

Administration ready to cope with rains: CM

By Our Correspondent

KOLKATA, July 26: The West Bengal administration is prepared to cope with any situation arising out of heavy rains in the state during the next 48 hours as has been predicted by the meteorological department.

Chief minister Mamata Banerjee told reporters on Sunday that a three-member committee headed by the state home secretary had been formed to monitor the situation.

The weather office predicted heavy to very heavy rainfall in the next 48 hours, which might result in flood in some parts of the state, because of a low pressure developing along the north-east Bay of Bengal adjoining Bangladesh and the West Bengal coast.

"Already some parts of North 24 Parganas district are waterlogged because of rains. But the administration is working round the clock with the local civic bodies. In the event of further rainfall we are alert and will cope with the situation," Banerjee said before leaving for London on a five-day trip.

The chief minister said the situation would be monitored even during her visit abroad and prompt decision would be taken as and when required. She hinted at her trip being cut short in case the situation turned intractable.

"Heavy to very heavy rain (724cm) is likely to occur at isolated places over Gangetic West Bengal and heavy rains (712cm) may occur in places over Odisha in the next 48 hours," a senior MeT official said last evening.

Warning has also been issued for fisherman going out to the sea.

Heavy rains hit the city and different parts of West Bengal on Saturday, causing water-



Mamata Banerjee at the Kolkata airport before taking her flight to London on Sunday

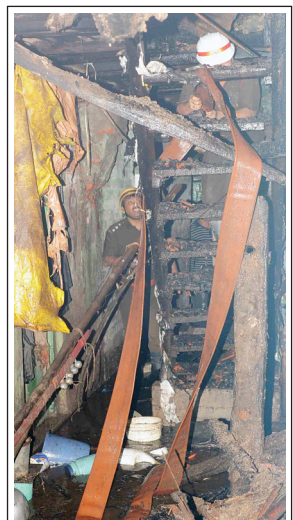
logging in many low lying areas.

Meanwhile, with several parts of Odisha already being pounded by a downpour since yesterday, many areas are likely to be lashed by heavy rains coupled with gusty surface wind till tomorrow under the influence of the low pressure formed over the northeast Bay of Bengal.

The low pressure, formed under the influence of cyclonic circulation over the northeast Bay of Bengal and neighbourhood, would concentrate into a

depression shortly, the local meteorological centre in Bhubaneswar said.

Under its impact, rains and thundershowers would occur in most places in the state. Heavy rainfall would occur at one or two places in northern part of the state in the next 24 hours, it said. Gusty surface wind with speed reaching 45 to 50 kmph and up to 60 kmph over North Odisha coast and 40 to 45 kmph over south Odisha coast would prevail along and off Odisha coast, the meteorological office said.



KOLKATA, 26 July: A fire broke out at the thickly populated Aheritola Nathbagan slum in north Kolkata around 4 pm on Sunday. Eleven fire tenders brought the fire under control. No casualty was reported. Three houses in the slum were completely gutted. —Prabir Bhattacharya



By Our Correspondent

KOLKATA, July 26: The Enforcement Directorate has summoned actress and Trinamool Congress MP Satabdi Roy for her alleged involvement with the Saradha chit fund company. Roy has been asked to present herself at the ED office on July 29.

According to ED sources, the Trinamool MP has told the investigating agency that though she was ready to cooperate in the investigation, she would not be able to appear before the investigators on July 29, as she would remain busy

with the ongoing parliament session.

Roy, however, told the ED that she would send all the documents related to the case through her lawyer.

ED officials said on Sunday that Saradha boss Sudipto Sen had admitted during his interrogation that Bollywood megastar and Trinamool MP Mithun Chakraborty and Satabdi Roy had been roped in to enhance the brand value of the company.

The actress was Saradha's brand ambassador and was paid Rs two lakh a month, Sudipto Sen had claimed. "After verifying the documents she would send, we will ask her to come to our office for recording her statement," an ED officer said.

Mithun Chakraborty has already returned the money — Rs 1.19 crore — he received from the Saradha group to the Enforcement Directorate. The actor had been paid that sum for his appearance on one of Saradha's TV channels.

