

Mamata's fight against 'corruption in judiciary'



Kolkata, August 18 (IANS) Known for courting controversies, West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee has again stirred the hornet's nest after saying that court judgments could be bought. Speaking during the state assembly's platinum jubilee celebrations here Tuesday, Banerjee displayed her trademark indiscretion when she alleged that there were

instances when court judgments have been "delivered for money" and there was "corruption in a section of judiciary". All hell broke loose as political and legal fraternity minced no words in criticising the chief minister and Trinamool Congress chief, making statements that had a liberal sprinkling of words such as "unbecoming", "irresponsible", "contempt of court" and "intemperate language". If Bharatiya Janata party leader Balbir Punj remarked, "It was unbecoming of a chief minister", former Supreme Court judge Santosh Hedge wished she had only been "more prudent". Former solicitor general Soli Sorabjee went a step ahead, asking: "What about the cases she has won in court? Who paid the judges? Mamata?" Amid all the brouhaha, an embarrassed central government sought to downplay its troublesome ally's faux pas when Congress leader and Law Minister Salman Khurshid said the remarks were probably intended "to protect the independence of the judiciary". Feisty Banerjee said she might land

up in a jail for her comments and a group of lawyers is making all efforts to make her words come true after filing contempt petitions in the Calcutta High Court and the Supreme Court. Hours after the petitions were filed, an unperturbed Banerjee not only defended her comments but also said that being a lawyer, she would argue her own case should the need arise. "...I have talked about a valueless judiciary. If talking about our country's drawbacks is a crime, I am ready to commit it a thousand times," an animated Banerjee said in her defence. She also attacked the media that had reported her remarks which subsequently formed the basis of the contempt petitions. While Banerjee continues to draw flak from all quarters, there are some who believe she may have touched a raw nerve since the judiciary is not untouched by allegations of corruption. The Rajya Sabha in August 2011 had overwhelmingly approved the impeachment motion against Calcutta High Court judge Soumitra Sen.



Chief Minister alongwith urban development minister and senior officials visited projects under construction in Agartala on August 18. # Pic : TO

Rape victim accuses police of extortion

Malda, Aug 18: A rape victim from Ratua has alleged that the police have extorted Rs 6,000 from her husband to start a probe into a complaint lodged a fortnight back. The 24-year-old victim, a resident of Baldiapukur village, was allegedly raped at knifepoint on August 2 when she was alone in her hut. Fed up with the police role, the victim on Friday met the women development minister Sabitri Mitra and the district magistrate and narrated the tragic tale. Mitra criticized the role of police who are yet to arrest the accused. The victim was reportedly gagged and raped by one Jahangir Sheikh while her husband was away. On the night of August 2, when the farmer from Baldiapukur village was busy watering a land close to his house, the accused, Jahangir Sheikh, sneaked into his hut, gagged his 24-year-old wife and raped her after holding her at the knifepoint. "I had lodged an FIR at the Ratua police station the next morning. But no action has yet been taken. Rather, the investigating officer Bikash Bhadra had demanded Rs 12,000 from me for arresting Jahangir," said the victim's husband. He claimed that Rs 6,000 was already paid to the police and though the medical test confirmed rape, the report was not handed over to him. According to him, he had sold his wife's jewellery and gave the police Rs 6,000, but the accused is yet to be arrested. He also claimed that a medical test on his wife at Ratua rural hospital has proved that she was raped. But the report was not handed over to him by the police.

Villagers resent delay in resolution of border row

Jowai, Aug 18: The People's Movement against the delay in solving the long-pending inter-state boundary dispute between Meghalaya and Assam, held at Khanduli village on Friday, was attended by thousands of local residents of the area including village elders, headmen and the Synjuk ki 30 Shnong. Leaders of the People's Movement including Nongkrem MLA Ardent Miller Basaiawmoit, former KSU general secretary Hamlet Dohling, FKJGP general secretary Joe Marwein, Rev. O Langstieh, secretary Synjuk ki Rangbah Shong Pangam Raliang, P Sunga, and leaders of Jaintia Hills based NGOs attended the public meeting. Drawing the attention of the people

towards the 'Status Quo' agreed upon by both the state governments, Basaiawmoit said, "It has been experienced that only Meghalaya is maintaining the 'so call Status Quo' whereas Assam is open violating the Status Quo by encroaching into Meghalaya and harassing the people in the border areas. Stating that even after 40 years, respective state governments have failed to solve the long-pending inter-state boundary dispute, the Nongkrem legislator said, "It is only through the People's Movement that we will be able to pressurise the government to solve the problem." Earlier, secretary of Synjuk ki 30 Shnong, P

