

Opp stages symbolic walk out from all-party meet; stormy Monsoon Session ahead likely

NEW DELHI: An all-party meeting convened by the government ahead of Parliament's Monsoon Session on Sunday saw the entire opposition staging a symbolic walk-out over the invitation to rebel TMC MPs and a demand for a discussion on the issues of Ram temple donation 'theft', NEET paper leak and mixing of ethanol in petrol. Though the opposition MPs returned soon to the meeting after protesting over what they termed was the "miscarriage of justice", the walkout signalled a stormy Monsoon Session ahead. The government on its part said it will listen to the Opposition and the opposition should also listen to it. "People of the country want Parliament to function smoothly. We also want this.



By protesting, no one is going to benefit politically. That is why I request members of all political parties to take part in the proceedings wholeheartedly," Union Minister Kiren Rijiju said. "If the opposition protests and creates chaos, the country suffers a lot. That is why in the Monsoon Session, where several important legislations

will come, the opposition should take part. If they want to oppose, they should oppose through debate, not by creating chaos and protests. We will cooperate and hope they will also cooperate," he said. As the meeting started, the opposition also protested against Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla's decisions on the rebel TMC lawmakers, allow-

ing them separate seats in the House and merger of the rebel Shiv Sena (UBT) MPs with the Shiv Sena led by Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. "Opposition decided to walk out of all-party meeting to protest the Speaker's decision on rebel MPs of TMC, Shiv Sena (UBT)," Congress leader Pramod Tiwari told reporters at Parliament House complex where the meeting is under-way. CPM leader John Brittas said the invitation to rebel TMC MPs to the all-party meet was a "miscarriage of justice". TMC MP Mahua Moitra said the entire opposition, including the Congress, the Samajwadi Party, DMK, JMM, Aam Aadmi Party, National Conference, Left parties, Shiv Sena (UBT), walked out of the

meeting in protest as the "so-called NCPI", which is an unrecognised party, was invited. She said the strength of the All India Trinamool Congress in the list provided by the table office is shown to be 28 members and these "so-called rebel 20 MPs" merger has not been approved by the Speaker. "Twenty disqualification petitions are still pending. There is no room for a separate bloc after the 91st amendment of the Constitution. So on what grounds did the Parliamentary Affairs Minister extend an invitation to these 20 rebel MPs and how are they attending this meeting? We have registered our strong symbolic protest and walked out," she said, thanking other opposition parties for extending the support to the TMC.

Mismatch in NEET (UG) retest scores suggests deeper rot in system: MP

BEED: NCP (SP) MP from Beed, Bajrang Sonwane, on Sunday claimed he has received several complaints from students about an alleged mismatch in their NEET-UG re-test scores after the NTA declared results, terming it a failure of governance. He demanded the immediate resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over the conduct of the national-level examination amid paper leak allegations. Some students from Beed district in Maharashtra have alleged discrepancies between their expected marks, calculated through the official answer key, and the final scores declared on their scorecards

following the declaration of results of the NEET-UG 2026 re-exam. "I have received around 10 to 11 official representations from students and parents within this district alone. The scale of paper leaks and irregularities regarding the NEET exam across the country reveals a completely chaotic and unplanned administration," Sonwane told reporters. Recounting his interactions with affected families, he recalled meeting an aggrieved student in Wadwani and two others in Beed, noting that he had also tweeted about another student's case earlier. Reacting to protests by students against al-

leged irregularities in the NEET-UG exam, the MP said, "Instead of addressing the nts within this district alone. The scale of paper leaks and irregularities regarding the NEET exam across the country reveals a completely chaotic and unplanned administration," Sonwane togrativity of the situation, the administration is picking up and detaining protestors. I fail to understand how such actions fit into a functioning democracy". The NCP (SP) leader said he would raise this issue of accountability in the upcoming parliamentary session. He said efforts will be made to bring a second railway line to the region.

