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Mexico's Hirving Lozano celebrates scoring their first goal with Jesus Gallardo —REUTERS

GJM to observe July 27 as martyrs' day

Makes common cause with GNLF

EOI CORRESPONDENT

DARJEELING, JUNE 17/-- Gorkha Janmukti Morcha may be arch-rivals of Gorkha National Liberation Front in the political arena of Darjeeling, but GJM leaders have decided to make common cause with the GNLF in the arena of observance of martyrs' day programmes. Only the future can say this will lead a broader political understanding between the two main parties dominating the political and social life in the hills for the past three decades.

For, GJM has decided to remember formally rather on July 27 the 12 people who were killed exactly a year ago, on June 17, 2017, in Darjeeling in police firing. July 27 is being observed as "Shahid Diwas" by GNLF leader Subash Ghisingh since the signing of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council accord in 1988. On that day in 1986, in Kalimpong 13 people were killed when the police opened fire on a crowd which was proceeding to the Mela Ground in the town to attend a public meeting. On June 17, exactly a year ago, three statehood agitators-Sunil Rai of Kajjaley, Bimal Sahshankar of Goke and Mahesh Gurung of Relling, participating in a rally near Singamari in Darjeeling, were the first to be killed when police

opened fire to disperse a stone-pelting crowd. That was the beginning of the latest phase of statehood agitation in Darjeeling; an agitation that has lost steam subsequently. In the entire course of the agitation that started from June 8, 2017, and withdrawn on September 26, a total of 13 people including a police person were killed.

would also be invited to attend and be felicitated. "Several people were killed during the three rounds of agitation for a separate state. We must remember all of them. We cannot observe each day as it will not make sense. That's why we have decided to organize a central programme to remember and honour the martyrs, like the GNLF party, July 27 every year" said GJM spokesperson Suraj Sharma. In the first statehood agitation that was helmed by the GNLF in 1986 more than 1200 people were reportedly killed. And in the second round of agitation led by the GJM from 2008 to 2011, five people were killed. A few days ago, former GJM president Bimal Gurung who is presently on the run from police through a social media message had asked people to observe Sunday as "black day" to mark the killing of people in the police firing on June 17, 2017. Gurung has also asked people to switch off their lights at home and light 106 butter lamps to remember the day. The GJM party however has made an appeal not to politicize the killings of the people during the agitation. "All who have died during various agitations are martyrs. But, the issue should not be politicized," the GJM spokesperson said.



File photo

The agitation first started with opposition to the decision of the West Bengal government imposing Bengali language in schools. Rallies and arson every day marked the 104 days of agitation and strike. GJM leaders said on Sunday a decision had been taken by the party to organize a central programme on July 27. On that occasion families of the "martyrs" of the three phases of agitation from 1986 to 2017

GNLF to resume 6th Schedule demand in Darjeeling

EOI CORRESPONDENT

DARJEELING, JUNE 17/-- Gorkha National Liberation Front President Mann Ghisingh on Sunday asked his party leaders and members not to get stuck on the Hill Area Development Committee (HADC), maintaining that they should now move forward for the demand of the Sixth Schedule. This was said by Ghisingh at his party office in Dr. Zakir Hussain road where the flag of the Gorkha Rashtriya Ex-Servicemen was unveiled. "We have to take forward the demand of Sixth Schedule visibly, in the eyes of the people and not get stuck with the HADC. Some time ago, some people were disappointed with this committee due to our decision to participate in the HADC that has been formed by the West Bengal government, but the main issue of our party is the Sixth Schedule and it is necessary to go to rural areas to make people understand the importance of the Sixth Schedule. We must make the people understand it in whichever way it is possible; be it putting up posters or making them

hear the speeches of my father (the late GNLF president Subash Ghisingh). We must make the people aware of this issue," he said. Subash Ghisingh while chairing the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council had realized that the council formed under an act of the West Bengal government did not enjoy sufficient powers and the real autonomy for the hill council could be achieved only if it was constituted under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. The GNLF president also spoke on the political relationship that the party had maintained with the state government adding that though they were continuing with it the party also needed the mandate of the people. "The party leaders should go to different villages and increase their contact with the people and convince them. The primary issue of our part is 6th schedule and our second issue is the development of the villages," said Ghisingh. He claimed that the last hope for the people in the hills, Terai and the Dooars was the GNLF. The GNLF will soon call a meeting to chalk out the future programmes of the party to take forward these issues.

Rajinikanth reaches Darjeeling, shoots in St Paul's

EOI CORRESPONDENT

DARJEELING, JUNE 17/-- The shooting for the yet-to-be-named south Indian movie starring Rajinikanth started here in Darjeeling on Sunday with shots of the film being done at St. Paul's School. The superstar arrived in Darjeeling town from Kurseong on Saturday. The shooting for the movie which is being directed by Karthi Subbaraj had been going on in Kurseong after the arrival of the superstar in Kurseong on June 6. The most part of the shooting in Kurseong was at Rangers College in St. Marys Hill in

the town. A source said on Sunday: "The superstar arrived in Darjeeling yesterday itself with the shooting taking place at St. Paul's School from today onwards. There are not many locations of the movie that will be shot here in Darjeeling with the other location being Mt. Hermon School only. In Darjeeling the shooting will continue for about 20 days after which again shooting will recommence in Kurseong." School sources on the other hand maintained that the movie unit has asked for 15 days for the shooting to be held at St. Paul's School alone. "The school is closed

for summer holidays at present and today's shooting which was an indoor one went well as far as I heard," said the school source without wanting to be named. It may be mentioned that St. Paul's School in Darjeeling is a favourite location of the Bollywood flock and the school has featured in a number of movies that have been shot in the hill town in the past. 'Main Hoon Na' starring Shah Rukh Khan and Sushmita Sen had been shot there along with the recent Telugu movie 'Raja the Great' starring Ravi Teja that been shot there last year.

