

Mamata renames state Karmashree scheme after Mahatma Gandhi

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday slammed the Centre over changes to the rural job guarantee programme and announced that the state's Karmashree scheme will be renamed after Mahatma Gandhi.

Rs. 3

KOLKATA

FRIDAY, 19 DECEMBER, 2025

PG-8, YEAR-12, ISSUE-199

(RNI NO.-WBENG/2014/56803)

WEBSITE:WWW.LIVE7TV.COM

Morning India

Lok Sabha adjourned after passage of G RAM G bill amid opposition uproar

MI News Service, New Delhi: The Lok Sabha proceedings were adjourned for the day on Thursday after the passage of the G RAM G bill amid opposition uproar over its provisions.

A discussion on air pollution in the Delhi National Capital Region was to be taken up later during the day and Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra was expected to initiate the discussion.

The Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Bill, 2025, seeking to guarantee rural jobs for 125 days every year, replacing the 20-year-old MGN-REGA, was passed on Thursday after Union minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan replied to a debate on it.

But the opposition raised slogans against the government and tore copies of the bill as Chouhan delivered his concluding remarks. Speaker Om Birla adjourned the proceedings for the day after the passage of the bill. Friday is the last day of the Winter Session.

The bill that seeks to replace the 20-year-old MGNREGA with a new initiative that guarantees rural jobs for 125 days every year, was taken up for discussions as soon as the House sat for the day. But the entire opposition, particularly the Congress, stood up and started vociferous protests against the Bill.

Rural Development Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan responded to the eight-hour long discussion, which began yesterday, on The Bill, asserting that the Modi government was ensuring that the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi were upheld through various initiatives taken by it.

"Congress killed ideals of Bapu, NDA ensured Bapu lives through pucca houses built under the PM Awas Yojana, Ujjwala yojana, Swachh Bharat Mission, Ayushman Bharat," Chouhan said listing out government schemes for welfare of the poor.

Soon opposition members trooped to the well of the House raising slogans against the government for dropping Mahatma Gandhi's name from the rural jobs initiative and tearing copies of the G RAM G Bill and flinging it towards the chair.

However, the Lok Sabha passed the G RAM G Bill by a voice vote amid uproar by the opposition. The speaker adjourned the Lok Sabha for the day soon after the bill was passed.

3 more Naxalites killed in encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh

MI News Service, Raipur: Three hardcore Naxalites, including a woman, were killed in a fierce encounter with security forces in the forested area of Chhattisgarh's Sukma district on Thursday, police said.

The exchange of fire broke out early in the morning on a forested hill under the Gopalali police station area when a team of District Reserve Guard was out on a search operation based on inputs about the presence of Maoist cadres in the area, Sukma Superintendent of Police Kiran Chavan confirmed.

The bodies of three Naxalites, including a woman, with large cache of ammunition, have been recovered from the encounter site so far, he said, adding that the operation continued till late in the evening and further details about more casualties are awaited.

With this latest action, a total of 284 Naxalites have been killed in encounters in Chhattisgarh so far this year.

Of them, 255 were eliminated in the Bastar division, comprising seven districts, including Sukma, Bijapur and Dantewada, while 27 others were gunned down in Gariband district, which falls in the Raipur division. Two Naxalites were killed in Mohla-Manpur-Ambargarh Chowki district in Durg division.

These three Maoists were killed during an encounter with District Reserve Guard (DRG) jawans in the Gollapalli forest. The operation was launched after receiving specific intelligence inputs about the presence of a large group of Naxalites in the Gollapalli area. As the security personnel reached the site very early this morning, Maoists allegedly opened fire, forcing the security forces to retaliate, leading to a fierce gun battle.

Even as the encounter continues the security forces maintained their positions and responded very cautiously because of unfriendly topography of the area comprising dense forest terrain. There is a strong possibility that those Naxalites killed in this encounter belong to the Area Committee Member (ACM) cadre, who have a ₹5 lakh bounty on them.

Earlier on December 3, security forces killed 12 Naxalites in an encounter on the Dantewada-Bijapur border. Among those killed was Divisional Committee Member (DVC) Vella Modiyam, a senior Maoist leader. However, that operation also resulted in casualties on the security forces' side, with three DRG jawans martyred and two others injured.



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is at the inauguration of 'Business and Industry Conclave' at Dhana Dhanyo auditorium in Kolkata on Thursday. Among those also present were Finance Minister Chandrima Bhattacharya and former Finance Minister Amit Mitra along with country's several leading industrialists including Sanjiv Goenka, Sanjib Puri, Siddharth Birla, Umesh Chowdhury, Sanjay Budhia and Hoon Sahib Soh. PIC: Prabir Bhattacharya

India-Oman sign Free Trade Agreement to boost bilateral relations: PM Modi

MI News Service, Muscat: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between India and the Sultanet of Oman will give new confidence and energy to the bilateral relations.

Speaking at the India-Oman Business Summit here, the visiting Prime Minister said the summit will give a new direction to the India-Oman partnership.

"Today, we are taking such a historic decision, the echo of which will be heard for many decades to come. Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement that is, CEPA, will give our partnership new confidence and new energy in the 21st century," the Prime minister said.

Elaborating importance of the agreement, Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, who is accompanying the Prime minister, said the comprehensive economic partnership agreement (CEPA) was signed today in presence of Prime Minister Modi and Sultan Haitham bin Tariq of Oman.

"The rich culture that we share between Oman and India has been instrumental in bringing us to this very memorable and fruitful day. We also have the privilege of executing the first Free Trade Agreement, which Oman has signed with India after nearly 20 long years," Piyush Goyal said while addressing the India-Oman Business Forum here.

He said the formal talks for FTA began in November 2023, and negotiations concluded earlier this year. Oman is India's third-largest export destination among Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

India-Oman FTA is set to open significant opportunities across sectors including textiles, food processing, automobiles,



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being conferred with Oman's highest honour, 'Order of Oman' by Sultan of Oman Haitham bin Tariq, in Muscat on Thursday.

gems and jewellery, agrochemicals, renewable energy and auto components, he said adding this agreement also aims to substantially reduce or eliminate tariffs on a wide range of goods, liberalise services trade and facilitate investment flows.

The present bilateral trade between the two countries stands at about USD 10.6 billion in 2024-25 with a trade deficit of USD 2.48 billion.

Currently, over 80% of Indian goods enter Oman at an average tariff of around 5%, but duties range widely from zero to as high as 100% on select products such as certain meats, alcohol and tobacco. "Tariff elimination under the CEPA is expected to improve competitiveness for Indian industrial exports, though sustained growth will depend on quality upgrades and prod-

uct differentiation in Oman's relatively small market," said Ajay Srivastava, founder, Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI).

Meanwhile, in a social media post PM Modi said his visit offers an opportunity to explore new avenues of collaboration and add fresh momentum to our partnership.

At the end of his three-nation tour, a number of key agreements were also signed in Muscat in sectors such as trade, investment, energy, defence, technology, agriculture, culture and people-to-people ties.

New Delhi has sought to deepen its trading relationships across West Asia, with an agreement already in place with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and negotiations ongoing with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

The GCC consists of Oman, the UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Qatar.

All these agreements have been signed capping a year of extensive trade negotiations with a number of countries, including the UK, the European Union (EU), Chile, the US, New Zealand and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

During his two day visit the Prime Minister also attended a business forum today and held an interaction with the Indian community in Oman apart from his official bilateral meeting with Haitham bin Tariq, the Sultan of Oman before leaving for New Delhi.

Oman has emerged as one of India's closest defence partners in the West Asian region. New Delhi is looking at Muscat for spares for its ageing fleet of Jaguar aircraft. Oman still has around 20-24 Jaguars. India is the only country still operating the Anglo-French fighter. India and Oman are also celebrating 70 years of diplomatic ties, which were first established in 1925.

Incidentally, till around 1970, Oman used the Indian Rupee and the Gulf Rupee respectively, before introducing its own currency. India also has military access to the Dugm port in Oman for logistical support since at least 2018, which further indicates the importance of Muscat for New Delhi.

The visit to Oman is the last leg of a three-nation tour that began in another West Asian nation, Jordan. The Indian PM has made the region a key priority for New Delhi, with visits to the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Oman in the last couple of years. PM Modi also paid a two-day visit to Ethiopia, where he was awarded the Great Honour Nishan of Ethiopia, and Jordan.

'We are defamed in spite of reducing joblessness', Mamata Banerjee



Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is addressing Business and Industry Conclave at Dhanadhanyo Auditorium in Kolkata on Thursday.

MI News Service, Kolkata: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has regretted that in spite of doing 'good jobs' by her government in different areas and creating jobs, a section of people tries to defame her and her party Trinamool Congress.

Speaking at a conference of the Confederation of West Bengal Trade Associations at the Netaji Indoor Stadium here, the Chief minister said, "Despite our state being deprived, we have reduced unemployment by as high as 40 per cent. This information is mentioned in a report of Niti Aayog, and not the state government."

Announcing a slew of measures for nearly 60-lakh strong traders, Mamata Banerjee also launched a trade receivable portal to streamline receivables in a time-bound manner for the trading community. Altogether 72 financial institutions would be linked to this portal, the Chief

minister announced. She said her government would soon set up two trade and export facilitation centres in Kolkata and Siliguri and it would create a B2B hub in those centres for the promotion of GI tags, adding that Bengal has a long list of GI products.

Asserting that Bengal has emerged as the commercial capital of Eastern and Northeastern India, driven by strong MSME-led growth and its strategic geographic location, Mamata Banerjee announced that two trade and export facilitation centres will be set up along with a business-to-business hub to channelise trade. She also announced the setting up of a West Bengal Traders' Welfare Board and a single-window interface involving district chambers to resolve small business issues. She also launched a state trade portal to address payment delays.

Mamata Banerjee assured that the registered MSMEs will be able to access funding from 72 banks and financial institutions through bill discounting mechanisms. "The state will offer plots for trade and business centres free across districts,"

●Continued to Pg 3

Dense fog cancels 27 flights, delayed many more at Delhi Airport

MI News Service, New Delhi: As many as 27 flights of various airlines were cancelled and many more delayed at Delhi Airport on Thursday due to dense fog and subsequent drop in visibility, an airport official said.

"As of now, 27 flights are cancelled -- 16 departures and 11 arrivals -- at Delhi Airport due to dense fog and low visibility," the Delhi International Airport official said.

In a passenger advisory Thursday morning, the airport authorities said due to dense fog, "flight operations are currently under CAT-III conditions, which may lead to further delays or disruptions."

"As a result of dense fog and subsequent drop in visibility till this afternoon as many as 27 flights of various airlines were cancelled and many more delayed from Delhi Airport on Thursday", the authorities said.

For this type of operation, not only should the pilots be trained, but the aircraft must also be compliant, they said.

CAT-III refers to a type of instrument landing system (ILS) approach that allows aircraft to land in conditions of very low visibility, such as fog, rain or snow, with a runway visual range (RVR) of 50-200 meters.

Amid dense fog and low visibility in Delhi and most parts of North India this morning, several airlines, including SpiceJet, Air India and IndiGo, released travel advisories, urging passengers to check the status of their flights beforehand. Apart from cancellation of 27 flights at the Delhi Airport, more than 250 in and out bound flights have been delayed so far due to low visibility.

This comes on a day when the Delhi government's additional curbs to control air pollution kick in. These include shifting offices to a hybrid mode, a ban on entry for certain vehicles, and a mandatory PUC certificate. The fresh measures are in addition to the GRAP-4 restrictions announced by the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) after the city registered AQI in the 'severe' category for three consecutive days since Saturday.

Though AQI has improved since then, but has remained firmly in the 'very poor' category. A discussion on pollution was scheduled in Lok Sabha today, but the House was adjourned for the day before it was taken for discussion.

Delhi Environment Minister Manjinder Singh had announced that all vehicles below the BS-VI category and registered outside Delhi will not be allowed to enter the city when GRAP 3 and 4 are in place.

The Delhi Traffic Police and transport department's enforcement teams are deployed at all petrol pumps and borders from Thursday to enforce the ban.

The final order, issued on Wednesday, states that the restriction will apply exclusively when Stage 4 of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) is in force.

The Supreme Court, meanwhile, on Wednesday ended protection against coercive action to BS-3 and below vehicles in the national capital.

Manjinder Singh Sirsa has also announced that from Thursday, vehicles without a PUC certificate will not be provided fuel at petrol pumps.

A PUC certificate refers to a Pollution Under Control certificate, which is issued after a simple emission check of vehicles at authorised PUC centres across the national capital.

The PUC certificate is issued for ₹60 for two- and three-wheeled vehicles, and for ₹80 for four-wheeled vehicles. For diesel-driven vehicles, the cost of a PUC certificate is ₹100. It is valid for 12 months for Bharat Stage IV and Bharat Stage VI compliant vehicles.

The Lok Sabha proceedings were adjourned for the day on Thursday even as a discussion on air pollution in the Delhi National Capital Region was scheduled for later in the day. Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra was expected to initiate the discussion.

●Continued to Pg 3

India likely to record 7 per cent growth in FY26: Gita Gopinath

MI News Service, New Delhi: The Indian economy is expected to record around 7 per cent growth in the current fiscal, up from 6.6 per cent projected by the IMF in October, said Gita Gopinath, former Chief economist of the Washington-based International Monetary Fund.