Husband dies, wife critical after couple falls from rooftop in Delhi

NEW DELHI: A post-dinner sleep on the rooftop of their four-storey house in Gandhi Nagar turned fatal, leaving the husband dead and his wife in critical condition, following family allegations of the couple arguing on the terrace right before the fall, police said on Sunday. The deceased was identified as Varun Sharma, and his wife, Geeta (29), is undergoing treatment at GTB Hospital, police said. A senior police officer said the couple lived with their family at Nanak Basti in Old Seelampur under the Gandhi Nagar police station area in East Delhi. Preliminary investigation revealed that the couple had dinner with the family around 9 pm and then went to sleep on the rooftop of the house. "Around 10 pm, family members heard the couple arguing on the terrace, followed by a loud sound of someone falling," police said. When relatives rushed outside, they found both Varun and Geeta lying injured in the lane below. Police said the couple were immediately taken to the hospital, where doctors declared Varun brought dead, while Geeta was referred to GTB Hospital. Police said it is yet to be

ascertained whether the couple accidentally fell during the argument or whether one pushed the other. "So far, family members have not expressed suspicion of any foul play, though investigators are examining all possible angles," the officer said. According to police, the incident came to light through medico-legal case (MLC) information received from Dr Hedge-war Hospital, where Varun was brought dead by his brother Arun Sharma. deceased was identified as Varun Sharma, and his wife, Geeta (29), is undergoing treatment at GTB Hospital, police said. A senior police officer said the couple lived with their family at Nanak Basti in Old Seelampur under the Gandhi Nagar police station area in East Delhi. Preliminary investigation revealed that the couple had dinner with th Geeta was also taken to the same hospital before being referred to GTB Hospital due to the seriousness of her injuries. The couple married in February 2019 and had a two-and-a-half-year-old son. Police said Varun's body has been sent to GTB Hospital for a post-mortem, while further investigation is underway.

Multi-agency security drill conducted at Parliament ahead of Monsoon session

NEW DELHI: A multi-agency mock drill was conducted by a joint team of security forces deployed at the Parliament House complex on Sunday ahead of Monsoon session. The session will begin on Monday and is scheduled to conclude on August 13. The overall security of the complex, located in central Delhi, is rendered by the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) along with units of the Delhi Police, CRPF, NSG, NDRF and the security staff of the Parliament. CISF Director General Praveer Ranjan visited the Parliament House and re-

viewed the operational preparedness for the Monsoon session, the force said. "The DG chaired a Sainik Sammelan, interacted with personnel, felicitated outstanding performers and emphasised continuous skill upgradation and the highest standards of CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear) preparedness." "The DG also called on the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha and the Secretary-General, Lok Sabha, to review security arrangements," the CISF said in a social media post. As part of the preparedness, the post added, a multi-agency mock drill in-



volving various security forces and agencies apart from other stakeholders was conducted to validate response mechanisms and strengthen inter-agency coordination. The CISF was entrusted with the security of the Parliament in May 2024. The paramilitary functions under

the command of the Union home ministry. In a separate development, the force said in a statement that it seized about 1,800 metric tonnes of coal in the last three weeks as part of a special operation conducted by it in coalfields of West Bengal and Jharkhand to

curb the theft and pilferage of the precious fossil fuel. "The CISF seized 1,798.72 metric tonnes of illegally mined, stored or transported coal worth approximately Rs 1.08 crore during intensive operations conducted across coalfields under its security cover over the last three weeks," an official statement said. The force also seized 84 vehicles, including heavy-duty trucks and modified motorcycles used for illegal transportation of coal, and filed 21 direct complaints against persons involved in illegal mining and coal smuggling. The action follows a high-le-

vel review chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah on July 5 during which he directed the force to ensure "Zero Coal Leakage" target. PTI had reported last week that the force, as per of its heightened measures in the coal sector, had suspended four officials for allegedly failing to check coal smuggling in the two states. An officer was also transferred. The force has deployed about 12,500 personnel to guard some of the country's major coal mines operated by Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCCL), Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL) and Central Coalfields Limited (CCL).

