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Sitharaman to present Union Budget on Jul 23 Parliament session set to begin tomorrow

NEW DELHI, July 20: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present the Union Budget on Tuesday as the Monsoon Session of Parliament gets underway next week with the united opposition set to corner the NDA government on issues ranging from the NEET paper leak case and railway safety.

The Monsoon Session begins on Monday and will have 19 sittings till August 12 when the government is expected to present six bills, including the one to replace the 90-year-old Aircraft Act, and also get the Parliament nod for the budget of Jammu and Kashmir, which is under central rule.

Sitharaman will also table the Economic Survey in Parliament on Monday.

Parliamentary affairs minister Kiren Rijiju has convened a meeting of the floor leaders of political parties in Parliament to understand

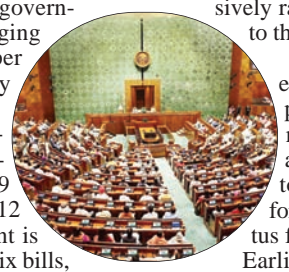
issues they would want to raise during the session.

The BJP, led by former Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik, has declared that it would play the role of a strong opposition and aggressively raise issues of interest to the state in Parliament.

Patnaik, who was elected as the chairperson of BJP parliamentary party, has asked his party MPs to take up the demand for special category status for Odisha.

Earlier this week, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh had said that the opposition would also resist any government move to dilute its stake in public sector banks below 51 per cent.

The government is likely to bring amendments to the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 and other laws such as Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1970, and the Banking (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)



40 more Assam students reach home state

Enhance vigil along India's border: Tipra Motha supremo ● 186 more people return from violence-hit B'desh via M'laya

GUWAHATI/AGARTALA, July 20: Altogether 186 more people, stranded in violence-hit Bangladesh, returned to India on Saturday via Dawki integrated check post in Meghalaya's West Jaintia Hills district, officials said, even 40 more students reached Assam.

Ninety-eight of them are from Nepal and 88 from India, including eight students from Meghalaya, they said.

"In the past three days, a total of 856 people from India, Nepal and Bhutan, mostly students, have crossed over to the country from Bangladesh due to agitation there," a senior home department official said.

The Meghalaya government has activated a helpline number for those who have been in violence-hit Bangladesh and are seeking assistance from the authorities of the northeastern state.

Violence escalated in Bangladesh's capital Dhaka and elsewhere over protests by students, demanding reforms to the quota system for government jobs.

The protesters are demanding an end to a quota system that reserves up to 30 per cent of government jobs for relatives of veterans who fought in Bangladesh's war of independence in 1971 against Pakistan.

Meanwhile, more than 40 students from Assam have returned from Bangladesh since violence erupted in the neighbouring country,



officials in Guwahati said on Saturday.

The Assam government is also in touch with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to ensure the safety of people from the state residing or visiting Bangladesh.

"Till 19th July, 41 students from Assam were safely repatriated from Bangladesh via Sutarkandi integrated check post amid violent protests against job quotas," a post on the Karimganj district commissioner's (DC) Facebook page said.

It added that the Karimganj DC and the superintendent of police have visited the ICP at Sutarkandi and interacted with the students, enquiring about their wellbeing and further

course of action.

Deputy Commissioner Mridul Yadav said that more students are expected to return through the border point.

"The district administration is geared up to help them. A magistrate and deputy superintendent of police have been stationed 24 hours at the border till the situation eases," he said.

Yadav added that no tension is anticipated in the border area as the ongoing problems of Bangladesh are its internal matters.

Some students from Dhubri have also reportedly crossed over through West Bengal and are expected to reach their home district by train later on Saturday, another

official said.

"The state government is in constant touch with the Ministry of External Affairs to coordinate plans to help citizens return in light of the situation in Bangladesh. Those who wish to return may contact the @ihcdhaka helpline: +880-1937400591," the Chief Minister's Office had posted on X.

The state government is yet to share the number of people from Assam residing or visiting the neighbouring country, or whether people have contacted the government for safe evacuation.

