

ETHNIC VIOLENCE Schools reopen in Manipur

Attendance very
low on the first day

NDTV ONLINE

After remaining shut for over a couple of months because of violence, schools reopened across Manipur yesterday.

Though attendance in most institutes was extremely low on the first day, students and guardians welcomed the state government's decision to restart classes.

Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Monday announced to reopen schools for classes 1 to 8 from July 5. Most students with whom PTI interacted were very happy to get back to school.

Class 1 student Linthoi said, "I am very happy. After a two-month wait, I will be able to meet my friends and teachers." She said the shutting down of schools had made her life boring.



University student activists take part in a demonstration in Maharagama, a suburb of Colombo, Sri Lanka yesterday, demanding the release of some of their colleagues in police custody and to mark the first year anniversary of the toppling of former president Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

Syria revokes BBC's media accreditation

Accuses the British
broadcaster of
spreading 'fake
news'

AFP, Damascus

Syria on Saturday announced it was cancelling the BBC's accreditation over what it called "misleading reports", a rare move against an international media outlet in the war-torn country.

"Due to the broadcaster's failure to adhere to professional standards and its insistence on providing biased and misleading reports", the information ministry has decided to "cancel the accreditation" of the BBC's "correspondent and cameraman", it said in a statement.

Accreditation of the BBC Radio correspondent in Syria was also revoked, the ministry added.

A spokesperson for the British broadcaster, without directly commenting on the Syrian move, said that "BBC News Arabic provides impartial independent journalism" and speaks "to people across the political spectrum to establish facts".

The information ministry said since Syria's war broke out in 2011, the BBC has "from time to time provided subjective and fake information and reports about the reality" in the country.

US-China ties on 'surer footing' after talks

Says US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, expects more communication at staff level

REUTERS, Beijing

US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said 10 hours of meetings with senior Chinese officials in recent days were "direct" and "productive", helping stabilise the superpowers' often rocky relationship as her four-day Beijing trip ended.

Before departing China yesterday, Yellen said the United States and China remained at odds on a number of issues but expressed confidence that her visit had advanced efforts to put the relationship on "surer footing".

"The US and China have significant disagreements," Yellen told a press conference at the US embassy in Beijing, citing Washington's concerns about what she called "unfair economic practices" and recent punitive actions against US firms.

"But President (Joe) Biden and I do not see the relationship between the US and China through the frame of great power conflict. We believe that the world is big enough for both of our countries to thrive."

With US-China relations at a low over national security issues, including Taiwan, US export bans on advanced technologies and China's state-led industrial policies, Washington has been trying to repair ties between the world's two biggest economies.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken visited Beijing last month, the first trip by the top US diplomat in Biden's presidency. Climate

envoy John Kerry is expected to visit this month.

The US diplomatic push comes ahead of a possible meeting between Biden and President Xi Jinping at September's Group of 20 summit in New Delhi or a Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation gathering scheduled for November in San Francisco.

Yellen said her visit aimed to establish and deepen ties with China's new economic team, reduce



the risk of misunderstanding and pave the way for cooperation in areas such as climate change and debt distress.

"I do think we've made some progress and I think we can have a healthy economic relationship that benefits both of us and the world," she said, adding that she expected more regular communications at the staff level.

Briefing reporters after the visit, a senior Treasury official said the trip as expected did not result in specific policy breakthroughs, but was "very successful" in terms

of "re-establishing contact" and building relationships.

She said Chinese officials raised concerns about an expected US executive order restricting outbound investment, but she assured them any such measure would be narrow in scope and enacted in a transparent way, through a rule-making process that would allow public input.

Yellen said she told Chinese officials they could raise concerns about US actions, so that Washington could explain, and "possibly in some situations, respond to unintended consequences of our actions if they're not carefully targeted."

Yellen met with officials including Premier Li Qiang and People's Bank of China Deputy Governor Pan Gongsheng, whom she referred to as the head of the central bank, appearing to confirm his expected promotion.

She also met US companies doing business in China, climate finance experts and women economists.

In her meetings with officials, she urged more cooperation between the sides on economic and climate issues while criticising what she called "punitive actions" against US companies in China.

She reiterated that Washington was not seeking to decouple from China's economy, as doing so would be "disastrous for both countries and destabilising for the world."

FUKUSHIMA PLANT North Korea slams IAEA for water approval

AFP, Seoul

North Korea yesterday slammed the UN nuclear watchdog for approving Japan's plan to discharge treated water from the Fukushima nuclear plant.

The International Atomic Energy Agency approved Tokyo's plan to release treated water from the tsunami-hit nuclear plant into the sea over the next few decades.

The plan has raised concerns in neighbouring countries, prompting China to ban some food imports and sparking protests in South Korea.