Talang, informed that Assam had, since 1970, encroached into Khanduli village and captured their cultivated land. Providing details, talang said in 1970 the Assam Battalion had set up its camp at Khang-Khadwi- the original and traditional boundary between Jaintia Hills and Karbi-Anglong districts. Later in 1973, the Assam Battalion shifted its camp beyond Khang-Khadwi into Meghalaya territory and in 1986 the camp was further shifted to Khanduli village. "We had registered our protests then but our politicians told us that since the camp was being set up on a temporary basis we should not be worried."

Mukul asks N-E CMs to depute teams to Southern states

Shillong, Aug 18: Chief Minister Dr Mukul Sangma has written to chief ministers of all the eight Northeastern states to consider the feasibility of deputing a delegation from their respective states to the South Indian states in view of the mass exodus of students and people from the North East fearing rumours of imminent attacks on them. Dr Sangma also emphasized on a joint visit to the South Indian states, saying that such a visit will have a far greater impact in dousing the situation. The State Government has already sought permission from the Ministry of Home Affairs to facilitate a tour of a government delegation from the State to different Southern states in the wake of mass exodus of students belonging to the Northeastern region to their respective home states.

Garo NGOs demand proactive efforts from State Government

Tura, Aug 18: The ongoing turmoil in southern India where hundreds of students and citizens from the Northeastern states have been boarding trains bound for their home destination was raised at a meeting between the Garo NGOs and the district administration of West Garo Hills at Tura on Friday. The meeting assumed significance given that several hundred students from Garo Hills are currently undergoing training in various technical colleges and institutions in southern India while an equal number are admitted in schools and higher education institutions. The student and social organizations from Tura led by the Garo Students' Union (GSU) and its allies such as the A'chik Youth Welfare Organisation (AYWO), FKJGP, Tura Government College Students' Union, and civil society groups including the United Christian Peace

Forum (UCPF) and the Garo Hills Separate State Demand Committee (GHSSDC) met Deputy Commissioner Pravin Bakshi at his office chamber on Friday afternoon following an invitation from the administration to discuss the ongoing situation in southern India. The NGOs and civil society groups wanted to know the steps being taken by the Meghalaya Government in dealing with the situation given that in Bangalore city alone there are over eight hundred students from Garo Hills undergoing higher education studies. It was made known to the student bodies and civil society groups that the Meghalaya government has already provided a helpline number which can be accessed by the concerned parents and their wards living in the south. The administration also briefed the NGOs about the actual events taking place in which

certain vested interest groups in that part of the state had created panic by spreading false rumours of impending attacks on people of the North East leading to mass exodus. Back at home, the district administration has begun an exercise to build mutual trust between the two communities- Garos and Muslims - by holding peace meetings in the plain belt region of the State. The first peace meeting took place at Hallidyganj town bordering Assam where both Garos and the Muslim community leaders attended and assured the administration to uphold the peace in the face of the ongoing panic situation taking place in south India. Similar peace meetings will be taking place in Phulbari, Tikrikilla and Rajabala within this week to instill confidence among the two communities, the Deputy Commissioner informed.



Manmohan Singh, shakes hands with Chief Justice of India S.H. Kapadia during the closing ceremony of a celebration of the Bombay High Court to mark 150 years of judicial service, in Mumbai.