Speaking at an Economic Conclave here on Wednesday, Gopinath said the IMF made its projection for India's growth before the National Statistical Office (NSO) came out with its July-September quarter growth rate of 8.2 per cent.

"I would say that the IMF number (India's growth projection) was 6.6 per cent that came out in October. But their forecast for the second quarter of the current fiscal, in terms of what the growth would be, was much lower than what it turned out to be at over 8 per cent.



Gita Gopinath

"Just doing math, I would expect that India's GDP growth would go up close to 7 per cent," she said.

Earlier this month, the Reserve Bank of India raised the GDP growth projection to 7.3 per cent for the current fiscal from its earlier estimate of 6.8 per cent, following robust economic performance in the July-September quarter.

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) registered a six-quarter high growth of 8.2 per cent in Q2 of 2025-26, underpinned by re-

silient domestic demand amidst global trade and policy uncertainties.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF), in October, revised upwards India's GDP growth forecast for the current fiscal to 6.6 per cent compared to its earlier estimate of 6.4 per cent on the back of strong growth, offsetting the impact of US tariffs on Indian shipments.

Gopinath, currently a Gregory and Ania Coffey Professor of Economics at Harvard University, said if India can maintain growth rates of close to 8 per cent for 20 years, then the country will reach much closer to the 2047 goals.

"But it is not easy to maintain even 8 per cent growth for a 20-year period on a sustained basis she said adding but "that is going to require sustained reforms" ..

●Continued to Pg 3

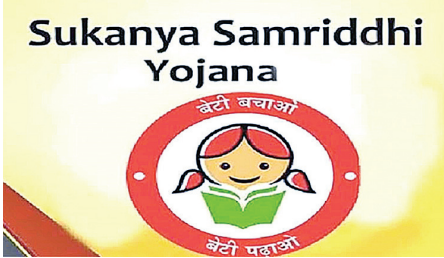
Shringla backs electoral roll revision

MI News Service, Kolkata: Harsh Vardhan Shringla, former Foreign Secretary and BJP MP, defended the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, highlighting its critical role in India's democracy, especially in West Bengal. He emphasized the need for voter verification to maintain public trust and described SIR as a constitutionally mandated process to include eligible citizens. Concerned about opposition from certain political parties, Shringla noted the Supreme Court's recognition of attempts to obstruct the verification process.

Bednarek excited to experience India's running culture at Tata Steel World 25K

MI News Service, Kolkata: Olympic silver medallist and American sprint star Kenny Bednarek, International Event Ambassador for the 10th Tata Steel World 25K Kolkata, said he is excited to experience India's vibrant running culture and believes global races play a key role in inspiring people to embrace fitness. Emphasising the importance of mindset, Bednarek said mental strength is crucial for elite performance. "You can be physically prepared, but without mental discipline, belief, and recovery, performance suffers. Sprinting is nearly 90 per cent mental," he said while interacting with students at GD Birla Centre for Education. Reflecting on his jour-

Sukanya Samridhhi camp draws strong response in Nabadwip



Dipankar Edbar, Nabadwip (Nadia) : Nabadwip witnessed a significant outreach initiative aimed at securing the future of the girl child, as a Sukanya Samridhhi Yojana awareness and account-opening camp was organised at the Ramakrishna Mission here on Wednesday. The camp was held at the Swami Atmashananda Bhavan of the Ramakrishna Mission, Nabadwip, under the management of the Department of Posts, with active support from the local Ramakrishna Mission unit. Among those present were Anup

Biswas, Business Executive of the Nadia North Division of the Postal Department; Mrityunjay Ghosh, Postmaster of the Rudrapara Branch Post Office; and Swami Amareshwarananda, Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission, Nabadwip, along with other officials and representatives. Parents of girl students from various schools participated in the camp. Officials explained the objectives of the Sukanya Samridhhi Yojana, highlighting its role in ensuring long-term financial security for the girl child, along with its savings benefits and government-backed returns. Parents were encouraged to open accounts in the names of their daughters under the scheme. Several Sukanya Samridhhi accounts were opened during the camp, and organisers said similar initiatives would be continued in the coming days. Participants welcomed the effort and emphasised the need for more such awareness programmes to promote financial planning for the welfare of girls.

IIT Kharagpur Introduces AI-led surgical robotics prog

MI News Service, Kharagpur: IIT Kharagpur has introduced a new research programme in partnership with the Intuitive Foundation to explore how artificial intelligence enabled surgical modelling can shape the future of robotic-assisted care. As part of the initiative, the institute inaugurated MANAS (Multi-modal AI in Navigation & Automation for Surgical Robotics). The programme aims to develop structured digital models of surgery that map surgical decisions, improve consistency in robotic-assisted procedures, and support AI-driven decision-making. Researchers will analyse real surgical data to identify key decision points and repetitive tasks suitable for selective early-stage automation. The research will be powered by the da Vinci



Research Kit (dVRK), a specialised non-clinical platform repurposed from retired da Vinci robotic systems, enabling safe academic experimentation

in controlled laboratory environments without human surgery. Supported by IIT Kharagpur's collaboration with Nil Ratan Sircar Medical College and Hospital, the team will closely document cholecystectomy procedures to refine digital surgical models. IIT Kharagpur Director Prof. Suman Chakraborty said the initiative highlights the strength of academia-industry collaboration in advancing surgical safety. The programme is expected to strengthen India's contribution to global research in surgical robotics, digital documentation, and responsible automation.

Bednarek excited to experience India's running culture at Tata Steel World 25K



ney, the double Olympic silver medallist said constant learning drives success. "There's no perfection, only progress. Even after winning, I look for areas to improve," he noted. Bednarek, a 200m silver medallist at Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024 with a personal best of 19.49 seconds, said American sprinting has a bright future, especially with the Olympics coming home. Expressing optimism about Indian athletics, he said India has immense talent and can achieve global success with the right training systems. Calling the Tata Steel World 25K a "celebration", Bednarek said he looks forward to cheering runners and witnessing the unity sport brings.

Paddy fire destroys one Bigha, farmer in crisis

MI News Service, North 24 Parganas: Panic gripped farmers in Paschim Khejurihariya under Bishpur Gram Panchayat, Hingalganj Block, after a massive fire reduced an entire paddy pile spanning one bigha of land to ashes, raising suspicions of deliberate arson. According to local sources, the fire erupted on a roadside paddy stack late Wednesday, spreading rapidly and destroying months of hard-earned crops before residents could intervene. The landowner, Kaushik Mandal, whose home is located in a neighboring village, rushed to the scene after being informed by locals. By the time he arrived, the fire had completely consumed the paddy, leaving the family devastated.

Nadia - Shantipur health officials extend nutritional support to TB patients

Dipankar Edbar, Krishnagar (Nadia) : In a collective effort to support tuberculosis (TB) patients beyond medical treatment, the Shantipur block health department has stepped in with nutritional assistance for 155 patients undergoing treatment in the block. Health officials said that while regular medication is crucial for TB recovery, a balanced and nutritious diet plays an equally important role. However, due to financial constraints, many patients struggle to meet their dietary needs. Keeping this in mind, employees of the Shantipur block health department have come forward to provide support from their own initiative and resources. According to the department, a total of 155 TB



patients are currently under treatment at the Shantipur Block Primary Health Centre. On Wednesday, during a programme organised at the Fulia Block Primary Health Centre, nutritional food packets were distributed among all these patients. Earlier, in different areas of the block, local residents had individually taken responsibility for supporting one or two TB patients. This, however, marks the first time that all health officials and staff of the block collectively came together to take responsibility for every TB patient in the block. Health department officials expressed hope that such coordinated initiatives would help strengthen efforts towards eliminating tuberculosis. The programme was attended by Nadia chief medical officer of health Ranjit Kumar Das, Shantipur BMOH Pooja Maitra, along with other health officials and staff of the block.

NATHEALTH

MI News Service, Kolkata: Kolkata will host a healthcare investment roundtable and workshop on December 18, 2025, organized by NATHEALTH and AHPI to promote healthcare growth in Eastern India. The event will gather leaders from hospitals, private equity, and healthcare entrepreneurs at The Bengal Club to discuss capital access, clinical governance, and sustainable expansion. The agenda features a presentation on regional investment and an entrepreneur-led session on scaling healthcare. NATHEALTH's Siddhartha Bhattacharya noted the need to connect capital with credible ventures, while AHPI's Dr. Giridhar Gyani stressed sustainable dialogue. Limited seating is available for interested participants.

Bagda draft list: 165 voters missing

MI News Service, North 24 Parganas: The release of the draft voter list under the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) has raised serious questions in Bagda after 165 voters could not be traced in Part No. 24 of Sindrani Gram Panchayat. Officials and local political leaders are expressing concern over potential irregularities and the accuracy of the voter rolls. Out of a total of 490 registered voters in the booth, 165 voters—approximately 34 percent—were unaccounted for during the SIR form distribution. Administrative officials, including the Booth Level Officer (BLO), conducted surveys and publicized the issue locally, but no evidence of the missing voters could be found. Bagda BDO Akhil Mandal stated that many of the missing voters could be migrant workers, though he emphasized that the exact reason for the discrepancy remains unclear. Adding to the controversy, it was reported that a resident, Akash Mallick, appears in the voter list with three different EPIC numbers, fueling allegations of irregularities. The situation has sparked a political row in the region. BJP panchayat member Kalpana Mandal expressed alarm, saying, "We have never seen such a large number of absent voters in this area. The presence of multiple EPIC numbers for a single individual raises serious questions about ghost voters." Responding to the accusations, Newton Bala, West Block Trinamool Congress President, countered, stating, "If ghost voters exist, why is the accusation targeted only at us? SIR is being implemented across Bengal, and political leaders will be held accountable as per the process." The incident has intensified scrutiny of the SIR process in North 24 Parganas, highlighting concerns over data accuracy, potential voter fraud, and transparency in the preparation of electoral rolls ahead of upcoming elections.



Ex-army men outrage over voter list summons

MI News Service, Nandigram: Deep resentment has surface in Nandigram after two former Indian army personnel were summoned for hearing under the SIR process, triggering sharp questions about citizenship verification and the dignity of veterans. The former soldiers—Pradeep Pradhan and Pradeep Jana, residents of the Suwendu Assembly constituency—expressed outrage after being asked to appear before the commission over alleged discrepancies in the voter list. Both men, who served the nation in uniform, questioned why they are now being compelled to prove their Indian citizenship. "After fighting for this country, do we still have to prove that we are Indians?" they asked, voicing deep frustration. In an emotional reaction, one of them remarked that if his name ultimately remains excluded from the electoral roll, he would be forced to "go to Uttar Pradesh," underscoring the humiliation and anger felt by the veterans. According to Booth Level Officer (BLO) sources, the issue stems from the absence of documented linkage to their fathers' names in the 2002 electoral records. Officials stated that since no paternal details were available in the records from that period, their names were flagged during the revision process and referred for scrutiny. However, the matter has raised further questions as the names of their children—despite similar documentation gaps—have been included in the voter list, intensifying allegations of inconsistency and procedural arbitrariness.

MI News Service, Murshidabad: In a stark reminder of the growing tensions surrounding Bengali migrant workers, Uttar Pradesh police recently detained 12 men from West Bengal in Banaras on suspicion of being Bangladeshi infiltrators. The group, which had travelled to the city several months ago in search of employment, was later released following intervention by Murshidabad district police, exposing the human cost of unchecked profiling and suspicion. According to local sources, ten of the detained men belong to the Bel-danga police station area in Murshidabad district. They have been identified as Illauidin Sheikh, Alamgir Sheikh, Montu Pramanik, Azbarul Sheikh, Ashrafur Sheikh, Kamaluddin Sheikh, Billal Hossain, Masdur Rahman, Mobarak Sheikh, and Mohammad Hasib Sheikh. Two others—Imam Sheikh from Rejinagar police station and Hasanuzzaman Mandal from Nowda police station—were also among those detained. They were joined by Namaz Ali from Kaliganj police station in Nadia district. The workers were initially taken into custody by UP authorities on suspicion of illegal infiltration. However, verification by West Bengal police confirmed their Indian citizenship, leading to their release. The incident has once again brought to the fore concerns over the targeting of Bengali-speaking migrant labourers in other states. This episode follows recent outrage over the detention of Sonali Khatun, a pregnant woman from Birbhum district, who was handed over to the Border

Bengal migrant labeled as "Bangladeshi" in UP: Cops to the rescued



Security Force by Delhi Police. The Supreme Court later ruled her detention unlawful, a verdict hailed by the Trinamool Congress (TMC) as vindication. Despite such rulings, allegations persist that migrant workers from Bengal continue to be routinely branded as "Bangladeshi" elsewhere in the country. As the TMC intensifies its rhetoric around Bengali cultural identity, questions are being raised about why Bengali workers remain vulnerable to misidentification and harassment, fuelling demands for greater accountability from neighbouring states and law enforcement agencies.

