEW DELHI, AUG 29 /-/- With the Doklam standoff resolved, Prime Minister Narendra Modi heads to China next week to attend the BRICS Summit in Fujian province and also visit Myanmar on the way back, the external affairs ministry said today. According to a statement issued here, Modi will visit Xi'an in Fujian province from September 3 to 5 and attend the 9th BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) Summit. India and China end their over 70-day-long tense standoff in Doklam on Monday with both agreeing to withdraw troops from the disputed region ahead of the BRICS summit. Modi will pay a state visit to Myanmar from September 5 to 7 on the invitation of Myanmar President U Htin Kyaw. This will be Prime Minister Modi's first bilateral State visit to Myanmar. During the visit, Modi will hold talks with State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi on matters of mutual interest and also call on President Kyaw. Apart from his engagements in the capital city of Nay Pyi Taw, he will visit Yangon and Bagan.

Self-styled godman Rampal acquitted in 2 criminal cases

HISAR, AUG 29 /-/- A Hisar court today acquitted self-styled godman Rampal in connection with two criminal cases registered against him, citing lack of evidence. Judicial magistrate, Hisar, Mukesh Kumar pronounced the verdict, acquitting Rampal, head of Satlok Ashram, Barwala and his followers here. On August 24, the judge had deferred the date of hearing to August 29 after the police cited tension in the wake of the Dera Sacha Sauda case. "The court has acquitted Rampal in both the cases," said Rampal's counsel A P Singh while talking to reporters here today. On November 17, 2014, a case was registered against Rampal and his followers

under sections 186 (Obstructing public servant in discharge of public function), 332 (Voluntarily causing hurt to deter public servant from his duty), 353 (Assault or use of criminal force to deter a public servant from discharging his duty) of the IPC. Another case was registered against Rampal and his followers Purshotam Dass, Raj Kumar, Mohinder Singh, Rajender Singh, Rahul and 30 other persons on November 18, 2014 on a complaint of Sukhdev Singh of Ratia (Patechabad) for rioting, unlawful assembly, disobedience to an order lawfully promulgated by a public servant and wrongfully confining any person. Rampal was arrested after a tense standoff between some his supporters and the police after close to 15,000 of his followers were evacuated from the sprawling ashram premises in 2014. The standoff had then turned violent, resulting into the death of five persons.



9 coaches of Duronto Express derail in Maharashtra

ASANGAON, AUG 29 /-/- The engine and nine coaches of the Nagpur-Mumbai Duronto Express derailed between Vasind and Asangaon stations in Maharashtra early today following a landslide, a senior railway official and a PTI reporter on board the train said, the fourth derailment in 10 days. The accident took place at 6.36 am. No passenger is reported to be injured in the incident so far, Sunil Udasi, chief of the Central Railway, said. Udasi said the derailment was caused due to a landslide. "The cause (of derailment) is sudden landslide due to heavy rains. But graciously enough, the driver did an excellent job of applying emergency breaks," he said. However, another railway official said the exact cause of the derailment was not yet clear. "It is suspected that a portion of the tracks was washed away due to heavy rains in the Kasara Ghats section since there has been long spell of incessant and torrential rains since the past few days," the official said. The train had a total of 18 coaches along with the engine slipped off the tracks". Rao, who was travelling in the A-2 coach that derailed, said the accident happened when most of the passengers were sleeping. "While we were sleeping, we felt a jerk and several passengers fell off their berths. When we got up, we found our train's bogies derailed". "Few people were stuck in the washrooms and were rescued by some passengers by breaking a glasses of windows," Rao said.

Victim's family express relief; await verdict in murder case

KURUKSHETRA, AUG 29 /-/- Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh exploited scores of his female disciples but the tortured victims would stay silent due to a feeling of "community shame", says the woman, who had dared to challenge the self-styled godman.