MPCC attacks Chief Minister's take on South India situation

Shillong, Aug 18: The Congress-led MUA Government in the State has come under attack from its own party leadership for attempting to down play the ongoing situation in some states of the country which has resulted in a mass exodus of students, especially from Bangalore and Pune to their respective home states in the North East. Reacting to Chief Minister Dr Mukul Sangma's statement on Thursday wherein he had claimed that the rumours about possible assault on Northeast students were not true, MPCC president DD Lapang said, "I fail to understand how the Government could claim the ongoing violence to be only

a rumour when hundreds of students from the region are returning back to their home states. Police have even arrested around nine people in connection with assault of our own students in Pune." "If the State Government is claiming that it is only a rumour, then all the students who are studying outside should be punished for spreading such rumours," Lapang added, while claiming that students from the region are being attacked by certain anti-social and anti-national elements. Meanwhile, in a letter addressed to Union Home Minister Sushilkumar Shinde, the MPCC president said it was not the first instance of discriminatory

attacks on students from the region. "Thousands of students from the region go to big cities for higher studies with a dream to come out with successful careers. But it is really sad that they are being subjected to such violence," he said. Lapang also said that such incidents are bound to affect their mindset and performance while also posing a grave threat to their security. Requesting the Union Home Minister to initiate steps to stem this violence, Lapang said it was necessary to prevent any serious repercussions elsewhere. "This would help to reinforce confidence of the people of the North East in the secular, just and noble ideals of the Constitution that

despite linguistic and cultural differences, the social fabric and integrity of the nation will be protected and preserved at all costs," Lapang said. Meanwhile, the UDP has also condemned the ongoing violence against the students from the North Eastern states. "We are deeply concerned over reports of mass exodus of students to their respective home states due to reported threats. It is really shocking that the student community from the region is being attacked," UDP working president Paul Lyngdoh stated in a statement on Friday. Lyngdoh urged the Central Government to take immediate measures for the safety and security of the student community.

Candlelight march against Nazareth Hospital closure

Patna, Aug 18: Hoping against hope, people of Mokama, a small town about 90km from the state capital, continue their satyagraha against the closure of Nazareth Hospital run by a Missionary organization. On Thursday evening, they took out a candlelight march in the town, close on the heels of a march by children to press their demand for the reopening of the hospital. Earlier in the day, a three-member delegation met the hospital's administrator, Sister Usha, for about one hour, but the talks didn't bore any fruit. The president of Nazareth Hospital Bachao Sangharsh Samiti, Upendra Sharma, told, "We requested Sister Usha to keep this jewel in Mokama's crown operational for the benefit of people of the town and nearby districts. Yeh hospital Mokama ka gaurav hai. The Jesuit organization is welcome to start any new venture on its premises, but it should not be at the cost of the hospital's closure." According to Sharma, Sister Usha told them that any decision about reopening the hospital would be taken by the hospital's board headed by Sister Basanti Lakra. She, however, assured them that the spokesperson at the Bishop's House in Patna would talk to them. While Sister Usha could not be reached for her comments, Sister Basanti Lakra had earlier told that they had been forced to close the hospital on account of various factors. She had said that on account of commendable improvement in healthcare services in the state and faster communication facilities, the inflow of patients to the hospital had declined over the years.

The Mind's Eye

HAPPY ALL THE WAY

**RAJYOGI
BRAHMAKUMAR
NIKUNJ JI**

How do we accumulate happiness? A tough task for all, but not an impossible one. It is said that a person with a happy, healthy mind is the one who is Happiest, because in this state of mind he remains calm and truly happy.

The main reason for our unhappiness is, when we fall below the line of self respect. The lower we sink beneath our self respect, the more miserable we become, slipping into a state of denial, thinking that it is normal not to have happiness. However, our focus should not be on constant happiness, but it should be on how we can begin to achieve a happy & healthy mind. A wiser person is the one who, instead of trying to make big leaps in life, just tries moving from one lamp post to the next. By doing so he experiences significant changes that take place & enlighten him from within. One must always learn to live in the present & try to connect with what is around us. This simple method will give us a heightened state of awareness. The more aware we are, the more we are able to stay above. The habit of seeing benefit in everything helps us to stay above when the world is down below. What is needed for this is good feelings, energy, light and more understanding. We can learn from everything that happens around us. If someone else makes a mistake, we can learn from it as well. Positive vision is an incredible way to bring happiness into the world. So try to cultivate positive vision in life & keep accumulating happiness.

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