Searching for missing father, son meets fatal end

MI News Service, Bakura: What began as a domestic dispute ended in a chain of irreversible tragedies on Wednesday night, as a young man searching for his missing father lost his life in a fatal road accident, along with a close friend, in Bakura district. According to local and police sources, the father of Budhan Mandal, a resident of Ghoramurga village under Santuri police station in Purulia, left home on Wednesday following an argument with family members. When he failed to return by evening, anxiety spread through the household. Concern for his father's safety, Budhan Mandal—who earned a living as a lorry driver—set out later that night with two friends on a motorcycle to search nearby areas. Suspecting that his father may have travelled toward Bakura, the trio rode through several locations but found no trace of him. While returning home late at night tragedy struck. Near

Tilna village under Chhatna police station in Bakura, the motorcycle collided head-on with a dumper truck under circumstances that remain under investigation. The impact hurled all three riders onto the roadway, leaving them critically injured. Police from Chhatna police station rushed to the scene following report of the crash and transported the victims to Chhatna Super Specialty Hospital. Doctors declared Budhan Mandal and Bipadataran Ghoshal dead on arrival. The third rider, Bapi Ghoshal, sustained severe injuries and was later shifted to Bankura Sammilani Medical College and Hospital for advanced treatment. The double fatality has plunged the victims' families into deep mourning, with grief gripping both Ghoramurga village in Purulia and surrounding areas of Bankura. The incident has once again highlighted the deadly risks posed by high-speed heavy vehicles on rural roads during night hours.

Leopard snatches 10-year-old boy from mother's lap in tea garden terror

MI News Service, Jalpaiguri: A mother's heart-rending screams shattered the calm of Wednesday evening at the dam line of Karbala Tea Garden in Kalabari, when a leopard sprang from the shadows and attacked her 10-year-old son, Patrika Orao. The child was feeding near their home when the big cat lunged without warning, clamping its jaws around him mid-bite. In a horrifying scene, the leopard dragged the boy several metres before suddenly releasing him and disappearing into the dense Kalabari tea gardens, leaving behind blood, chaos, and terror. Neighbours and tea garden workers rushed to the spot on hearing the screams and found the child grievously injured. Patrika was immediately taken to Banarhat Hospital for emergency treatment. However, as his condition deteriorated rapidly, doctors referred him to Malbazar Super Specialty Hospital, where he is currently battling for his life under close medical supervision. This latest incident marks the seventh leopard attack in Kalabari in the past three months, an area that has already witnessed multiple fatalities due to big cat intrusions. The re-



curring attacks have intensified fear among tea workers, especially women and children living in labour lines bordering forested areas. Despite claims by the forest department of capturing seven leopards, deploying two patrol vehicles, engaging 10 workers for surveillance, and installing nets around labour settlements, residents allege that these measures have failed to prevent attacks. Many accuse authorities of merely relocating leopards from one vulnerable area to another while describing the situation as being under "strict surveillance." Binaguri Wildlife Squad Ranger Himadri Debnath reached the site soon after the incident to conduct a preliminary investigation. However, panic continues to grip the region. As leopards roam Bengal's tea belt unchecked, workers demand decisive and lasting action—not assurances—before another life is lost.

A.K. Fazlul Haque Girls' Higher Secondary School Holds Annual Athletic Sports Meet 2025

MI News Service, Kolkata: The Annual Athletic Sports Meet 2025 of A.K. Fazlul Haque Girls' Higher Secondary School was successfully held today at the St. James' School Ground, under the leadership of Principal Farzana Saleem. The event featured a colourful march past, impressive drill displays, and a variety of races. Winners were felicitated with prizes and certificates. A highlight of the day was a full-contact karate demonstration by the school's karate-trained girls. The institution has introduced karate training for all students to promote self-defence skills, physical and mental fitness, and to instill values of justice and truth. Among the distinguished guests were former karate champion Sana



Ahmed, who serves as the school secretary and councillor of Ward 62; Abdul Majeed, President of the Calcutta Muslim Orphanage; Abdul Qayyum Ansari, General Secretary of the Calcutta Muslim Orphanage; and other committee members including

Shahid Rashid, Golam Sadique, Md. Noor Alam Azmi, and Md. Hossain. A large number of other dignitaries and parents also attended the event. Speaking on the occasion, Abdul Qayyum Ansari, General Secretary of the Calcutta Muslim Orphanage, praised the students' strong performance in board examinations and expressed pride in their achievements. He noted that the school is one of the units under the Calcutta Muslim Orphanage, which operates three schools in total. Ansari further emphasised the introduction of karate, stating, "For self-defence, physical and mental fitness, we have introduced karate. In two to three years, all our students will achieve black belts, similar to schools in Japan."

Winter on hold in Bengal, No chill before Christmas



MI News Service, Kolkata: Winter enthusiast in Bengal may have to wait longer, as the IMD has ruled out any significant cold spell in the state at least until after Christmas. According to the Alipore Meteorological office, prevailing western disturbances and cyclonic circulation over north-west India are influencing regional weather patterns, resulting in a gradual rise in temperature across South Bengal. In Kolkata, where a mild child was felt over the past few days, daytime warmth has begun to return. The city recorded a minimum temperature of 16.7 degrees Celsius on Friday—around normal for this time of year. Weather officials indicate that temperature may fluctuate by 1-2 degrees in the coming days, with a further slight increase likely by the weekend. While mornings and evening may retain a faint winter touch, the chill is expected to weaken significantly during the daytime hours. The IMD has forecast light morning fog across parts of the state but

clarified that there is no warning of dense fog at present. Skies are expected to remain largely clear throughout the day, with dry weather prevailing. In South Bengal's western districts, minimum temperatures are likely to hover between 12 and 14 degrees Celsius, while coastal areas, including the Sundarbans belt, may record lows of 15 to 17 degrees Celsius over the next few days. North Bengal, however, will continue to experience a wintry atmosphere. The region may witness light fog during early morning hours, followed by clear skies. Temperatures are expected to remain near normal, with minimal variation. In the Darjeeling hill areas, minimum temperatures may dip to 6-8 degrees Celsius, while the five northern districts could see lows between 9 and 13 degrees Celsius. Districts adjacent to Malda are likely to record minimums of 15-17 degrees Celsius. Meteorologists have emphasized that no sharp temperature drop or severe cold wave is anticipated in the immediate future, underscoring that Bengal's winter remains on pause—for now.

SC Grants Relief to Jobless 'Eligible' Teachers; Recruitment Deadline Extended

MI News Service, Kolkata: Jobless yet "eligible" teachers in West Bengal have received major relief from the Supreme Court, easing concerns for both the state government and the School Service Commission (SSC). As per the court's order, these teachers will be allowed to continue working with salaries until August 31 next year. The court has also extended the deadline for fresh recruitment of teachers for Classes IX-X and XI-XII, pushing it from December 31 this year to August 31, 2026, granting an eight-month extension.

Earlier, the Supreme Court had cancelled the entire 2016 recruitment panel and directed that a new selection process be completed by December 31, 2025. Acting on the order, the SSC began the recruitment process, declaring examination results and starting document verification for Classes IX-X. Interviews are scheduled to follow, while the merit list for Classes XI-XII is expected in January.

Under the earlier timeline, the tenure of the eligible jobless teachers was set to end on December 31, raising fears of large-scale disruption in schools from January. The Education Department therefore sought additional time from the apex court.



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee released dossier along with State Ministers Shashi Panja and Chandrima Bhattacharya, former State Finance Minister Amit Mitra, State Chief Secretary Manoj Pant, and leading industrialists including Sanjiv Goenka, Sanjib Puri, Thomas Gietzen, Siddharth Birla, Umesh Chowdhary, and Hoon Sahib Soh, along with actor Prosenjit Chatterjee, during Business and Industry Conclave at the Dhana Dhanya Auditorium in Kolkata on Thursday
PIC: Prabir Bhattacharya

Mamata renames state Karmashree scheme after Mahatma Gandhi, lashes out at Centre

MI News Service, Kolkata: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday slammed the Centre over changes to the rural job guarantee programme and announced that the state's Karmashree scheme will be renamed after Mahatma Gandhi. Lashing out at the BJP-led

NDA government, Banerjee criticised the move to replace the nearly 20-year-old Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) with the Viksit Bharat - Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G). "The removal of Gandhi-

ji's name fills me with deep shame. A Bill has been introduced that removes the name of Mahatma Gandhi from MGNREGA," she said.

"Are we now forgetting even the Father of the Nation? We have therefore decided to rename our Karmashree scheme after Mahatma Gandhi. We seek nothing except respect. And if some do not know how to honour Mahatma Gandhi, we will demonstrate what true respect means," the Trinamool Congress supremo added.

Speaking at a business and industry conclave in the city, Banerjee said if some politi-

cal parties "fail to show respect to our national icons, we will do it."

Her remarks came as the Lok Sabha passed the VB-G RAM G Bill, which seeks to replace the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005.

Defending the state against criticism, Banerjee asserted that attempts to defame West Bengal would fail, highlighting its growing economic and cultural significance.

"Some people want to defame Bengal, but they don't know how much the state has changed. Bengal today is one of the leading logistics hubs



and serves as the gateway to Southeast Asia, East India, and the northeastern states. It is surrounded by states like Jharkhand, Bihar, and Odisha," the Chief Minister said.

She dismissed what she termed "fake news" and highlighted key economic initiatives, including wagon manufacturing and tourism growth. Banerjee announced

that around 350 acres of land in Uttarpara, Hooghly district, will be allotted to UmeshChoudhary for wagon manufacturing.

She also claimed that West Bengal has emerged as the second-largest tourist destination in India and stressed the government's efforts to provide 16 lakh bicycles annually to Class IX government school students.

Banerjee further said Bengal ranks number one in the country in implementing around 95 social welfare schemes aimed at poverty alleviation, including Lakshmi Bhandar.



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee shares a cheerful moment with children while inaugurating the Kolkata Christmas Festival 2025 at Allen Park on Thursday.

Abhishek slams BJP as draft voter rolls debunk 'Rohingya deletion' claim

MI News Service, Kolkata: All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) National General Secretary Abhishek Banerjee on Thursday launched a sharp political attack on the Bharatiya Janata Party after the draft electoral rolls published by the Election Commission allegedly disproved the BJP's claim that between one and 1.5 crore Rohingyas names had been removed from the voter list in West Bengal. The ruling party alleged that the BJP's claim stood exposed as "completely false" and accused it of attempting to divide society and malign Bengal for electoral gains.

"The conspiracy with which the BJP tried to use the Election Commission to conduct SIR in Bengal has completely failed. Those who insulted Bengal by calling it a breeding ground for Bangladeshis should come before the public and apologise to the 10 crore people of Bengal," Banerjee added.

Referring to the Election Commission's draft roll data, Banerjee said the BJP's narrative about large-scale deletion of Rohingyas voters had been outright reject-

ed by the poll body itself. "Those who spread false stories about Bengal being a shelter for infiltrators and fabricated claims of one to one-and-a-half crore Rohingyas have now been exposed. The Election Commission has rejected those claims," he said.

Citing statistical data, Banerjee explained that whenever a SIR of electoral rolls is conducted, around 1.5 to 2 per cent of names are generally removed. "This time, about 24 lakh names have been deleted after being identified as deceased, which is roughly 2 per cent of the population. This is a standard process. The conspiracy that the BJP tried to engineer in Bengal by misusing the Election Commission has failed completely," he asserted.

The Trinamool leader further demanded an apology from the BJP for what he described as systematic attempts to brand Bengalis as illegal immigrants. "Those who have called Bengal 'the birthplace of Bangladeshis' must apologise to the 10 crore people of the state," he said.

Targeting Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Banerjee said

that if infiltration was indeed a serious concern, the responsibility lay with the Centre. "Border security and the Central Reserve Police Force are under the control of the Union Home Minister. If infiltration is happening, Amit Shah must answer for it," he said.

Banerjee also referred to incidents outside Bengal to underline his argument. "Look at what happened in Pahalgam. The Kashmir Police does not report to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. Then how are infiltrators entering there? Who will take responsibility for the blast in Delhi on November 11, just ahead of the Bihar election results?" he asked.

Highlighting alleged harassment of Bengalis in other states, Banerjee cited the case of SonaliKhatun, who was allegedly deported to Bangladesh despite her parents' names featuring in the 2002 voter list. "She could return to India only after Supreme Court intervention. I will meet her and her family within the next two days," he said, adding that the Trinamool Congress would stand by anyone facing similar harassment.

MI News Service, Kolkata: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has ordered a full-fledged investigation into the devastating fire that broke out at a slum settlement in Ghuni, near New Town, on Wednesday evening. The massive blaze reduced several shanties to ashes and left more than a hundred families homeless overnight, triggering serious concerns over safety and rehabilitation.

Soon after the incident, the Chief Minister spoke to State Fire and Emergency Services Minister Sujit Bose over the phone to take stock of the situation. She directed the authorities to conduct a thorough probe into the cause of the fire and ensure immediate assistance for the affected residents.

Following the Chief Minister's instructions, North 24 Parganas District Magistrate Shashank Shetty, along with senior administrative officials, visited the fire-ravaged areas of the Ghuni slum on Thursday morning. The officials also interacted with displaced residents currently taking shelter at relief camps



set up in the area. According to local sources, at least 300 families have been affected by the blaze. The district administration assessed the extent of damage and assured the victims of all possible support.