BJP lambasts Chamling's public interaction programme

SUJAL PRADHAN

GANGTOK, JUNE 17/-- The Sikkim Chapter president of BJP D. B. Chauhan on Sunday lambasted the on-going public interaction programme of Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, saying students should actually study for their examinations instead of listening to the political speeches of the Chief Minister. "Don't understand why the CM is inviting students at his political programme. It is a loss for the students," he said. The public interaction programme was in no way fruitful for the people, he said, while talking to newsmen at the Singtam party office of BJP. During the day, 37 families from the East, West and South Districts joined BJP for-



Youths joining BJP —Shekhar Khawas

mally at Singtam. BJP spokesperson J. B. Darnal; said BJP was gaining in popularity steadily and more youths were joining the party in Sikkim.

2 rescued from Tista river

SANJAY AGARWAL

RANGPO, JUNE 17/-- The Rangpo Police with the help of a rafting team from the adjoining area of West Bengal has rescued two persons alive from the Tista river. The police said they were informed on Saturday night, at about 10.30 pm, by local residents that two persons had got stuck in the Tista river while fishing. The police team from Rangpo taking a rafting squad from West Bengal led by Praveen Rai reached the Tista river and rescued Uttam



Thapa (48) and Ram Bahadur Rai (40) alive. This was the third such incident in the past two months and eight persons have been rescued alive from the Tista river. Talking to this correspondent, SHO Rangpo, Keshang Bhutia on Sunday specially appealed to people to avoid visiting the river side especially in the evening time.

Upper Sichey landslide spots inspected

DEPAK SHARMA



A scene of the landslide —EOI Photo

GANGTOK, JUNE, 17/-- On Sunday morning MLA D. R. Thapa along with D.C. East Kapil Meena, councillors, Sikkim police officials and officials of concerned departments inspected the scene of a landslide near Hidden Forest Hotel at Marigold, Upper Sichey, East Sikkim. Taking stock of the situation, Thapa asked officials to provide logistical support and make arrangements for relief of the affected residents. The MLA also asked the D.C. to constitute an expert committee to tackle the emergencies arising out of the nature's fury on priority and ensure the safety of private holdings from landslides. He also said basic amenities like water supply and power supply must remain operational.

Assam apprehensions about citizens' register publication on June 30

EOI CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA, JUNE 17/-- With the final draft for the National Register of Citizens (NRC) due for publication in Assam on June 30, the Assam government has stepped up internal security in an effort to prevent volatile situations.

The first draft of the updated version of the NRC in Assam was published on December 31. Of about 33 million people in Assam who had applied for inclusion of their names in the NRC by submit-

ting legacy documents, only about 20 million names had been included in the first list, leaving a whopping 13 million out. The publication of the first draft had not been followed by violent protests as feared. Often some names of members of a single family had appeared in the list while names of others had been left out had possibly raised hopes that the mistakes would be rectified in the final draft. But it had raised apprehensions about the rigour of the verification process. Assam is the only state that has an NRC; the first NRC was pub-

lished in 1951, soon after Independence, by recording particulars of all persons enumerated during the census. The updating of the NRC, being done under the directive of the Supreme Court, would be done by incorporating the names of all persons whose names appeared in the NRC of 1951, or in any of the electoral rolls till the midnight of March 24, 1971, or in any of the other admissible documents which would prove their presence in Assam or any other part of India before March 25, 1971, which, according to the Assam Accord, is

the cut-off date for determination of illegal immigrants from Bangladesh. All the names appearing in the NRC 1951, or any of the electoral rolls up to March 24, 1971, together are called the 'legacy data.' There would be two requirements for inclusion of names in the updated NRC: the existence of a person's name in the pre-1971 period and proving linkage with such a person. Details submitted by the applicants would be verified. The apprehension that the names of many genuine citizens could be left out has arisen because, in the ab-

sence of a proper documentation system in the country, it had become difficult for many applicants to procure the required documents, like birth certificates and school certificates, to prove their relationship with persons whose names had appeared in the legacy document. This is true particularly of settlers who have come to Assam from other parts of the country. Other state governments and agencies to whom documents have been sent for verification have often been slow to respond. Only about 150,000 of about 550,000 documents which

had been dispatched for verification have been returned by other state governments, according to a report by the Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis. The objective behind updating the NRC is to compile a list of names of genuine Indian citizens living in Assam, and in the process detect foreigners who had illegally entered after March 25, 1971. The question is, what would happen to people whose names would not figure in the final NRC and are declared illegal immigrants. (Written with PTI reports)

Blast at India developed hydel project in Nepal

KATHMANDU, JUNE 17/-- A bomb exploded at the office of a major hydropower project being constructed with Indian assistance in Nepal last Wednesday, the second such incident at the facility in over a month. An unidentified group exploded an improvised explosive device in the office of Arun III hydropower in Tumlingtar, nearly 500 km from Kathmandu. The explosion did not cause any serious damage and no one was injured in the incident, according to the police. Security arrangements have been intensified following the incident, he said. On April 29, a CPN Maoist faction had exploded a bomb at the office of the project weeks before its inauguration by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. PTI