But she and her family had to cope with countless threats and mental pressure for 15 years, the victim says. Her brother was murdered as well. Now, with Ram Rahim Singh behind bars, sentenced to 20 years in prison in connection with the sexual exploitation of the victim and another woman, an atmosphere of jubilation prevails in a village along the GT road, around 10 kms from here. The victim, whose family lives here, said that they had been connected with the Dera for 40 years since Baba Satnam Singh was his head. She was teaching in a school run by the Dera and the real face of the sect chief Ram Rahim Singh stood exposed before her in 1999 when she came to know that innocent girls were being sexually abused. Girls were employed as security persons at the entrance of a 'Guffa' (cave) where the Dera chief used to stay and she too was employed there, the victim said. She started noticing that some of the girls coming out of the 'Guffa' would be weeping. Later, the Dera chief eyed her and she was sexually exploited, the woman claimed. She disclosed it to her parents who were aware of the Dera chief's power and sent her back to their village. Later, the entire family left the Dera in 2001. Meanwhile, with members of the Dera Sacha Sauda living in its old headquarters having moved out, Army and security personnel are now placed by the sect's sprawling new complex which is still to be vacated by some 200 people, officials here said. No incidents of violence have been reported from Sirsa in the last two days, the officials said. Mobile internet services, suspended days before the Dera chief was sentenced to 20 years of jail on Monday, have been restored, they added. Army personnel have put up barricades around 500 metres away from the new complex of the Dera and are urging followers who are still here to leave the premises. The new facility came up about 12 years ago as the sect's popularity grew, leading to a demand for expanded facilities. The old complex was built by the sect's founder, Mastana Balochistani.

Dera case

Heavydownpour disrupts Mumbai

MUMBAI, AUG 29 /-/- Torrential rain accompanied by strong winds pummelled Mumbai today, disrupting rail, road and air services, uprooting trees, swamping homes, and bringing the megapolis and satellite towns to their knees. People's woes were compounded by the high tide that prevented natural drainage of water into the sea. Meteorological department sources said Mumbai recorded copious rain of 65 mm in just three hours. Thousands of vehicles were stranded on arterial roads in Lower Parel, Dadar, Kurla, Andheri, Khar West, Ghatkopar, Sion and Hindmata areas that were under knee to waist deep water for several hours, many have broken down. Suburban rail services, the lifeline of the metropolis, were thrown out of gear. Train services on all three suburban railway lines— Central, Western and Harbour lines—have been paralysed. (Details on Page 3)



People help a woman to move her car through a water-logged road during rains in Mumbai —Reuters

MMCH hit by allegation of altering newborn

SOUMYA DE SARKAR
MALDA, AUG 29 /-/- Malda medical college & hospital (MMCH) authorities had to face severe embarrassment after an allegation of altering a newborn male baby with a female newborn was raised by the parents. Taking the couple's written complaint into account, MMCH authorities constituted a five-member committee to investigate into the matter. Sunita Karimkar (Tikadar) of Lenin Nagar area in Gazole block was admitted to MMCH with labour-pain on August 28. Gobinda Tikadar, Rajender Singh and others delivered a male baby at same night. "But the newborn was kept



at the labour-room. When the nurses handed over the newborn to my wife, we were awe-struck to find that she was delivered a female newborn instead of our newborn baby. We immediately relatives of the couple too claimed that Sunita had delivered a male baby. She refused to accept the newborn. At 11 am, Anand Dawn, medical super cum vice principal (MSVP) of MMCH conceded that a controversy over exchanging newborns erupted in the institution. He spoke to the concerned woman too. "A five-member enquiry committee would probe into the matter. If the woman proves to be true, a strong action would follow," MSVP said.

FLY AND WORK IN EUROPE

Various Jobs Vacancies
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Contact: **YAKTHUNG**, Phansidewa More, Amarpally, Siliguri-734013. Phone: 8670311879 / 9002644505 / 9002744506 / 9800287505
E-mail : hr@yakhung.org