Residents said that the fire destroyed not only their homes but also all important documents, leaving many with nothing but the clothes they were wearing. The loss of identity papers has caused widespread anxiety, particularly amid the ongoing SIR-related atmosphere. Acknowledging the gravity of the situation, the district administration assured that necessary steps would be

taken to help residents recover their lost documents. Officials said a formal complaint would be filed shortly, following which a directive would be issued to expedite the reissuance of essential papers.

The massive fire broke out on Wednesday in a densely populated slum area located behind New Town's Eco Park, under the jurisdiction of the Jyagra-Hatiara 2 No. Gram Panchayat in Rajarhat. The settlement mainly consisted of temporary bamboo structures covered with tarpaulin sheets. Local sources estimated that around 70 to 80 shanties were completely gutted in the fire.

Eyewitnesses reported that the fire initially started in a single hut before rapidly spreading to neighbouring structures. Most residents of the slum earn their livelihood by collecting plastic and paper waste, resulting in large quantities of flammable materials being stored in and around their homes. This significantly accelerated the spread of the fire. The situation worsened when multiple gas cylinders stored in nearby huts exploded one after another, intensifying the blaze and causing panic among residents.

More than ten fire engines were pressed into service, and firefighters battled the flames for several hours before bringing the situation under control. However, fresh smoke was seen billowing from a few spots on Thursday morning, prompting the continued presence of fire brigade personnel at the site as a precautionary measure.

Authorities said further assessments are underway, and relief and rehabilitation measures will be strengthened in the coming days.

Fire erupts at oxygen cylinder godown in Kankurgachi

MI News Service, Kolkata: Just hours after a devastating fire broke out in a slum area of New Town, another major fire incident triggered panic in Kolkata, this time at an oxygen cylinder godown in the Kankurgachi-Maniktala area. The fire broke out late on Wednesday night and continued for several hours, with repeated sounds of explosions reportedly heard from the site. Fortunately, no casualties or injuries were reported.

According to preliminary information, the fire broke out around 2.30 am at an oxygen cylinder

storage godown located in Maniktala. The exact cause of the blaze is yet to be ascertained. As the fire spread rapidly, several oxygen cylinders stored inside the godown reportedly exploded one after another, intensifying the flames and causing widespread

fear among residents of the densely populated neighbourhood. Local residents said the intensity of the explosions was so severe that windowpanes of nearby houses shattered. Many residents

rushed out of their homes in the middle of the night after hearing loud blasts and seeing thick plumes of smoke rising from the godown. The area was soon cordoned off as a precautionary measure to prevent any further mishaps.

Upon receiving infor-

mation, multiple fire tenders rushed to the spot. Firefighters launched operations on a war footing to bring the blaze under control, facing significant challenges due to the presence of highly inflammable

oxygen cylinders. After several hours of sustained effort, the fire was largely brought under control by Thursday morning. However, officials said that pockets of fire were still smouldering, and fire personnel continued cooling operations to prevent re-ignition.

Fire department officials confirmed that no injuries or loss of life had been reported in the incident. An investigation has been initiated to determine the cause of the fire and to check whether proper safety protocols were being followed at the godown.

'We are defamed in spite of reducing joblessness', Mamata Banerjee

● Continued from Pg 1
with 10 more plots. If Bengal changes, the country will change," the Chief minister said.

She, however, rejected allegations that the state's debt has mounted to nearly Rs 7 lakh crore. Countering the Opposition's claim of an economic collapse marked by mounting debt she said, "Some people only spread negativity. The reality is very different." "Critics should note that West Bengal operates strictly within the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) framework while

continuing development work despite large pending central dues amounting to Rs 1.97 lakh crore," Mamata Banerjee said adding "We have to run all projects even when the Centre does not pay our dues," she claimed.

Emphasising the role of micro, small and medium enterprises and the neighbourhood shops, Mamata Banerjee said MSMEs and these local shops were the backbone of economy and key to employment generation. Citing official data, the Chief minister said the state's exports have crossed Rs 1.15 lakh

crore, while the number of registered companies has exceeded 2.5 lakh, which, she said, contradicts claims of business flight.

More than 93 lakh MSME units are operating in the state, the Chief minister said, adding that West Bengal's performance on ease of doing business has improved as per national rankings. She also highlighted that logistics has been accorded industry status to improve competitiveness and support businesses in the state. On industrial preparedness, Mamata Banerjee said the state has developed over

200 industrial parks to create a ready land bank, and announced six economic corridors, and expanded railway coach manufacturing for Metro projects. "From Purulia to the Sundarbans, logistics costs will come down and industry will benefit," she said.

Flagging emerging challenges from technology, she cautioned about potential job losses due to Artificial Intelligence (AI), and urged industries to face this in stressing the continued need for human touch and reliability. Seeking an end to what she termed a negative narrative,

Tigress dies in city zoo, third such death in just three months

MI News Service, Kolkata: A 34-month-old tigress, brought from Nandankanan Zoological Park in Odisha, has died of an unknown illness at the century-old Alipore Zoological Gardens, marking the third death of a Royal Bengal Tiger (RBT) at the zoo within just three months and triggering serious concern among animal lovers, experts, and zookeepers.

The tigress, born in February 2023 at Nandankanan and brought to Kolkata in August the same year, was found dead inside her enclosure on Wednesday. Alipore Zoological Gardens director TriptiSaha said a post-mortem examination was conducted and viscera samples were sent for laboratory tests to ascertain the exact cause of death.

According to zoo sources, the tigress was suffering from an infection caused by a haemoprotozoan parasite and had been admitted to the zoo's health facility recovery centre, where she later died. Officials said the viscera test would confirm the precise cause.

The latest death has taken the toll of Royal Bengal Tigers at Alipore Zoo to three in the past three months. In September, two tigers died, raising fears that the iconic city zoo may soon be left without the majestic animal.

The recurring deaths have raised questions over veterinary care and disease management. Sources said the suspected infection may involve blood parasites such as Babesia, Theileria, Anaplasma, or Trypanosoma, transmitted by ticks or biting flies.

Prominent wildlife conservationist Biswajit Roy Chowdhury expressed grave concern, saying the possible presence of parasites poses a serious threat to animals housed in the zoo.

Cal HC orders CBI probe into 2010 Hooghly TMC worker murder

MI News Service, Kolkata: More than a decade after a Trinamool Congress worker was allegedly shot dead during the Left Front regime in West Bengal's Hooghly district, the Calcutta High Court has ordered a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe into the case, citing lack of progress in the earlier investigation.

The order relates to the murder of TMC worker Rabin Ghosh, who was killed on February 14, 2010, during a violent incident at Prasadpur High School in Jangipara, where voting was underway to elect guardians' representatives. According to case records, clashes broke out between CPI(M) supporters and TMC workers, escalating into violence.

The victim's family alleged that Ghosh was shot dead by the then officer-in-charge of Jangipara police station, Tapasbrati Chakrabarty, using his service revolver. Ghosh died on the spot, triggering widespread political outrage at the time.

The probe was initially handed over to the CID, but the family claimed that even after nearly 15 years, no meaningful progress had been made and no accountability fixed. They subsequently approached the High Court seeking a CBI inquiry.

Hearing the matter on Thursday, Justice Tirthankar Ghosh observed that the prolonged delay warranted intervention and directed the transfer of the investigation to the CBI. The family expressed hope that the fresh probe would finally deliver justice.

Parth Jindal becomes CMA president

MI News Service, Kolkata: The Cement Manufacturers' Association (CMA) has elected JSW Cement Managing Director Parth Jindal as its new president at the association's annual general meeting on Thursday. Dr Raghavpat Singhania, Managing Director of JK Cement, has been appointed vice-president. Jindal succeeds NeerajAkhoury, Managing Director of Shree Cement. Marking a first in CMA's history, both the president and vice-president are from the younger generation, expected to bring a dynamic and forward-looking approach. Jindal will steer CMA's policy engagement with a focus on sustainability, decarbonisation, and logistics optimisation.

I, MAFIJUL GAZI, S/o- MANIK GAZI, residing at Vill : Sangberia, P.O.Matia, P.S. Basirhat, Hal P.S. Matia, Dist. North-24-Pgs, WB. Pin: 743437, do hereby declare that inadvertently my and my wife's name has been wrongly written in my son ABDUL MATIN GAZI's birth Certificate (Reg No. 1011, dt-14/02/2002) as MOFIJUL ISLAM & MST REHENA BIBI, in place of MAFIJUL GAZI & REHENA KHATUN BIBI. On 09/12/25 vide affidavit no. 30737 before the Court of 1st Class Judicial Magistrate, Basirhat, I affirm that MAFIJUL GAZI, S/o- MANIK GAZI & MOFIJUL ISLAM is same one & identical person and both REHENA KHATUN BIBI, W/o- MAFIJUL GAZI & MST. REHENA BIBI, W/o- MOFIJUL ISLAM is same one & identical person.

I, SK MOINUDDIN, S/O SK ABUTALEB, husband of SEKH JENNETARABEGAM, residing at Amila, Khandagosh, Purba Bardhaman, Pin-713423 do hereby declare that in my wife's passport (K7619977) and voter card (WB/362022/312134) my name has been wrongly recorded as MUINUDDIN in place of SK MOINUDDIN. On 17/12/2025 vide affidavit no. 51027, before the Court of Executive Magistrate, Purba Bardhaman, I affirm that SK MOINUDDIN & MUINUDDIN is the same & one identical person.

I, Amish Agarwal, S/o Rajendra Agarwal, residing at 266/9, G.T. Road, Bally (M), Lluah, Dist Howrah 711204 West Bengal, do hereby declare that I have a Male child namely Akshat Agarwal which is recorded in his Passport N1927303, Aadhar Card (8196 8198 9146), Birth Certificate (Regn. No. 1/07/2012/03014, Old Regn. No. 942) & Disability Certificate (No.WB3162020 120011876). I intend to change my said son's name i.e. Shashank Agarwal in all official papers & documents. On 18/12/2025 vide affidavit no. 31950, before the Court of 1st Class Judicial Magistrate, Kolkata. I affirm that Shashank Agarwal & Akshat Agarwal is the same, one & identical person.

Name Change
I, Gouranga Ray S/o Late. Kamal Kanti Roy R/A -37, Mukundapur, P.S. - Purba Jadavpur, Kolkata - 700099 have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Madan Mohon Roy as declared before the Ld. 1st Class Judicial Magistrate Court at Alipore (WB) vide Affidavit No. - 26906 dated - 17.04.2014. Gouranga Ray and Madan Mohon Roy both are same and identical person.

Name Change
I Sayesta Quadir W/o Abdul Quadir Residing at 3, C.R Avenue, P.S.-Bowbazar, Kolkata - 700072 WB. have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Shaista Praween as declared before the First Class Judicial Magistrate Dated 06-09-21 Sayesta Quadir and Shaista Praween both are same and identical person. court, District vide affidavit no.930.

Name Change
I, Vaishali Daftary & Vaishali P. Daftary w/o of Paresh K. Daftary residing at 5, Bejoy Mukherjee Lane, 2nd floor, Flat -2A, Bhawanipore, Kolkata-700025, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare that I have changed my name from Vaishali Daftary & Vaishali P. Daftary to Vaishali Paresh Daftary via affidavit before the Notary Public at Kolkata dated 18th December, 2025.

Name Change
I, Trisha Daftary d/o of Paresh K. Daftary residing at 5, Bejoy Mukherjee Lane, 2nd floor, Flat -2A, Bhawanipore, Kolkata-700025, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare that I have changed my name from Trisha Daftary to Trisha Paresh Daftary via affidavit before the Notary Public at Kolkata dated 18th December, 2025.

Name Change
I, Dipa Ray D/o Late Kamal Kanti Roy R/A 37, Mukundapur, P.O. - Mukundapur, P.S. - Purba Jadavpur, Kolkata - 700099 have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Bhabani Roy as declared before the Ld. 1st Class Magistrate Court, at Alipore (WB) vide Affidavit No. - 6425, dated - 15.09.2022. Bhabani Roy and Dipa Ray both are same and identical person.

NAME CHANGE

I, Shah Mohammad Saifullah, S/O- Shah Mohammad Asrof Ali (father) & Meher Afzalun Nessa Begum (mother), H/O- Wahida Mussaini residing at Vill.- Bhumshore, P.S.- Bhatnar, Dist.- Burdwan, Pin-713125 have changed the names & address and shall henceforth be known as Shah Md Saifullah, S/O- Shah Md Asrof Ali (father) & Maher Afjalunnesa Shah (mother), H/O- Wahida Hussainee residing at Vill.- Bhumshore, P.O.- Bamsor, P.S.- Bhatar, Dist.- Purba Bardhaman, Pin-713125 as declared before the 1st Class Judicial Magistrate Court at Purba Bardhaman, West Bengal vide Affidavit no. 6184 dated 12/12/2025. I further declare that Shah Mohammad Saifullah, S/O- Shah Mohammad Asrof Ali (father) & Meher Afzalun Nessa Begum (mother), H/O- Wahida Mussaini residing at Vill.- Bhumshore, P.S.- Bhatnar, Dist.- Burdwan, Pin-713125 and Shah Md Saifullah, S/O- Shah Md Asrof Ali (father) & Maher Afjalunnesa Shah (mother), H/O- Wahida Hussainee residing at Vill.- Bhumshore, P.O.- Bamsor, P.S.- Bhatar, Dist.- Purba Bardhaman, Pin-713125 both are same and identical person. I also declare that my place of birth should be rectified as Bhumshore instead of Burdwan as per the above mentioned Affidavit.