Meanwhile, Tipra Motha supremo Pradyot Kishore Manikya Debbarma on Saturday urged the Centre to enhance vigil along the country's border with violence-hit Bangladesh.

Tripura shares an 856 km-long border with the neighbouring country.

"History shows us that whenever there has been unrest in East Pakistan/Bangladesh, Tripura has suffered the most. I appeal to the Govt. of India to ensure that border vigil should be at the highest alert. GoI should constitutionally secure the indigenous population for future generations," Debbarma said on Facebook.

Instability in Bangladesh "immediately affects bordering northeastern states like Tripura, Assam, and Meghalaya," he said.

HT BRIEFS

Road mishap
BOKAJAN: On NH 39 at Talbaljan under Bokajan police station in Karbi Anglong a speeding bus rear-ended a Bolero SUV which in turn hit a bicycle with two riders. The two were seriously injured. The Bolero driver said he lost control after being hit by the bus and hit the bicycle. The injured bicycle riders were identified as Samir Goyari (22) of Kachari Bosti and Sonjoy Basumatary (18), a resident of Amrajan Kachari Bosti. The SUV driver was not injured. Police reached the spot and took stock of the situation. The wounded were taken to hospital for treatment.

Made in Korea
KHERONI: A balloon attached to a parachute device fell from the sky in Matikhola Jeng Kro Village, West Karbi Anglong, near Kheroni police station. The balloon landed in the morning and subsequently burst. A passing mason from another village found it and took it along. Upon learning this, villagers notified the police, who then set out to locate the mason. Along the way, they encountered a severely damaged road, prompting the police to request that the villagers continue the search. Eventually, the villagers managed to find the mason, retrieved the device, and proceeded to Kheroni police station, where it was handed over.

Assam flood situation improves as number of affected people dips to 2 lakh

GUWAHATI, July 20: The flood situation in Assam improved as the number of affected people decreased to 2 lakh in 10 districts, official sources said on Saturday.

Two major rivers, including the Brahmaputra, continued to flow above the danger level.

The districts reeling under floods are Cachar, Dhemaji, Dhubri, Dibrugarh, Goalpara, Golaghat, Kamrup Metropolitan, Karimganj, Nagaon and Sivasagar.

A total of 2.07 lakh people are still affected, followed by Cachar (36,000) and Dhubri (20,000), the sources said.

Till Thursday, over 2.72 lakh people were affected by the floods



in 11 districts of the state. The total number of people losing their lives in this year's floods, landslides, storms and lightning strikes stands at 113.

Altogether 61 relief camps and relief distribution centres are operational, catering to more than 16,600 affected people. A total of 10,228.36 (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

One held with rare fish species in Assam: Officials

GOLAGHAT, July 20: A person was arrested and a rare species of fish seized from him in Assam's Golaghat district, forest officials said on Saturday.

The arrest followed a search operation carried out on Friday night by forest personnel from Kaziranga range headquarters and Haldirbari beat office, based on specific information.

During the operation, four live 'Channa Barca' fish were discovered inside a vehicle. The car and the fish were seized, and the driver was taken into custody.

The arrested person, from neighbouring Nagaon district, has been charged (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Families of deceased file complaint for probe

Cachar encounter: One of three killed was earlier arrested for terrorism: DGP

GUWAHATI, July 20: One of the three suspected Hmar militants killed in an alleged encounter with police in Assam's Cachar district three days ago had previously been arrested for terrorism, a top official has claimed.

This assertion comes amid a police complaint filed by the families of the deceased youths, demanding a probe into the circumstances of their deaths, while an apex Hmar community body has urged the NHRC to take suo motu cognisance of the 'extrajudicial' deaths.

The encounter, which occurred on July 17, resulted in the deaths of Lallungawi Hmar (21) and Lalbikung Hmar (33) from Assam, and Joshua (35) from Manipur.

DGP GP Singh claimed that one of the deceased, Lalbikung, was previously arrested for possessing arms and ammunition.