New industrial policy underway, will offer cheap power: Himachal CM

SHIMLA: Himachal Pradesh ensures round-the-clock power supply to industries and will soon introduce a new industrial policy with a provision of reduced electricity tariffs to attract more investment in the state, Chief Minister Sukhvirinder Singh Sukhu said. He was addressing the Chandigarh Leadership Conclave and the 23rd Annual General Meeting organised by TiE (The Indus Entrepreneurs Chandigarh) on Saturday, a statement issued here on Sunday said. The chief minister said

that the state government was committed to providing every possible facility and support to investors and was poised to emerge as a national leader in green hydrogen production in the coming years. As part of its clean energy initiatives, BioChar plants were being established across the state, while a geothermal energy project had already been set up in Kinnaur district, he said. Highlighting Himachal Pradesh's status as a power-surplus state, he said the government was signing a three-year

Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with Punjab for the supply of electricity. Referring to Punjab as Himachal Pradesh's 'elder brother', the chief minister said his state would continue to strengthen this long-standing partnership by supplying power to Punjab. He said that Himachal Pradesh offers a conducive environment for the IT sector. The state government was also working towards establishing data storage infrastructure in the state. In addition, an IT park was

being developed in Kandaghat of Solan district. The state is also making efforts to secure its 7.19 per cent share in Chandigarh, and continuous dialogue was being held in this regard, Sukhu said. He also stated that a railway line from Chandigarh to Baddi was being developed, with the state government bearing 50 per cent of the expenditure on land acquisition and construction. The railway network is expected to be completed within three years and would benefit industrialists in Baddi and Nalagarh, he added.

Speaker Birla calls for constructive debate as LS BAC meets ahead of Monsoon Session

NEW DELHI: The entire opposition on Sunday staged a symbolic walk out from the all-party meeting convened here ahead of Parliament's Monsoon Session to protest against the invitation extended to rebel TMC MPs. The opposition also protested against Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla's decisions on the rebel TMC lawmakers, allowing them separate seats in the House and merger of the rebel Shiv Sena (UBT) MPs with the Shiv Sena led by Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. "Opposition decided to walk out of all-party meeting to protest the Speaker's decision on rebel MPs of TMC, Shiv Sena (UBT)," Congress leader Pramod Tiwari told reporters at Parliament House complex where the meeting is underway. CPM leader John Brittas said the invitation to rebel TMC MPs to the all-party meet was a "miscarriage of justice". The opposition members returned to the meeting venue after a brief period and participated in the proceeding. Parliamentary Affairs

Minister Kiren Rijiju had on Saturday invited leader of the breakaway Trinamool Congress (TMC) group Sudip Bandyopadhyay to the customary all-party meeting ahead of the Monsoon Session of Parliament, noting that he and 19 other MPs "have joined the National Citizens Party of India (NCPI)". Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla had on Saturday approved separate seating for the 20 rebel TMC lawmakers, who have claimed to have joined a little-known party, NCPI. The TMC rebel group of 20 MPs will be seated separately, away from the parent party, sources had said. No final decision has been taken on the demand of the rebel TMC MPs to be recognised as part of the NCPI, and the matter is still under consideration, they had said. The TMC had demanded the disqualification of the rebel MPs. The all-party meeting is held before every session of Parliament to discuss the government's legislative agenda and seek co-operation from political parties for the smooth conduct of proceedings.

Humayun Kabir appears before police over 'provocative remarks'

KOLKATA: Aam Janata Unnayan Party (AJUP) chief Humayun Kabir on Sunday appeared before the police in West Bengal's Murshidabad district in connection with a case registered over his alleged provocative remarks at a public meeting. Kabir, the MLA of Naoda, appeared at the Shaktipur police station around 11 am. This is the second time in a week that the legislator has appeared before the police over provocative remarks. He had appeared before the Rejinagar police station on



July 14 in connection with another FIR, after being questioned there for nearly four hours on July 4. The Shaktipur police station

had earlier issued him two notices, but he failed to appear. A fresh summons was served on his family members when he visited the Rejinagar

police station earlier this week, directing him to appear on Sunday. Separate FIRs were registered at the Rejinagar and Shaktipur police stations after Kabir allegedly made provocative and inflammatory remarks during public meetings in the two areas. The controversy also reverberated in the state assembly during its recent session. Chief Minister Suvenudhikari has recently warned of police action against those making statements that could disturb communal harmony.