NAME CHANGE
I, Sanjay Agarwal S/O. Hosiyari Mal Agarwal residing at 23 Canal Street, Pratibha Enclave, Block-A, Flat-309, P.O.- Shreebhumi, North 24 Parganas, Kolkata-700048 have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Sanjay Kumar Agarwal as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata vide affidavit no. 71935 dated 30.10.2025. Sanjay Agarwal and Sanjay Kumar Agarwal both are same and identical person.

Name Change

I, Arun Agarwal (Old Name) S/o Sajjan Kumar Agarwal Residing at 270/C, Rabindra Sarani, Barabazar, District - Kolkata, Pin - 700007, West Bengal, India, have Changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Arun Kumar Agarwal (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public Kolkata vide affidavit Dated 18-12-2025. Arun Agarwal (Old Name) and Arun Kumar Agarwal (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change

I, Ambia Bibi (Old Name) W/o Usman Ali Sardar Residing at Vill - Makrampur, Po - Kustia, P.s - Sonarpur, District - South 24 Parganas, Pin - 743330, West Bengal, India, have Changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Ambia Khatun Bibi (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public Kolkata vide affidavit Dated 18-12-2025. Ambia Bibi (Old Name) and Ambia Khatun Bibi (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change

I, Sanjay Barman (Old Name) S/o Nanda Dulal Barman Residing at AJ-206, Sector-II, Salt Lake, District - North 24 Parganas, Pin - 700091, West Bengal, India, have Changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Sanjoy Barman (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public Kolkata vide affidavit Dated 18-12-2025. Sanjay Barman (Old Name) and Sanjoy Barman (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change

I, Sk Masud Hossain (Old Name) S/o Sk Mosaraf Hossain Residing at Vill - Barue Mistri Para, Po - Mato, P.s - Penro, District - Howrah, Pin - 711408, West Bengal, India, have Changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Masud Hossain Sk (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public Kolkata vide affidavit Dated 18-12-2025. Sk Masud Hossain (Old Name) and Masud Hossain Sk (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change

I, Sania Mullick (Old Name) W/o Reyan Mondal Residing at Daulatpur Laskarpura, Maheshbala, District - Kolkata, Pin - 700139, West Bengal, India, have Changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Sania Mallick (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public Kolkata vide affidavit no 1 Dated 17-12-2025. Sania Mullick (Old Name) and Sania Mallick (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change

I, Kamal Kumar Saraf (Old Name) S/o Shyam Sundar Saraf Residing at 164 Block-B, Lake Town, Po+P.s - Lake Town, District - North 24 Parganas, Pin - 700089, West Bengal, India, have Changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Kamal Saraf (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public Kolkata vide affidavit no 23 Dated 17-12-2025. Kamal Kumar Saraf (Old Name) and Kamal Saraf (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change

I, B. Soujanya (Old Name) W/o Anil Kumar Botta Residing at 198/2, Santoshpur Avenue, 2nd Floor, 7th Road, Santoshpur, District - Kolkata Pin - 700075, West Bengal, India, have Changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Soujanya Pudi (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public Kolkata vide affidavit no 22 Dated 17-12-2025. B. Soujanya (Old Name) and Soujanya Pudi (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change

I, Sk Ziaul Haque S/o. Late Nazrul Haque, R/o. Sudarsan, Ramnathpur, Polba, Hooghly-712148, declared that in my father's L.R. Porcha (Dist. Hooghly, P.S. Polba, Muzsa Sudarsan, J.L. No. 7, L.R. Khatian No. 363, L.R. Dag No. 825), where my father's name has been recorded as Najibar Rahman instead of his actual & correct name is Nazrul Haque. That my father Nazrul Haque & Najibar Rahman are the same and one identical person vide an affidavit no. 10660, sworn before Judicial Magistrate, Sadar Hooghly Court on 10/11/2025.

Name Change

I, Mamta Shaw, daughter of Lt Kuleshwar Shaw, wife of Amil Kumar Shaw, residing at 234/D, Kati Charan Ghosh Road, Kolkata-700050, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare that actual name of my father was Kuleshwar Shaw and Kuleshwar Shaw, Kuleshwr Shaw and Kuleswar Shaw was the same and one identical person via affidavit before the Court of 1st Class Judicial Magistrate at Sealdah dated 19th September 2025.

Name Change

I, TIPU RANI DAS (Existing Name of dependent as per service records) Mother DURGA PADA DAS (Name of Air veteran) residing of BOGL Plant site Basti, Nazrul Pally, MAMC, Durgapur-10, Durgapur Municipal Corporation, Durgapur Heavy Engg. Plant, P.S. New Township, Dist. Paschim Bardhaman, West Bengal, Pin-713210 have changed my Name from TIPU RANI DAS (Existing Name of spouse as per service records) to TIPURANI DAS vide Affidavit No. & 42, dated 17.12.25 at Durgapur Court.

Name Change

I Sanobar Raj Ansari D/o Salahuddin Residing at 40 Dr.Noorie Lane 1 P.O. Baidyabadi, P.S. Bhadreswar under Champdani Municipality, Dist-Hooghly, Pin-712222, WB. That my Father name wrongly recorded in all my academic documents as Salahuddin Raj Ansari in place of Salahuddin but in my EPIC, PAN card and Aadhar Card my Father name is recorded Salahuddin, vide an affidavit before the judicial Magistrate 1st class at chandannagore. Affidavit no 2928. Date.23.05.2025. That Salahuddin Raj Ansari and Salahuddin both are the same and one identical person.

Name Change

I, Md Sohil Shah (Old Name) Son Of Md Sajid Shah, Residing At 22,Ripon Lane, Park Street, Kolkata- 700016, West Bengal, India. Have Changed My Name And Shall Henceforth Be Known As Md Shohil Shah (New Name) As Declared Before The Notary Public At Kolkata On 18/12/2025. Md Sohil Shah (Old Name) And Md Shohil Shah (New Name) Both Are Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change

I, Minarul Haque Mondal (Old Names), Son of Sirajul Mondal, residing at Vill & P.O-Nataberia, P.S. - Bagdah, Dist- 24 Parganas (North), Pin- 743297, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Minarul Mondal (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata dated 16/12/2025. Minarul Haque Mondal (Old Name) and Minarul Mondal (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change

I, Swastik Mondal (Old Name) Son Of Sumit Kumar Mandal, Residing At Thuba Near Telephone Exchange, Taki, P.S-Hasnabad, Dist-24 Parganas (North), Pin- 743429, West Bengal, India. Have Changed My Name And Shall Henceforth Be Known As Swastik Mandal (New Name) As Declared Before The Ld. 1st Class Judicial Magistrate At Kolkata On 08/03/2022. Swastik Mondal (Old Name) And Swastik Mandal (New Name) Both Are Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change

I, Saraswati Mondal (Old Name) Wife Of Sumit Kumar Mandal, Residing At Vill- Thuba, P.O- Taki, P.S-Hasnabad, Dist-24 Parganas (North), Pin-743429, West Bengal, India. Have Changed My Name And Shall Henceforth Be Known As Saraswati Mandal Mridha (New Name) As Declared Before The Ld. 1st Class Judicial Magistrate At Kolkata On 08/03/2022. Saraswati Mondal (Old Name) And Saraswati Mandal Mridha (New Name) Both Are Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change

I, Sumit Mandal (Old Name) Son Of Amarendra Nath Mandal, Residing At Vill- Thuba, P.O- Taki, P.S-Hasnabad, Dist-24 Parganas (North), Pin-743429, West Bengal, India. Have Changed My Name And Shall Henceforth Be Known As Sumit Kumar Mandal (New Name) As Declared Before The Ld. 1st Class Judicial Magistrate At Kolkata On 08/03/2022. Sumit Mandal (Old Name) And Sumit Kumar Mandal (New Name) Both Are Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change

I, Sarkar Mouli Deepak (Old Name) Daughter Of Nandita Sarkar, Residing At 197/1/1, New 133, M.C.Garden Road, P.O.- Ghughudanga, P.S.-Dumdum, Dist- 24 Parganas (North), Pin- 700030, West Bengal, India. Have Changed My Name And Shall Henceforth Be Known As Mouli Sarkar (New Name) As Declared Before The Notary Public At Kolkata On 17/12/2025. Sarkar Mouli Deepak (Old Name) And Mouli Sarkar (New Name) Both Are Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change

I, Nandita (Old Name) Daughter Of Pradip Das, Residing At 3rd Floor, Flat D/2, (Old 245), 197/1/1, M.C.Garden Road, P.O.- Ghughudanga, P.S.-Dum Dum, Dist- 24 Parganas (North), Pin- 700030, West Bengal, India. Have Changed My Name And Shall Henceforth Be Known As Nandita Sarkar (New Name) As Declared Before The Notary Public At Kolkata On 17/12/2025. Nandita (Old Name) And Nandita Sarkar (New Name) Both Are Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change

I, Dhiraj Kumar Dutta (Old Name) S/o Sourendra Nath Dutta Residing at FL 205 Sunrise Green, Jatraagachi, Newtown, District - North 24 Parganas, Pin - 700162, West Bengal, India have Changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Dhiraj Kumar Dutta (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public Kolkata vide affidavit no 18-12-2025. Dhiraj Kumar Dutta (Old Name) and Dhiraj Kumar Dutta (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change

I, Nur Nawaj Molla, Md Noor Nawaj Molla (Old Name) S/o Nachim Molla Residing at Joychandi Mandir Road, Vic- Joyngar Molen (M), Po- Joyngar Mozilpur, District - South 24 Parganas, Pin - 743337 West Bengal, India, have Changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Noor Nawaj Molla (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public Kolkata vide affidavit no 16/2025 Dated 18-12-2025. Nur Nawaj Molla, Md Noor Nawaj Molla (Old Name) and Noor Nawaj Molla (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change

I, Ashok Kumar Singh, Ashoke Kumar Singh (Old Name) S/o Raj Karan Singh Residing at Manoharapur, Uttar Subhash Pally, VTC - Dankuni M, P.O - Dankuni, District - Hooghly, Pin - 712311, West Bengal, India, have Changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Ashok Singh (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public Kolkata vide affidavit no 15/2025 Dated 18-12-2025. Ashok Kumar Singh, Ashoke Kumar Singh (Old Name) and Ashok Singh (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change

I, Zahid Hassain Molla, Zahid Hassan Molla (Old Name) S/o Abul Kalam Molla Residing at Vill - Gabberia, Po - Dootaina, Ps - Bishnupur, District - South 24 Parganas, Pin - 743503, West Bengal, India, have Changed my name and shall henceforth be Known as Zahid Hassan Molla (New Name) as declared before the Notary public Kolkata vide affidavit Dated 18-12-2025. Zahid Hassain Molla, Zahid Hassan Malla (Old Name) and Zahid Hassan Molla (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change

I, Nafisa Husain Virpurwala (Old Name), Wife Of Husain Virpurwala, Residing At 23n,Dr Ambedkar Sarani, 3rd Floor, Kolkata-700046, West Bengal, Have Changed My Name And Shall Henceforth Be Known As Nafisa Virpurwala (New Name) Vide An Affidavit Sworn Before The Notary Public At Kolkata On 18/12/2025. Husain Virpurwala And Nafisa Virpurwala Both Are The Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change

I, Hussain Saifuddin Virpurwala (Old Name), Son Of Saifuddin Virpurwala, Residing At 23n, Dr Ambedkar Sarani, 3rd Floor, Kolkata-700046, West Bengal, Have Changed My Name And Shall Henceforth Be Known As Husain Virpurwala (New Name) Vide An Affidavit Sworn Before The Notary Public At Kolkata On 18/12/2025. Hussain Saifuddin Virpurwala And Husain Virpurwala Both Are The Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change

I, Ashim Baidya (old name) S/O Bimal Baidya, resident of Helenchca, N.O Colony, P.S.- Bagda, north 24 parganas, Pin- 743270, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Asim Baidya (new name), as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata, vide an affidavit dated 17/12/2025. Asim Baidya (new name) and Ashim Baidya (old name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change

I, Ashma Khatoon (old name) W/O Zainal Abedin, resident of 60/1/9, Dr Sudhir Bose Road, Kolkata-700023, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Asma Khatoon (new name), as declared before the Notary Public at Kolkata, vide an affidavit dated 18/12/2025. Asma Khatoon (new name) and Ashma Khatoon (old name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change

I, Jainal Abidin (old name) S/O Ali Ahmed, resident of 60/1/9, Dr Sudhir Bose Road, Kolkata-700023, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Zainal Abedin (new name), as declared Before the Notary Public at Kolkata, vide an affidavit dated 17/12/2025. Zainal Abidin (old name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change

I, Mahzemen Khatoon (old name) D/O Mushtaque Ahmed, resident of 25/5B, Kavi Md Iqbal Road, Kolkata-700023, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Mahzabin Khatoon (new name), as declared Before the Notary Public at Kolkata, vide an affidavit dated 17/12/2025. Mahzabin Khatoon (new name) and Mahzemen Khatoon (old name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change

I, Nasrin Begum Wife of Md. Yunus, aged 61 years Resident of 9, Rajab Ali Lane, P.O. - Khidripore, P.S. - Ekbalpore, Kolkata - 700 023, West Bengal, India declare that My mother MA Begum, W/o Late Md. Yusuf is correctly recordd as Banu Begum in Voter Identity card No. WB/23/147/279248, MA Begum and Banu Begum is the same and one identical person i.e. my said deceased mother alone.... Affidavit No. 74117/04/12/2025.

