

Maharashtra ex-Minister Baba Siddique shot dead in Mumbai's Bandra

MUMBAI, OCT 12: Sending shockwaves in political circles, Ajit Pawar-led NCP's senior leader Baba Ziauddin Siddique was shot dead near Nirmal Nagar in Bandra East on Saturday.

As per available information, at least two-three persons, who were lying in wait for the former state minister, rushed and fired multiple rounds indiscriminately at him. The businessman-cum-politician sustained two-three rounds, including one in the chest, outside his office there.

An aide standing nearby also suffered a shot in the leg even as the assailants in the shoot-and-scoot incident disappeared from there, around 9.30 pm.

Initially, the crowd did not notice the development as fire crackers were being burst on the roads as part of Dussehra celebrations and crowds were re-



turning from the two major political rallies this evening.

As some people realised that there was a shootout, his aides and others helped rush him to the Lilavati Hospital in Bandra West where he was declared dead.

As news of the shootout and Siddique's demise spread like wildfire, top NCP, Congress and leaders of the MahaYuti, plus his Congress MLA son Zee-

shan B. Siddique rushed to the hospital, besides his close friend and Bollywood actor Sanjay Dutt, among others.

According to a police officer, two persons were detained from Andheri East soon after the shootout and further investigations are under way by the Crime Branch.

Though the motives behind the killing of the influential and prominent minority community

leader Siddique are not clear, it is tentatively suspected to be an outcome of some business rivalry.

A veteran Congress leader for decades and a close associate of the former Union Minister Sunil Dutt and his daughter Priya Dutt, Siddique had quit the party to throw his lot with Ajit Pawar's NCP in February, ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

For the past few months, even his son Zeeshan has been sitting on the fence and is expected to make his political preferences clear soon, ahead of the upcoming state Assembly elections.

The Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) leaders have slammed the MahaYuti regime for the sensational killing of Siddique and demanded the resignation of the Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister and Home Minister Devendra Fadnis.

Sant Nirankari Mission organises grand English Medium Samagam

HIMALAYAN MAIL NEWS JAMMU, OCT 12

With the grace of Satguru Mata Sudhiksha Ji Maharaj an English Medium Samagam was organised at Sant Nirankari Satsang Bhawan, Shastrri Nagar, Jammu where Large number of saints irrespective of age from every nook and corner of Jammu, participated and had Divine Blessings.

The Samagam was presided over by Rev Saint Narpal Singh Ji Gyan Pracharak from Chandigarh. While addressing the congregation he said that the language of love is most powerful language. But in the modern age English being most adopted language world over and all the modern gadgets are



synchronised with English language. As such the Satguru wants that saints of mission specially youth should be adept in speaking and writing English to

compete in the world scenario and enabling them to spread the spiritual message of the Sant Nirankari Mission world over effectively. Amongst others the

congregation was also addressed and thanked all the participating branches of the Sant Nirankari Mission world over effectively. Amongst others the

Global Hunger Index 2024 ranks India under 'serious' category

LONDON, OCT 12: The Global Hunger Index (GHI), a tool used by international humanitarian agencies to measure and track hunger levels with GHI scores based on under-nourishment and child mortality indicators across 127 countries, has ranked India 105th, which places it under the "serious" category of the analysis.

The 2024 report, now in its 19th edition, is published this week by Irish humanitarian organisation Concern Worldwide and German aid agency Welthungerhilfe to highlight that hunger levels will remain high in many of the world's poorest countries for several decades in the absence of more progress in measures to tackle the issue.

India is among 42 countries that fall within the "serious" category, alongside Pakistan and Afghanistan, with other South Asian neighbours such as Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka showing better GHI scores to be listed under the "moderate" category.

"With a score of 27.3 in 2024 Global Hunger Index,



India has a level of hunger that is serious," reads the index entry.

India's GHI score is based on the values of four component indicators: 13.7 per cent of the population is undernourished, 35.5 per cent of children under five are stunted with 18.7 per cent of them being wasted, and 2.9 per cent of children die before their fifth birthday, the report notes.