"One of the terrorists who was killed in a recent exchange of fire at Assam Border in Cachar district has a previous recorded history of indulging in terrorism," Singh posted on X.

He said Lalbikung was arrested with arms and ammunition on June

4, 2019 by Assam Rifles, and the three youths on Friday filed a police complaint demanding a probe into the circumstances leading to their deaths.

Lalthavel Hmar, Lalremsang Hmar and Lalchungnung Hmar, relatives of the three youths, filed a complaint at Lakhipur police station in Cachar district. However, police have not registered an FIR yet.

The complaint requested a thorough investigation, stating that the explanation given by Cachar SP Numal Mahatta "doesn't add up" and called for punishment of the perpetrators.

Earlier, the Assam Hills Region of the Hmar Inpui, the community's apex body, termed the circumstances leading to death of the three youths as "a stark violation of human rights" and urged the NHRC to take suo motu cognisance of (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

Upcoming Jharkhand assembly polls crucial for protecting tribals, Hindus: Himanta

RANCHI, July 20: Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday said that the upcoming Jharkhand assembly elections are crucial for protecting tribals and Hindus, as the "demography of the state is changing due to Bangladeshi infiltration".

Sarma, who is also the BJP's election co-in-charge for Jharkhand, was addressing party workers during the extended executive committee meeting of the party in Ranchi's Prabhat Tara Ground.

"After Assam and West Bengal, Bangladeshi infiltrators' next target is Jharkhand, which is a matter of concern. There are many districts in the state where Muslim infiltrators' population has reached up to 30 per cent. So, the upcoming assembly elections are crucial for protecting tribals and Hindus in the state," Sarma said.

He claimed that the Muslim population in Assam has reached 40 per cent now.

"Of these 40 per cent, the population of indigenous Muslims, whom we consider As-

samese, is only 4 per cent, while 36 per cent of the population is of infiltrators. If the Muslim population in Assam grows in this way, Assam will be a Muslim-majority state by 2041," he said.

Sarma said that the Muslim population in neighbouring West Bengal has reached 26 per cent.

"It is growing at the rate of 29 per cent every 10 years. After Assam, West Bengal, Kerala and Jammu and Kashmir, (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

IIT Guwahati to investigate artificial floods in Dibrugarh: Sonowal



HT Correspondent
DIBRUGARH, July 20: Union minister Sarbananda Sonowal announced on Saturday that IIT Guwahati will investigate the causes of artificial floods in Dibrugarh, leading to the formulation of a comprehensive master plan.

Sonowal made these remarks during his visit to the Naliapool area of Dibrugarh City to inspect the drainage and sewerage system.

"The government will take corrective measures based on the findings to address the issue of artificial flooding in the city," said Sonowal, who also serves as the Lok Sabha MP for Dibrugarh LSC.

He emphasised the need

for experts and authorities to collaborate closely to develop a sustainable and practical solution to the poorly designed drainage system, aimed at mitigating the impact of artificial floods on city life.

Sonowal also discussed the matter with Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.

"The artificial floods in Dibrugarh are a significant concern, and we must take proactive steps to resolve this issue with economically viable, ecologically sound, and environmentally sustainable solutions," Sonowal stated. "IIT Guwahati will investigate the underlying causes (CONTD. ON PAGE-2)

কৃষি আৰু কৃষক কল্যাণ মন্ত্ৰালয়
ভাৰত চৰকাৰ

“প্রধানমন্ত্রী ফচল বীমা যোজনাৰ বতৰৰ অনিশ্চয়তাৰ সৈতে জড়িত কৃতিশংকা বন্ম কৰি পৰিশ্ৰমী কৃষক ডাই-ডনীৰ আৰ্থিক হিত বন্ধা কৰাত একেৰাহে গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ ভূমিকা পালন কৰি আহিছে। এই কৃষক হিতৈষী বীমাৰ লাভ কোটি কোটি কৃষকে পাব ধৰিছে।”

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