Name Change

I, GOLAPI BIBI W/O- SURABADDIN SEKH Residing at, Vill - Asrafpur, Post - Shyamnagar, Ps- Tehatta, Dist- Nadia, Pin- 741155, West Bengal. That my name GOLAP JAN BIBI is wrongly Recorded in my son's birth certificate registration No. 269. That Manarul Shaikh is my son, he was born 10/04/2004. Do hereby declare that I have Changed my name from GOLAP JAN BIBI TO GOLAPI BIBI (New Name) and hence forth I Shall be Known as (New Name) GOLAPI BIBI in all purpose Vide an affidavit Sworn before the Judicial Magistrate (1st Class) at tehatta Nadia On 08 Dec 2025. GOLAPI BIBI and GOLAP JAN BIBI both are Same and one identical person.

Name Change

I, (Old Name) SAMIN AKTAR S/O- JIYAUU, Residing at, Vill - Pichhli, Post - Koklamari, Ps- Englishbazar, Dist- Malda, Pin- 732208, West Bengal. Do hereby declare that I have Changed my name from SAMIN AKTAR TO SAMIM AKTAR (New name) and hence forth I shall be Known as (New name) SAMIM AKTAR in all purpose Vide an affidavit Sworn before the notary public at Berhampore Murshidabad On 17 Dec 2025. SAMIM AKTAR and SAMIN AKTAR both are Same and one identical person.

NAME CHANGE

I, Samir Biswas S/O, Late Satyen Biswas R/O, 315A, Gurulia Kalyan Pally, Siddheswar Tola Chat Road, 3 Noapara, P.O.: Gurulia, P.S: Noapara, Pin-743133. I do hereby declare vide affidavit before the Ld 1st class judicial magistrate at Barrackpore court dated on 04/12/2025 that in my voter Id card No. JGL3759099 my father name recorded as Satyendra Biswas, and his P.P.O record (No.-PENX/31546 and 31049) and it's relevant documents his name was recorded as Satyendra Kr Biswas, and also my father death certificate being (Regn No.- 151), and land deed (No.-1-1212) his name has recorded as Satyendra Kumar Biswas. My father correct name Satyen Biswas has recorded in the voter list of 2002 of 131 Jagaddal Assembly Constituency, vide SI No.-375, Part No-215 in Bengali Version. My father Satyen Biswas @ Satyendra Kr Biswas and Satyendra Kumar Biswas was same and one identical person.

NAME CHANGE

I, Jayanti Karmakar (Old Name), W/o.- Jibish Krishna Karmakar, R/o.- Vill.- Nishargharh, P.O.-Debiipur, P.S. - Memari, Dist.- Purba Bardhaman, WB-713146, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Kalpana Karmakar (New Name), vide Affidavit SI. No. 71 dt 01.12.25, before the Executive Magistrate at Purba Bardhaman, That, Jayanti Karmakar (Old Name) & Kalpana Karmakar (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

NIA: ISIS Cell renamed as COUNTERTERRORISM RESEARCH CELL

MI News Service, New Delhi: The government has widened the scope of the ISIS Investigation Research Cell in the National Investigation Agency to other theatres of terrorism and renamed it as the counter terrorism research cell, the home ministry informed Parliament. In a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha, junior home minister Nityanand Rai said exclusive divisions, such as the anti-human trafficking division, anti-cyber terrorism division, the financial action task force cell, the financial analysis unit and a special cell comprising legal experts, have also been created in the NIA.

He said a specialised unit — the national terror data fusion and analysis centre — has been established in the agency for enabling big data analytics and facilitating automation and digitisation of the investigative processes to strengthen supervision and enhance efficiency, consistency and accountability. Rai said the NIA has 1,901 sanctioned posts at present, of which 769 have been sanctioned over the last five years. “Further, the mandate of NIA has also been expanded to investigate offences related to Explosive Substances Act, 1908, human trafficking, cyber terrorism and Arms Act, 1959. Footprint of NIA has been expanded pan-India, by establishing 21 branch offices... with two zonal offices (in Guwahati and Jammu) and headquarters at Delhi,” he said.

Eastern Railway's Sealdah Division Enhances Train Services To Clear Anticipated Passenger Rush On 20.12.2025

MI News Service, Kolkata, 18 Dec.25 : To clear the anticipated rush of passengers in Kalyani - Lalgola section, Eastern Railway's Sealdah Division has planned following arrangements in train running on 20.12.2025 as under: Additional EMU services on 20.12.2025: • Lalgola - Ranaghat EMU special will leave Lalgola at 06:30 hrs. to reach Ranaghat at 09:25 hrs. • Kalyani - Krishnanagar EMU special will leave Kalyani at 07:40 hrs. & 08:04 hrs. to reach Krishnanagar at 08:36 hrs. & 09:00 hrs. respectively. Additional stoppage of Mail/Express trains (journey commencing on 20.12.2025):

Children's education in Purba Medinipur are in safe hands

MI News Service, Kolkata, 18 Dec.25 : The Navodaya School at East Midnapore, Kapasaria successfully conducted the JNV Selection Test on 13 December 2025 for Class 6 admission. This entrance test is simultaneously conducted in all districts throughout the country. The District Magistrate of Purba Medinipur Shri Unice Rishin Ismail, IAS, being the Chairman of the school ensured all arrangements were made. Smt. Taneyya Parveen, ADM (General) was entrusted with the responsibility who worked tediously along with District Inspector of Schools, Purba Medinipur and Principal of JNV Kapasaria. Under various considerations and to avert any unlawful activity by out-siders, prohibitory orders were issued by the SDM Tam-luk, Purba Medinipur on the day of the exam. Adequate security bandobast was also ensured by SP Purba Medinipur. JNV Kapasaria, a co-education residential school, established in the year 2004, is spread across 17 acres of land in the Mahishadal block of Purba Medinipur. With a student strength of almost 480, it-salumni are presently working in various professional fields such as doctors, engineers and IT professionals and thus serving the Nation, thanks to a dedicated team of qualified and highly experienced teachers and staff members.

Name Change

I, Partha Protim Mukhopadhyay (old name) S/O Ratan Monti Mukhopadhyay @ Ratan Monti Mukherjee, resident of 30/4, Shih Chandra Chatterjee Street, Belur Math, Bally(n), Howrah-711202, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Partha Protim Mukherjee (new name), as declared Before the Notary Public at Kolkata, vide an affidavit dated 17/12/2025. Partha Protim Mukherjee (new name) and Partha Protim Mukhopadhyay (old name) both are same and one identical person.

MoU on Salary account offerings

MI News Service, Kolkata, 18 Dec.25 : A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between Chittaranjan Locomotive Works (CLW), Chittaranjan and ICICI Bank on 17.12.2025, to facilitate enhanced financial solutions to the employees of CLW.

This MoU was exchanged at CLW Administrative Office, Chittaranjan in presence of Sri K.K.Goyal, Principal Financial Advisor; Sri Ranjan Mohanty, Chief Personnel Officer; Sr.Officers of CLW Accounts Department and senior Officials of ICICI Bank. On this occasion, Sri K.K.Goyal specially mentioned the efforts of Shri Anil Kumar Gupta, General Manager/CLW and Zonal Head of ICICI Bank, without whose initiative this would not have been possible. He further stated that, this MOU will help the employees of CLW to get enhanced benefits and best in class service of ICICI Bank. Sri Ranjan Mohanty, Chief Personnel Officer congratulated the



bank team for signing the MoU & expressed that this will help the employees. On this occasion, Zonal head thanked the leadership of CLW for signing the MOU. He assured best in class service and facility would be provided from the bank to the employees and family members of the employees of CLW.

bank team for signing the MoU & expressed that this will help the employees.

On this occasion, Zonal head thanked the leadership of CLW for signing the MOU. He assured best in class service and facility would be provided from the bank to the employees and family members of the employees of CLW.

Indian Railways Boosts Track Speed Potential, 79% of Network Now at 110 kmph and Above

MI News Service, New Delhi, 18 Dec.25 : Upgradation and improvement of railway tracks on Indian Railways to increase the speed potential have been carried out in a big way during the last 11 years. The measures for track upgradation include use of 60 kg rails, wider base concrete sleepers, thick web switches, longer rail panels, H Beam sleepers, modern track renewal and maintenance machines, interlocking of level crossing gates, intense monitoring of track geometry etc. As a result of the above measures, there has been significant increase in speed potential of the tracks. Total percentage of track having speed potential of 110 kmph and above has gone to 79% in Nov'25 from 40% in Mar'14. This information was provided by the Union Minister for Railways, Information & Broadcasting and Electronics & Information Technology, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, in a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha.

More Trips Will be Notified in Coming Days

MI News Service, New Delhi, 18 Dec.25 : For the Christmas and New Year period of 2025-26, Indian Railways has planned an extensive operation of special trains across eight zones to manage the anticipated surge in passenger traffic. A total of 244 trips have been notified so far. More trips will be notified in the coming days.

On the Mumbai-Goa (Konkan) corridor, daily and weekly specials are being operated between Mumbai CSMT / LTT and Karmali / Madgaon, covering major stops along the way and providing additional seating and sleeper options. Similarly, special services on Mumbai-Nagpur, Pune-Sanganer, and other Maharashtra routes are helping passengers avoid overcrowding on regular trains while providing convenient travel options during the festive period. Across northern and eastern India, special trains on

busy corridors connecting Delhi, Howrah, Lucknow, and nearby cities are being run to accommodate long-distance travellers heading home or to holiday destinations.

In the south and central regions, additional services connecting Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Mangaluru, and other cities ensure smooth travel for passengers during this peak period. Specific examples include CSMT-Karmali, LTT- Thiruvananthapuram, Pune-Sanganer, and CSMT-Nagpur, among others, with each offering multiple trips to meet the festive rush. By running these special trains, Indian Railways is providing additional capacity, comfort, and convenience, helping passengers celebrate Christmas and New Year 2026 without travel stress, while connecting them efficiently to beaches, cities, and holiday destinations across India.

Indian Railways Enhances Passenger Experience by Bringing Regional Cuisines on Vande Bharat Trains

● Passengers to Enjoy Regional Delicacies of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Odisha, West Bengal, Kerala, Bihar and Kashmir from the Comfort of Their Train Seats
MI News Service, New Delhi, 18 Dec.25 : Indian Railways has introduced the service of regional cuisines on Vande Bharat trains to further enhance passenger experience by offering culturally relevant food and authentic local flavours. This initiative brings the taste of India's diverse culinary heritage directly to passengers, allowing them to enjoy regional delicacies from the comfort of their train seats.



Date: December 19, 2025
Place: Rajibpur (WB)

Sincerely Authorised Officer
For ICICI Bank Ltd.

Study recommends people to think twice before going on a diet

WASHINGTON DC : A new qualitative study focuses on the negative interpersonal and psychological repercussions of 'yo-yo dieting,' or weight cycling. The work emphasises the dangers of yo-yo dieting and how difficult it is for people to escape the pattern.

"Yo-yo dieting - unintentionally gaining weight and dieting to lose weight only to gain it back and restart the cycle - is a prevalent part of American culture, with fad diets and lose-weight-quick plans or drugs normalized as people pursue beauty ideals," says LynseyRomo, corresponding author of a paper on the study and an associate professor of communication at North Carolina State University.

"Based on what we learned through this study, as well as the existing research, we recommend that most people avoid dieting, unless it is medically necessary. Our study also offers insights into how people can combat insidious aspects of weight cycling and challenge the cycle." For the study, researchers conducted in-depth interviews with 36 adults - 13 men and 23 women - who had experienced weight cycling where they lost and regained more than 11 pounds. The goal was to learn more about why and how people entered the yo-yo dieting cycle and how, if at all, they were able to get out of it. All the study participants reported wanting to lose weight due to social stigma related to their weight, and/or because they were comparing their weight to that of celebrities or peers.

"Overwhelmingly, participants did not start dieting for health reasons, but because they felt social pressure to lose



weight," Romo says. The study participants also reported engaging in a variety of weight-loss strategies, which resulted in initial weight loss, but eventual regain. Regaining the weight led people to feel shame and further internalize stigma associated with weight - leaving study participants feeling worse about themselves than they did before they began dieting. This, in turn, often led people to engage in increasingly extreme behaviors to try to lose weight again.

"For instance, many participants engaged in disordered weight management behaviors, such as binge or emotional eating, restricting food and calories, memorizing calorie counts, being stressed about what they were eating and the number on

the scale, falling back on quick fixes (such as low-carb diets or diet drugs), overexercising, and avoiding social events with food to drop pounds fast," says Romo. "Inevitably, these diet behaviors became unsustainable, and participants regained weight, often more than they had initially lost."