For the purpose of the index, undernourishment is defined as the share of the population with insufficient caloric intake, stunted as the share of children under age five who have low

height for their age to reflect "chronic" undernutrition, wasting as the share of children under five who have low weight for their height due to "acute" undernutrition, and mortality refers to the fatal mix of inadequate nutrition and unhealthy environments.

Based on the values of these four indicators, a GHI score is calculated for each country on a 100-point scale reflecting the severity of hunger, where 0 is the best possible score (no hunger) and 100 is the worst.

Based on its analysis, the report concludes the

chances of achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal of Zero Hunger by 2030 are looking very unlikely.

"Despite the international community's repeated emphasis on the importance of the right to adequate food, there remains a troubling disparity between the standards established and the reality that in many parts of the world the right to food is being blatantly disregarded," the report concludes.

Globally, around 733 million people face hunger each day due to a lack of access to a sufficient amount of food, while about 2.8 billion people cannot afford a healthy diet.

Some of the African nations are on the extreme ends of the GHI spectrum under the "alarming" category, with wars in Gaza and Sudan being highlighted as having led to exceptional food crises.

Conflict and civil strife are also generating food crises elsewhere, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Mali and Syria, it added.

Data-logger video indicates track change preceded Tamil Nadu train accident: Experts

NEW DELHI, OCT 12:

A day after a passenger train rammed into a stationary freight train near Chennai, experts and union leaders said according to the data-logger video, the Mysuru-Darbhanga Express was given a green signal to pass through the main line, however, it entered a loop line already occupied by the freight train.

Train number 12578, Mysuru-Darbhanga Bagmati Express, collided with the stationary goods train at the Kavaraipeeta railway station in the Chennai rail division in Tamil Nadu around 8.30 pm on Friday, leading to injuries to nine passengers.

The data logger is a device placed in the station area to capture train movements and signal aspects, among other things.

This data logger's yard-simulation video has been circulated among senior railway officials' WhatsApp groups since Saturday morning, prompting them to draw a parallel between the accident and the Balasore train collision of June 2, 2023.

When contacted, the chief public relations officer (CPRO) of the Southern Railway said he is not aware of any such video and that multiple investigations have already been initiated into the collision.

In a press statement released late on Friday, the Railway Board also admitted that the passenger train was given a green signal for the main line but it experienced a jerk and entered the loop line, resulting in the collision with the freight train. A high-level enquiry has been ordered into the incident.

The board said on Saturday that the commissioner



of railway safety will conduct a detailed investigation as he visited the accident site in the morning.

In Balasore, the Howrah-bound Coromandel Express was given a green signal for the main line. However, due to the wrong interlocking of tracks, it entered a loop line and collided with a stationary goods train.

"Based on the information available in the public domain, it appears that this collision almost repeats the Balasore train collision of June 2, 2023. The railways should take a serious approach to remove the anomalies in the signalling system," R Kumaresan, president, All India Loco Running Staff Association (AILRSA), Southern Railway, said.

According to safety experts, in an automatic-signalling system, the signal aspect follows the interlocking of tracks. It means if the signal is green for the main line, the interlocking will automatically be set in such a way that the train comes on the main line.

"The lack of coordination

between signal aspect and interlocking happens due to some fault in the signalling system.

Prime facie, it appears to be some kind of a technical glitch," a safety expert said, requesting anonymity.

Sanjay Pandhi, the working president of Indian Railway Loco Runningmen's Organisation (IRLRO), expressed surprise as according to him, all previous trains passed through the said station "without any abnormalities in the signalling and interlocking system".

"In Balasore, the collision happened soon after the signal-repair work was over.

Contrary to that, there was no such thing reported at the Kavaraipeeta railway station and train operations were normal.

"So it appears that some malfunction, which could be corrosion of mechanical equipment etc., might have happened, leading to a co-ordination break of signal and interlocking," Pandhi said.

KP Arya, who retired as the chief signal and tele-

com engineer/information technology in the Northern Railway, said, "The data logger's yard-simulation video shows that the train concerned is going on both the main line as well as the loop line, which is not possible."