For parents and children, too

By Our Correspondent

KOLKATA, July 26: As the city's population is ageing, many elderly people face a common problem. Their children, whom they have brought up with great care, often leave them under compulsion of finding a living in some faraway place. Maybe they send some money home and keep in touch over phone or Skype, but that is not enough for their parents to escape the pangs of loneliness. There are not too many community organisations that could lend them a hand of support. Mamta Ka Mandir under Bhagwat Jan Kalyan Trust was established precisely with this objective: helping those old people whose children had left them. And now, it is venturing to make another much needed social intervention: helping those children whose parents have left them. Its founder Pandit Maliram Shastri made the announcement during its fourth annual function at Rajarhat on Sunday. The children will get free education in DPS Megacity. Ramavtar Poddar, Dr. S.K. Sharma, Vijay Agarwal, A.D.C.P (Traffic) Bidhannagar Police Commissioner Shivani Tiwari, Biramprakash Sultania, Satyanarayan Khaitan, Vinod Kedia, Naval Sultania, Dilip Chowdhary and Manoj Agarwal graced the occasion.

City

With Yakub set for final reckoning, ISI professors question 2004 execution

Demand for relook at Dhananjoy case

By Nilanjan Dutta

KOLKATA, July 26: Even as Yakub Memon's petition comes up before the Supreme Court on Monday and his last mercy plea still lies with the President, the Coordination of Democratic Rights Organisations (CDRO), a conglomeration of rights bodies in the country, has raised the demand for reopening of the case of Dhananjay Chatterjee, hanged in a city jail 11 years ago.

The demand is prompted by the findings of a recent research by two professors of the Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata. According to the report by Debashish Sengupta and Prabal Chaudhury titled "Re-Analysis of the Case of the Murder of Hetal Parekh and the Judicial Killing of Dhananjay Chatterjee", all the mainstays of the police and prosecution story are open to question.

Dhananjoy was executed on the eve of Independence Day 2004, nearly 14 years after his arrest in May 1990, on charges of rape and murder of school-girl Hetal Parekh, who lived in a city apartment in which he worked as a guard.

What made the statisticians turn to something that is apparently not even remotely con-

nected with their academic discipline? "We are immersed in mathematics, and mathematics is all about logic. Before the hanging as we were following the news about the case, it seemed there was a lack of logic in the whole build-up. Any logical voice might have been drowned in the pro-hanging frenzy. Sometime after the execution, we decided to put all the elements of the case to the test of logic. And now we are in a position to say that his guilt had not been proved beyond reasonable doubt," Prof. Sengupta told Morning India.

The task was not easy. Moreover, it was not an official project. However, the two professors with two research associates meticulously gathered and analysed every bit of record generated in course of the long case.

Here are some salient points from their findings which CDRO has cited to back up its demand:

Witnesses: The police case was based on certain witness accounts which are suspect. The police claimed that the apartment liftman had left Dhananjay on the floor of the victim's apartment. The liftman denied this in court and the prosecution had to declare

him hostile. The police seizure list was signed as witness by a person who supplied tea to the police station. He did not turn up to give evidence during the trial.

Recoveries: A necklace recovered at the scene of crime, which the police claimed to be Dhananjay's, turned out to belong to another apartment staffer who claimed to have given it to Dhananjay. Police also did not bother to tally the number of the watch recovered from Dhananjay's village house and the one that the Parekh family claimed was stolen from their house.

Forensic evidence: There were 21 stab wounds on the victim's body, but no weapon was recovered. The victim's body was lying in a pool of blood, yet no witness claimed that they saw any blood on Dhananjay's clothes. While semen traces were found in the victim's vagina, no DNA test was done to ascertain if it was of the accused.

Other inconsistencies: The crime allegedly happened between 5:20 pm and 5:50 pm, while Hetal's mother was out of the house. However, she called the police three hours after discovering her body and immediately named Dhananjay as the culprit. A letter to the



security agency by Hetal's father alleging that Dhananjay used to harass her was used by the police to establish motive. To the researchers, it seemed to have been written after the crime.