"Almost all of the study participants became obsessed with their weight," says Katelin Mueller, co-author of the study and graduate student at NC State. "Weight loss became a focal point for their lives, to the point that it distracted them from spending time with friends, family, and colleagues and reducing weight-gain temptations such as drinking and overeating."

"Participants referred to the experience

as an addiction or a vicious cycle," Romo says. "Individuals who were able to understand and address their toxic dieting behaviors were more successful at breaking the cycle. Strategies people used to combat these toxic behaviors included focusing on their health rather than the number on the scale, as well as exercising for fun, rather than counting the number of calories they burned."

"Participants who were more successful at challenging the cycle were also able to embrace healthy eating behaviors - such as eating a varied diet and eating when they were hungry - rather than treating eating as something that needs to be closely monitored, controlled or punished." However, the researchers found the vast majority of study participants stuck in the cycle.

"The combination of ingrained thought patterns, societal expectations, toxic diet culture, and pervasive weight stigma make it difficult for people to completely exit the cycle, even when they really want to," Romo says.

"Ultimately, this study tells us that weight cycling is a negative practice that can cause people real harm," Romo says. "Our findings suggest that it can be damaging for people to begin dieting unless it is medically necessary. Dieting to meet some perceived societal standard inadvertently set participants up for years of shame, body dissatisfaction, unhappiness, stress, social comparisons, and weight-related preoccupation. Once a diet has begun, it is very difficult for many people to avoid a lifelong struggle with their weight."

Skin Diseases: Types of, Symptoms, Treatment & Prevention



Skin disease symptoms vary significantly, depending on what condition you have. Skin changes are not always due to skin diseases. For example, you may get a blister from wearing ill-fitting shoes. However, when skin changes show up with no known cause, they may be linked to an underlying condition.

Generally, skin diseases may cause:

- Discolored skin patches (abnormal pigmentation).
- Dry skin.**
- Open sores, lesions or ulcers.
- Peeling skin.**
- Rashes, possibly with itching or pain.
- Red, white or pus-filled bumps.
- Scaly or rough skin.**
- Do skin diseases usually return after treatment?
- Many skin conditions are chronic (long-lasting). Treatment can reduce symptoms, but you may need to continue medication or other treatments to keep symptoms at bay.
- Some skin conditions go away without treatment. You may also have periods of remission (months or years with no symptoms).
- Some health conditions can increase your chances of developing a skin disease. You may be more likely to experience skin changes or symptoms if you have :**
- Diabetes: People with diabetes may have trouble with wound healing, particularly on their feet.
- Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD): Some IBD medications can lead to skin problems such as vitiligo or eczema.
- Lupus: This chronic condi-

tion can lead to inflammation and skin problems, such as rashes, sores or scaly skin patches.

Skin changes can also be the result of pregnancy, stress or hormonal changes. For example, melasma is a common skin disease that mostly affects pregnant women. Conditions like alopecia areata, acne, Raynaud's phenomenon or rosacea may get worse when you're stressed.

Some skin diseases are not preventable. For example, there is no way to change your genetics or prevent an autoimmune disorder.

You can take steps to avoid contagious or infectious skin diseases. You may prevent contagious skin diseases or reduce their symptoms if you:

- Avoid sharing utensils, personal items or cosmetics.
- Disinfect objects you use in public spaces, such as gym equipment.
- Drink plenty of water and eat a nutritious diet.
- Limit contact with irritants or harsh chemicals.
- Sleep seven to eight hours per night.
- Use sun protection to prevent sunburn and other sun damage.
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water.

Researchers suggest how brain waves are part of memory

BONN [GERMANY] : Spatial navigation and memory are essential aspects of our daily lives. Without these abilities, we would struggle to navigate our surroundings and recall past experiences. However, the neural basis of spatial memory is poorly understood.

A study group led by Prof. Lukas Kunz, who recently joined the University Hospital Bonn (UKB), discovered new information about this knowledge gap. He discovered, with scientists from New York and Freiburg, that different types of nerve cells activate simultaneously during spatial memory and are coordinated by brain waves ("ripples"). The results have been published in the journal Nature Neuroscience.

Associative memory allows different pieces of information are linked together.

"In the context of spatial memory, associative memory enables us to remember the locations of certain objects in the spatial environment," explains Prof. Kunz, research group leader for Cognitive and Translational Neuroscience at the Department of Epileptology at the UKB. He is also a member of the Transdisciplinary Research Area (TRA) "Life & Health" at the University of Bonn. "For example, we can remember where in the house we put our keys". At older age or in certain diseases such as Alzheimer's, however, this ability is limited. "It is therefore important to investigate the neuronal basis of different forms of human memory," said Prof. Kunz. In the long term, this could help develop new therapies for memory impairments. Nerve



cells are active while information is retrieved from memory. To further investigate this phenomenon, the researchers recorded the activity of individual nerve cells in epilepsy patients performing a memory task. "In a virtual world, the participants were asked to remember the locations of different objects," explains Prof. Kunz.

The recordings showed that different types of nerve cells became active during this memory task. Some nerve cells responded to certain objects, while other nerve cells activated in response to certain locations. The scientists observed that interactions between the different types of nerve cells became stronger over time when participants remembered the right object in the right place. In addition

to place and object neurons, the researchers observed hippocampal brain waves ("ripples") that also occurred during the memory task, presumably playing a crucial role in the formation and retrieval of associative memories. "Ripples could be important for the connection of different types of nerve cells and the formation of complex memories. It will be exciting to further investigate this idea in future studies," explains Prof. Kunz.

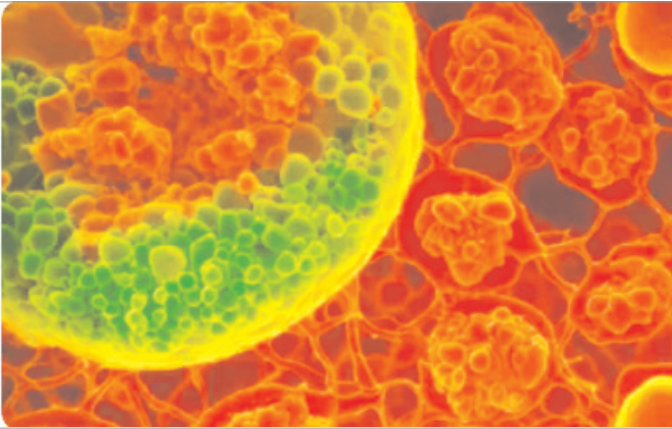
It will also be interesting to study how memory performance is modulated when ripples are suppressed or triggered, providing insights into the causal relevance of ripples.

Prof Kunz intends to continue the findings that he gained with his colleagues at Columbia University's School of Engineering and Applied Science in New York and the University of Freiburg at the University Hospital Bonn.

"The department of epileptology at the UKB is well-known for its excellent brain research. The department has the unique opportunity to record the activity of individual nerve cells in the human brain in the video EEG monitoring unit, which is the heart of every epilepsy center. This provides exciting insights into the functioning of the human brain, which is only possible at a few research centers worldwide," describes Prof. Kunz.

In his interdisciplinary research, he builds on the close exchange with other researchers and medical doctors, which is essential for the development of new research ideas.

Researchers find ways to prevent idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis



MICHIGAN [US] : The most frequent type of pulmonary fibrosis scarring of the lungs is idiopathic, which means that the cause is unclear. Researchers are working quickly to develop treatments to prevent or reduce idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF) and associated lung disorders, which can cause severe shortness of breath, dry cough, and intense exhaustion. The average survival time after being diagnosed with IPF is about three to five years, and there is no cure.

A recent U-M study conducted by Sean Fortier, M.D. and Marc Peters-Golden, M.D. from the Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine at U-M Medical School, discovered a pathway used during normal wound healing that has the potential to reverse IPF.

Using a mouse model, they simulated IPF by administering bleomycin, a chemotherapy agent that causes cell injury and confirmed that the resulting lung scarring resolved itself over the span of about six weeks. Because of this, "studying fibrosis is kind of tough," said Fortier. "If we're going to give

experimental drugs to try and resolve fibrosis, we have to do it before it resolves on its own. Otherwise, we will not be able to tell if the resolution was the action of the drug or natural repair mechanisms of the body." However, he said, "there's actually a lot to learn about how the mouse gets better on its own. If we can learn the molecular mechanisms by which this occurs, we may uncover new targets for IPF."

The process by which lung injury either leads to healing or fibrosis relies in part on what happens to a cell called a fibroblast, which forms connective tissue. During injury or illness, fibroblasts are activated, becoming myofibroblasts that form scar tissue by secreting collagen. When the job is done, these fibroblasts must be deactivated, or de-differentiated, to go back to their quiet state or undergo programmed cell death and be cleared.

"This is the major distinction between normal wound healing and fibrosis - the persistence of activated myofibroblasts," explained Fortier. That deactiva-

tion is controlled by molecular brakes. The study examined one of these brakes, called MKP1 - which the team found was expressed at lower levels in fibroblasts from patients with IPF.

By genetically eliminating MKP1 in fibroblasts of mice after establishing lung injury, the team saw that fibrosis continued uncontrolled.

"Instead of at day 63, seeing that nice resolution, you still see fibrosis," said Fortier.

"We argued by contradiction: when you knock out this brake, fibrosis that would otherwise naturally disappear, persists and therefore MKP1 is necessary for spontaneous resolution of fibrosis."

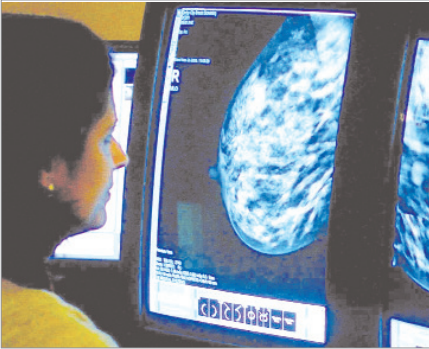
They performed several additional studies using CRISPR techniques to demonstrate how MKP1 applies the brakes, mainly by deactivating the enzyme p38a, which is implicated in a cell's reaction to stress. Furthermore, they demonstrated that neither of the two current FDA approved drugs for lung fibrosis, pirfenidone and nintedanib, are able to turn off myofibroblasts.

"That's totally in keeping with the fact that they do slow the progression, but they don't halt or reverse disease," said Fortier. Fortier hopes the discovery that this pathway reverses fibrosis leads to exploration of additional brakes on fibrosis. "So much work on fibrosis has focused on how we can prevent it, but when a patient presents to my clinic with a dry cough, shortness of breath, and low oxygen as a result of underlying IPF, the scarring is already present. Of course, we'd love a way to prevent the scarring from getting worse, but the Holy Grail is to reverse it."

Study sheds more light on detection of breast cancer

FLORIDA [US] : Scientists have developed a saliva test that detects breast cancer and has shown promising results in preclinical testing. A new handheld gadget, according to researchers from the University of Florida and National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University in Taiwan, detects breast cancer indicators from a small sample of spit. Their findings appeared in the Journal of Vacuum Science and Technology B.

"Imagine medical staff conducting breast cancer screening in communities or hospitals," said Hsiao-Hsuan Wan, a UF doctoral student in the Department of Chemical Engineering and the study's lead author. "Our device is an excellent choice because it is portable -- about the size of



your hand -- and reusable. The testing time is under five seconds per sample, which

makes it highly efficient." The new tool works by placing a saliva sample on a test strip, which is treated with specific antibodies that respond to cancer biomarkers.

Electrical impulses are sent to contact points on the biosensor device. Signals are measured and translated into digital information about how much biomarker is present. The results are quick and easy to interpret, Wan said. During testing, the device distinguished between healthy breast tissue, early breast cancer, and advanced breast cancer in a small group of 21 women. Their biosensor design uses common components like glucose testing strips and the open-source hardware-software platform Arduino.

Study reveals how specific lipids indicate tissue ageing, decreases through exercise

LOS ANGELES [US] : Researchers discovered that a form of fat builds as tissue ages and can be reversed with exercise.

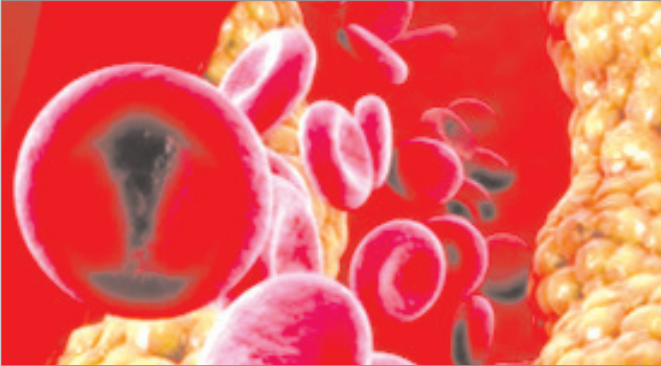
Researchers from Amsterdam UMC and colleagues from Maastricht UMC+ examined rats and human tissue before and after exercise to reach this conclusion. The findings are published in the journal Nature Ageing.