The release of the treated water will have a "fatal adverse impact on the human lives and security and ecological environment," an official from Pyongyang's environmental protection ministry said in a statement.

"What matters is the unreasonable behaviour of IAEA actively patronizing and facilitating Japan's projected discharge of nuclear-polluted water, which is unimaginable," the statement added.

Some 1.33 million cubic metres of water used for cooling have accumulated at the nuclear plant, where several reactors went into meltdown after the 2011 tsunami overwhelmed cooling systems.

12 dead in north India rain fury

Delhi downpour highest
in 40 years

NDTV ONLINE

At least 12 people have died in the past two days as heavy rain pounded several parts of north India. The weather office has predicted more showers over the next couple of days.

The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted heavy to extremely heavy rain for Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir.

The IMD said a western disturbance prevailed over northern India, leading to an intense spell of rain on Saturday, including Delhi which experienced the season's first heavy rain.

Waterlogging led to traffic jams in several parts of the national capital. The city recorded 153 mm of rainfall in 24 hours, highest in single day in July since 1982.

Heavy rain continued in Delhi and its adjoining areas yesterday as well. Several parts of Gurugram also experienced waterlogging and power outages.

A 58-year-old woman was killed in Delhi when the ceiling of her flat came crashing down on her, while four people died in rain-related incidents in Rajasthan.

A woman and her six-year-old daughter were killed in UP's Muzaffarnagar early yesterday morning after their house collapsed due to heavy rain.



EXPLICIT PHOTOS CLAIMS BBC suspends male presenter

AGENCIES

The BBC yesterday suspended a prominent male presenter over allegations that he paid a teenager for sexually explicit images, as the corporation struggles to contain a rapidly escalating crisis. It has been alleged that the unnamed BBC star gave £35,000 over three years to a young person who used the money to fund their crack cocaine habit. The young person, who was allegedly just 17 years old when they began talking to the presenter, is said to have given the BBC presenter sexually explicit images and performances. The BBC said yesterday: "The BBC takes any allegations seriously and we have robust internal processes in place to proactively deal with such allegations..."

Thailand's PM frontrunner rallies supporters

AFP, Bangkok

Thailand's progressive frontrunner for prime minister yesterday told supporters he would "not step back" ahead of a parliamentary vote this week that will determine if he will lead the country. Pita Limjaroenrat's pro-democracy Move Forward Party (MFP) netted the most seats at the May 14 election but there are no guarantees it will be able to form government or that he will become the premier. MFP's eight-party coalition has a total of 312 lower house seats but remains short of the 376 votes needed across both houses of parliament to endorse Pita for the top job.



Amazon basin countries race to save rainforest

AFP, Leticia

With the effects of climate change mounting, Amazon basin countries met in Colombia for a summit Saturday to strategize on how to save the world's biggest rainforest.

"To sustain the Amazon, according to science, we need to keep 80 percent of its forests standing and not manage to go beyond 20 percent deforestation, and unfortunately we are already at 17," said Colombian Environment Minister Susana Muhamad.

"Losing the Amazon, reaching the point of no return, has irreversible consequences for global climate change," she warned at the meeting attended by representatives from Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela.

Rainforests are often called the "lungs of the Earth," soaking up planet-warming carbon dioxide and expelling life-giving oxygen.

Their protection is crucial in the battle to combat climate change.

In a bit of rare good news, deforestation of the Brazilian Amazon fell by one-third in the first six months of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's administration compared to the same period last year, the government said last week.

Lula's leftist government also has pledged to seize half of all land deforested illegally in areas designated as having special environmental protection, set aside three million hectares (7.4 million acres) of protected land by 2027, and strengthen Brazil's network for environmental monitoring.



Police arrest a Sikh protestor during a demonstration for the independence of Khalistan in front of the Indian Consulate in Toronto, Canada on Saturday. Earlier this week, the US condemned vandalism at the Indian consulate in San Francisco after Indian news agency ANI reported that Sikh separatists had tried to set fire to the offices.

Reporter for Mexican newspaper found slain

AFP, Mexico City

A regional correspondent for leading Mexican newspaper La Jornada was found slain on Saturday, shortly after he went missing in the western state of Nayarit, prosecutors said.

Luis Martin Sanchez Iniguez is one of three active or former journalists to have been abducted in the state in recent days, the prosecutors' office said in a statement, adding to Mexico's surging attacks on the press that are often linked to the country's powerful drug cartels.

His body turned up in a village near Tepic "with signs of violence" and two cardboard messages pinned to his chest.

The statement did not indicate the content of the scrawled cardboard messages left on Sanchez's body by his abductors, a common tactic used by organized crime in Mexico to sow terror.