"Unfortunately, even if our findings raise strong doubts now, there is no way to bring back the person concerned,"

rued Prof. Sengupta.

"This is one of the main reasons why we demand that no one should be hanged: be it Yakub Memon or Dhananjay. Death penalty must be abolished. It leaves no chance for rectification even if an error of judgement is found later," said Tapas Chakraborty, one of the conveners of CDRO.

Mamata on a fun trip: Rahul

By Our Correspondent

KOLKATA, July 26: West Bengal BJP president Rahul Sinha ridiculed Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's London visit as a "fun trip" from a Kargil Day rally in Kolkata on Sunday. He resented the huge expenditure on the tour and also reacted on her strategies of business dealings with Britain.

"The Chief Minister is out on a fun trip to London with a band of ministers investing such a huge sum of money just for merriment, rather than something of worth. Britain is itself sinking under a financial crisis and our CM went there in the hope of aid," the state BJP president said.

The BJP leader also predicted new "revelations" regarding the Saradha scam in August. On the syndicates issue he said, "Our CM says something

and does the very opposite. Maybe her party men too do not listen to her, which was evident the day after July 21. She asked them to stop harassing teachers and soon it was followed by a teacher in Asansol getting beaten up."

Sixteen years after the Kargil war, the BJP sought to commemorate it in Kolkata by taking out a procession from Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's statue at Shyambazar five-point crossing to the statue of Captain Kanad Bhattacharya near Tala Bridge.

The BJP and Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha while paying homage to Captain Bhattacharya, who died defending the border in 1999, demanded that an important street in the city be named after him.

They said as the Mayor was in London with the CM, they



Rahul Sinha garlanding the statue of Captain Kanad Bhattacharya in Kolkata on Sunday —Prabir Bhattacharya

would submit their demand to the deputy mayor. Sinha appreciated the Prime Minister's role on the border issue and

said, "Pakistan is continuously indulging in attacks on India, but Modiji is capable of hoisting the Indian flag in Lahore."

‘Victims’ to knock CEC door

By Our Correspondent

KOLKATA, July 26: A delegation of Amra Akranta, a forum of "victims of violence by the state and the ruling party" in West Bengal, will meet Chief Election Commissioner Nasim Zaidi next month to complain about the "deteriorating law and order in the state", which, it believes, will not allow the 2016 Assembly elections to be

held in a free and fair manner. The delegation will also meet the state's Chief Electoral Officer Sunil Gupta on August 4 on the issue.

The delegation will include among others Prof. Ambikesh Mahapatra, Pratima Dutta, Promila Roy Biswas (sister of slain activist Barun Biswas), the lady of Sattore allegedly tortured by the police and Ibrahim Siddiqui of Furfura Sharif.

They will also meet Union home minister Rajnath Singh to seek justice for several cases of human rights violations in the state.

Amra Akranta members had earlier met President Pranab Mukherjee and held a sit-in at Jantar Mantar in Delhi to highlight what it described as complete lawlessness in West Bengal.

Though the President's office had asked the state

home secretary to hear out their grievances, the state government was yet to respond, Mahapatra said on Sunday.

"Even when we went to Nabanna to meet the home secretary, we were denied an appointment. We will tell the EC that holding of a free election here will be impossible because the administration works in favour of Trinamool Congress," he said.



Dog lovers rally in Kolkata on Sunday to protest against the Kerala government's recent decision to kill all stray dogs

—Prabir Bhattacharya

Working on e-retailing strategy, says Godrej

KOLKATA, July 26: Consumer durable major Godrej Appliances today said it is working on differentiated online strategy for its products in the wake of deep discounting by e-retailers.

"When it comes to discounting by the online players, we are working on a strategy of differentiated offering with our strategic online partners so that together we offer a value to the end consumer which is not based on the discounted price but on the overall product proposition," Godrej Appliances Business Head & EVP Kamal Nandi said on Sunday.

"Online sales today are growing by leaps and bounds. E-tailing has successfully created a buzz and connect with the consumers. Going by the performance in the past year, we feel that this emerging channel has huge potential," he said.

Currently, the mix of online in the overall sales is three per cent. Along with online strategy, he said, the company is also strengthening physical sales channels.