Laser Power bags advanced conductor project from Himachal electricity board

KOLKATA: Cables and conductors manufacturer Laser Power & Infra Ltd on Sunday said it has secured a Rs 4.15 crore order from Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board Limited for the supply and installation of advanced conductors. The Kolkata-based company said the project entails replacing conventional conductors with advanced high-temperature low-sag conductors that significantly enhance transmission capacity while utilising the existing tower infrastructure. This turnkey reconductoring project is aimed at improving power supply reliability in the Nalagarh Electrical Division, Himachal Pradesh, it said. "The order, valued at approximately Rs 4.15 crore, represents Laser's first commercial deployment of advanced conductor technology under its manufacturing agreement with TS Conductor Corp of the US," the company said in a statement. Laser Power & Infra Ltd chairman and managing director Deepak Goel said the order marks the successful commercialisation of its technology partnership with TS Conductor and validates its strategy of bringing globally proven advanced conductor.

Mizoram pitches itself as emerging hub for event tourism

AIZAWL: Pitching Mizoram as an emerging destination for event tourism, Tourism Minister Lalghinglova Hmar said the state has immense untapped potential in the sector. Addressing the North East Events and Entertainment Leaders' Summit in Guwahati on Saturday, he invited event management professionals to explore the state as a venue for large-scale events and stated that improved rail and air connectivity had made Mizoram more accessible than ever. "Come and host your events in Mizoram, amid our scenic hills and valleys, pristine rivers and clean environment. We will warmly welcome you," Hmar said, according to a statement. The minister said event tourism could create substantial employment opportunities

and generate economic benefits for local communities, adding that the state government was committed to developing the sector as a key growth driver. During the summit, Mizoram showcased its tourism potential through a video presentation, highlighting the state's tourism calendar, major attractions and initiatives undertaken by the government. The presentation, jointly prepared by the Tourism Department and the Information and Public Relations Department, emphasised the state's readiness to host major tourism and entertainment events, the statement said. The two-day summit concluded on Sunday after deliberations on strategies to promote event tourism across the northeastern states, it said.

Haryana CM directs all deputy commissioners to strengthen revenue grievance redressal system

CHANDIGARH: Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Sunday reviewed the functioning of the Revenue Department and took stock of the progress made in the implementation of various digital governance initiatives, land record modernisation projects and citizen-centric reforms. During a comprehensive review meeting, the chief minister directed officers to ensure that every revenue service is delivered in a transparent, technology-driven and time-bound manner so that people receive hassle-free services without unnecessary delays, an official statement said. Saini reviewed the grievance redressal mechanism and directed officers to make the entire system more transparent, accountable and citizen-friendly. Stressing that every eligible cit-



izen must receive justice, Saini said applicants whose cases have been rejected should be given a fair opportunity to seek a review if they are not satisfied with the decision. Additional Chief Secretary and Financial Commissioner, Revenue & Disaster Management, Sumita Misra informed those present in the meeting that the Revenue Department has embarked upon a comprehensive digital transformation by establishing its first dedicated in-house Information Technology

Division in May 2025. The division has reduced dependence on external agencies and enabled faster development and maintenance of departmental digital platforms. Reviewing the progress of the Integrated Revenue portal, the chief minister was informed that the portal has been developed as a single digital platform for both citizens and departmental officers. The portal provides online revenue services through a citizen-friendly interface, in-

corporates a Single Sign-On system for officers and enables real-time monitoring of service delivery and pendency through integrated dashboards. While reviewing the complaint dashboard, Saini directed officers to maintain complete transparency in the disposal of applications. He instructed that every rejected case should clearly mention the reasons for rejection and that all such records should be maintained properly. He further directed officers to conduct random checks of rejected cases to ensure that no eligible applicant is denied benefits due to procedural lapses or incorrect scrutiny. The chief minister directed all deputy commissioners to include tehsildars and other Revenue Department officers in the weekly 'Samadhan Shivirs' being organised across all dis-

tricts. Saini reviewed the progress of the State's Land Record Modernisation Programme and was informed that more than 40.20 crore legacy revenue record images have been digitised, laying the foundation for a comprehensive digital land records repository. Nearly 44,000 square kilometres have been covered through drone surveys, while 19 Continuously Operating Reference Stations have been established to strengthen Haryana's geospatial infrastructure. As many as 99 per cent of village maps have been geo-referenced, around 60 lakh Tatima maps have been updated, and approximately 60 per cent of records of rights have been standardised. Over 99.5 per cent of digitised records have already undergone first-level verification.