"So there is a possibility that the train might have derailed at the interlocking point and while the engine and some coaches headed towards the loop line and collided with the freight train, the remaining coaches scattered all around, infringing the main line as well," he added.

Arya said it is a widely-known (but never officially acknowledged) engineering defect of tracks and interlocking-point mechanisms, which can cause such a derailment.

"I have gone on highlighting this aspect during my various tenures to the Railway Board as well as to the commissioner of railway safety," he said.

The experts said a clear picture would only emerge after a thorough investigation, which is already on.

RG Kar horror: Doctors of private hospitals call for 'partial cease work'



KOLKATA, OCT 12: Doctors of private hospitals on Saturday called for a 48-hour "partial cease work" from October 14 in medical establishments across West Bengal, in solidarity with the agitating junior medics observing a fast-unto-death, demanding justice for the RG Kar hospital victim.

The doctors, under the banner of Healthcare Professionals of Private Hospitals, however, said emergency services in all medical facilities will remain operational.

Maintaining that the

West Bengal government has not taken any positive steps with regard to the demands of the agitating medics of state-run hospitals, the medics said the entire fraternity was worried and in anxiety over the situation.

"From October 14 onwards, majority of doctors of private set-ups will not perform any non-emergency duties," the medics told reporters here.

"But, we will make sure no patient suffers due to this, as all emergency services will be kept opera-

tional," they said. The "partial cease work" will begin from 6 am of October 14. The doctors said their agitation could be extended if they do not receive "appropriate response" from the state government.

"We request the government to pay heed to the protesting doctors' demands and consider those with empathy. If appropriate response is received from their side, we will go back to our usual work," the medics said in a release.

They also expressed

concern over the health condition of the junior doctors, who are on a fast-unto-death, demanding justice for the postgraduate trainee, who was raped and murdered at the state-run R G Kar Medical College and Hospital in August, besides enhanced workplace security, and a transparent referral and patient admission system in government hospitals.

Two of the 11 medics on hunger strike have been admitted to hospital, after their health condition deteriorated.

Rima Das' 'Village Rockstars 2' wins Kim Jiseok Award at Busan International Film Festival

MUMBAI, OCT 12: Filmmaker Rima Das' "Village Rockstars 2", a sequel to her 2017 film, has won the Kim Jiseok Award at 2024 Busan International Film Festival.

"Village Rockstars 2" was the only Indian feature among eight films selected in the Jiseok Competition section at the 29th edition of the festival.

The film is a follow-up to the internationally acclaimed, national award-winning "Village Rockstars", which premiered at Toronto International Film Festival in 2017 and was India's official entry for the 2019 Academy Awards.

Kim Jiseok Award, established in 2017, commemorates the late Kim Jiseok, who dedicated his life to discovering and supporting



the growth of Asian cinema. It is awarded to two films that best reflect the contemporary state of Asian cinema.

The Jiseok jury, which included Christian Jeune, Prasanna Vithanage, and Shin Suwon, described Das' film as "an honest poetic expression of everyday life, showing the harmony between nature and hu-

mankind through the struggles and gaze of a young girl".

"Receiving the Kim Jiseok Award, in honour of someone who dedicated his life to the growth of Asian cinema, is truly a privilege," said Das in a statement. Earlier this year, she was invited to join the director's branch of Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sci-

ences. "Village Rockstars 2" follows a teenage girl's relentless pursuit of her musical dream.

"However, life's harsh realities challenge her innocence. As she faces these trials, she embarks on a journey to rediscover the profound connection between music and life, seeking a new harmony in the symphony of her dreams," reads the official synopsis.

The film, produced by Flying River Films and Akanga Film Asia, stars Bhanita Das, Basanti Das, Junumoni Boro, Boloram Das, and Manabendra Das.

"Village Rockstars 2" will have its India premiere at MAMI Mumbai Film Festival 2024 in South Asia Competition. The festival will be held from October 19 to 24.