"The idea that we could reverse aging is something that was long considered science fiction, but these findings do allow us to understand a lot more about the aging process," says RieckeltHoutkooper, Professor at the laboratory Genetic Metabolic Diseases of Amsterdam UMC. "Everyone says that 'it's just part of getting older,' but this doesn't actually have to be true. By understanding more about the aging process, we can also look into new ways of intervening," says Georges Janssens, first author of the paper and assistant professor at Amsterdam UMC. In recent

years, laboratory research has shown that we may be able to counteract age-related diseases by intervening in the fundamental processes that lead to ageing. Although science has increasingly mapped out how metabolism changes during aging, large parts remained uncharted. "We

membrane of cells, which ensures that the inside and outside remain separate," says Houtkooper.

In order to add this new chapter, the research team investigated how the composition of fats changes in mice. They looked at ten different tis-



wanted to add a new chapter to the atlas. Lipids are an important part of our diet, and crucial for the functioning of our body cells. Specific lipids make up the

sues, including muscles, kidneys, liver and heart. It was noticed that one type of lipid, the bis(monoacylglycerol)phosphates (or BMPs), were elevated in all

tissues from the older animals. Suggesting an accumulation of these lipids during aging. They then investigated whether this also happens in humans. Although it was not possible to obtain as many different tissues, the accumulation of BMP was also visible in muscle biopsies of older people. Finally, they then completed more muscle biopsies from people before and after a healthy intervention that included one hour of exercise a day and saw the level of BMPs decreased in the active participants.

"These results are an important new step for our understanding of the aging process, but they are certainly not the final answer. We plan to conduct follow-up studies to better understand how BMPs contribute to aging, what are the consequences of BMP accumulation on the aging process, and whether this can only be influenced by exercise or are the other ways to affect BMPs levels," concludes Houtkooper.

Shimla Mosque Row: Hindu group claims mosques built on government land, threatens large protests

MI news Service, Shimla: Tensions have surfaced in Shimla after the right-wing organisation Hindu Raksha Manch claimed that three mosques in Nerwa tehsil were built on government land and warned of protests if the district administration does not take action.

Addressing a press conference, Hindu Raksha Manch president Kamal Gautam said the group had accessed official information through a Right to Information (RTI) request. According to him, the reply showed that two mosques, Rahman and Bilal were standing on government land.

He alleged that unauthorised religious construc-



tions were taking place in the area and demanded immediate action, warning that the organisation would take to the streets if authorities failed to respond.

Gautam also claimed that such constructions were affecting the demo-

graphic balance of the state, alleging that government land was being encroached upon without permission. He said the administration must act firmly to prevent what he described as illegal occupation.

Muslim residents in Nerwa strongly rejected the allegations, saying the claims had created fear and uncertainty in the community. Members of local mosque committees said they were being accused publicly without any opportunity to present their side.

They questioned why only Muslim places of worship were being targeted repeatedly and stressed that land disputes should be resolved through legal and administrative processes, not public threats. Community leaders pointed out that similar tensions had recently emerged in the Sanjauli Mosque case in Shimla. They said repeated targeting of mosques was send-

ing a worrying signal and contributing to communal unease. Some leaders warned that such controversies risked disturbing the fragile social harmony in the region.

The issue has also put pressure on the Congress-led state government. Muslim groups have urged Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu to ensure that minority rights are protected and that no organisation is allowed to influence administrative decisions through threats of protests.

A senior Congress leader said any land-related dispute must be examined strictly on the basis of official records and legal procedures.

Karnataka Assembly passes hate speech bill amid strong opposition

MI News Service, Belagavi: Amid strong opposition, the Karnataka Assembly, on Thursday, passed the Hate Speech and Hate Crimes (Prevention) Bill, the first such law in the country. The Bill has a provision for a jail term up to seven years and a fine upto Rs 1 lakh. The bill, cleared by the cabinet on December 4, was presented in the House by Home Minister G Parameshwara on December 10.

The Minister said the provision for 10 years jail term in the event of repeated offence has been reduced to seven years. According to the bill, any expression, which is made, published or circulated in words either spoken or written or by signs or by visible representations or through electronic communication or otherwise, in public view, with an intention to cause injury, disharmony or feelings of enmity or hatred or ill-will against person alive or dead, class or group of persons or community, to meet any prejudicial interest, is hate speech.

Israel fires mortar into Gaza residential area, wounding at least 10

MI News Service, Jerusalem: Israeli troops fired a mortar shell over the ceasefire line into a Palestinian residential area in the Gaza Strip, in the latest incident to rock the tenuous ceasefire with Hamas. Health officials said at least 10 people were wounded, and the army said it was investigating.

The military said the mortar was fired during an operation in the area of the "Yellow Line," which was drawn in the ceasefire agreement and divides the Israeli-held majority of Gaza from the rest of the territory.

The military did not say what troops were doing or whether they had crossed the line. It said the mortar had veered from its intended target, which it did not specify.

Fadel Naem, director of Al-Ahli Hospital, said the hospital received 10 people wounded in the strike on central Gaza City, some critically.

It was not the first time since the ceasefire took effect on Oct. 10 that Israeli fire has caused Palestinian casualties outside the Yellow Line. Palestinian health officials have reported over 370 deaths from Israeli fire



since the truce.

Israel has said it has opened fire in response to Hamas violations, and says most of those killed have been Hamas militants. But an Israeli military official, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with military protocol, said the army is aware of a number of incidents where civilians were killed, including young children and a family traveling in a van.

Palestinians say civilians have been killed in some cases because the line is poorly marked. Israeli troops have been laying down yellow blocks to delineate it, but in some areas the blocks have not yet been placed.

The Israel-Hamas ceasefire is struggling to reach its next phase, with both sides accusing each other of violations. The first

phase involved the exchange of hostages for Palestinian prisoners. The second is supposed to involve the deployment of an international stabilization force, a technocratic governing body for Gaza, the disarmament of Hamas and further Israeli troop withdrawals from the territory.

The remains of one hostage, Ran Gvili, are still in Gaza, and the militants appear to be struggling to find it. Israel is demanding the return of Gvili's remains before moving to the second phase.

Hamas is calling for more international pressure on Israel to open key border crossings, cease deadly strikes and allow more aid into the strip. Recently released Israeli military figures suggest it hasn't met the ceasefire stipulation of allowing 600 trucks of aid

into Gaza a day, though Israel disputes that finding.

Humanitarian groups say the lack of aid has had harsh effects on most of Gaza's residents. Food remains scarce as the territory struggles to bounce back from famine, which affected parts of Gaza during the war.

The vast majority of Gaza's 2 million people have been displaced. Most live in vast tent camps or among the shells of damaged buildings.

The initial Hamas-led Oct. 7, 2023, attack on southern Israel killed around 1,200 people and took 251 hostages. Almost all hostages or their remains have been returned in ceasefires or other deals.

Israel's two-year campaign in Gaza has killed more than 70,660 Palestinians, roughly half of them women and children, according to the territory's Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between militants and civilians in its count. The ministry, which operates under the Hamas-run government, is staffed by medical professionals and maintains detailed records viewed as generally reliable by the international community.

Israel approves 34.7-bln-USD gas deal with Egypt

MI News Service, Jerusalem: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Wednesday that he had approved a gas deal worth 112 billion shekels (about 34.7 billion U.S. dollars) under which Israel will supply natural gas to Egypt.

Under the deal, U.S. energy company Chevron, along with its Israeli partners, will supply Egypt with gas. Calling it the "largest gas deal in Israel's history," Netanyahu said about 58 billion

shekels from the deal will flow into the state treasury.

In a broadcast statement, he said he was hopeful that the deal would strengthen "Israel's status as a regional energy power and contribute to stability in our region." Energy Minister Eli Cohen, speaking alongside Netanyahu, described the approval of the agreement as "a historic moment" for Israel, both diplomatically and economically.

Cohen said the approval

followed several months of intensive negotiations, and that gas companies are expected to invest more than 16 billion shekels in gas infrastructure under the deal.

Israel became a natural gas producer after the discovery of major offshore fields in the eastern Mediterranean over the past decade, including the Tamar and Leviathan fields, which have transformed the country from an energy importer into a regional exporter.

U.S, Russian negotiators to meet in Miami over peace deal to end Ukraine crisis: Media

MI News Service, Washington: U.S. and Russian negotiators are expected to hold talks in Miami, U.S. state of Florida, this weekend over a peace deal aimed at ending the Ukraine crisis that has lasted nearly four years, U.S. media outlet Politico reported on Wednesday.

The schedule remains in flux, and if they meet, the Trump administration will present to the Russian side the latest development following the talks among U.S., Ukrainian and European officials in Berlin last weekend, said the report, citing two people familiar with the matter. U.S. President Donald Trump's special envoy Steve Witkoff and Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner are expected to represent the U.S. side while the Russian delegation is expected to include Russian President Vladimir Putin's special envoy Kirill Dmitriev, said the report.

Ukrainian national security adviser Rustem Umerov is also expected to meet with the U.S. delega-



tion separately in Miami or another location in the United States in the coming weekend.

The U.S., European and Ukrainian officials have reached consensus or significantly closed gaps on 90 percent of their differences on a 20-point U.S. draft peace plan during the Berlin talks last weekend, officials with the Trump administration said. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has said Ukraine could suspend its bid to join NATO in exchange for Western security guarantees to prevent renewed conflict with Russia if a peace agreement were reached, with Kiev seeking protections comparable to those granted to alliance members -- assurances the United States has so far not offered.

Telangana panchayat polls: Congress wins over 53pc of all Sarpanch posts



MI News Service, Hyderabad: Telangana's ruling party Congress has bagged over 53 per cent of Sarpanch posts in the Gram Panchayat elections held in three phases.

The party continued its dominance in the final phase held on Wednesday (December 17) to secure a clear majority. Out of 4,159 Gram Panchayats notified for the third phase of polls, Congress-backed candidates won 2,246 Gram Panchayats.

Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) once again gave a tough fight to the ruling party to win 1,163 Sarpanch posts.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was a distant third with only 246 seats. Independents and others bagged 491 seats.

Barring Siddipet, Congress-backed candidates won the majority of seats in the remaining 30 districts. Out of the total 12,727 Gram Panchayats for which the State Election Commission (SEC) issued notifications in all three phases, Congress-backed candidates have won 6,822 (53.60 per cent) Gram Panchayats.

BRS stood second with 3,519 Gram Panchayats (27.64 per cent). BJP-backed candidates could win only 703 Gram Panchayats (5.52 per cent) while Independents and others secured 1,654 seats (12.99 per cent).

With any Independents declaring support for Congress, the ruling party claimed that it bagged two-thirds of Sarpanch posts.

Congress secured a clear majority in Nalgonda, Khammam, Bhadradi, Hanamkonda, Jagtial, Jayashankar Bhupalapally, Mahabubabad, Mahabubnagar, Macherial, Nagarkurnool, Nizamabad, Peddapalli, Rangareddy, Sangareddy, Suryapet, Vikarabad, Kamareddy and Yadadri districts.

The State Election Commission (SEC) had issued a notification for elections for 12,728 Sarpanch posts and 1,12,242 Ward Members in 564 mandals.

A total of 1,205 sarpanches were elected unanimously, while no nominations were filed in 21 Gram Panchayats. Elections could not be conducted for five Sarpanch posts due to court stays.

Elections were conducted for the remaining 11,497 Sarpanches in three phases.

Upa-Sarpanches were elected by newly elected Ward Members. As many as 25,848 Ward Members were elected unanimously.

No nominations were filed in 393 wards, while elections could not be held for 46 Ward Members due to court stays.

Elections were held for the remaining 85,955 Ward Members in three phases. There were 38,394 candidates for Sarpanch posts, while 2,12,251 candidates competed for Ward Member posts.

More than 80 per cent of 1.66 crore voters cast their votes in all three phases.

The SEC will take a decision soon on 26 Panchayats and 439 Wards where elections could not be conducted. The newly elected Sarpanches will take charge on December 22.

UN warns powerful storm worsens humanitarian crisis in Gaza

MI News Service, Gaza: The UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) has warned that Storm Byron has further aggravated the already dire living conditions for thousands of displaced people in the Gaza Strip, many of whom are sheltering in tents or damaged buildings.

UNRWA said on US social media company X on Tuesday that the storm has intensified risks for families who have been forced from their homes, as severe weather hits overcrowded and unsafe shelters. "Storm Byron is worsening the already dire living conditions of thousands of people living in tents or damaged shelters," the agency said.

UNRWA added that while it continues efforts to support displaced families, Israeli authorities have been blocking the agency from directly bringing humanitarian aid into Gaza for months, limiting the scale of assistance that can reach those in need. The agency said people have died after damaged buildings collapsed where families were sheltering, while children



have died due to exposure to the cold. "This must stop," UNRWA said, calling for immediate and unhindered access for humanitarian aid. "Aid must be allowed in at scale, now."

Since last week, thousands of tents housing survivors of Israel's war have turned into pools of water, soaking bedding, clothing, and food supplies and leaving hundreds of Palestinian families exposed to the cold without warmth or shelter.

The Gaza Strip, the media office said, needs around 300,000 tents and prefabricated housing units to meet the most basic shelter needs of Palestinians

after the destruction of the enclave's infrastructure in two years of Israeli attacks. Israel's two year war in Gaza killed more than 70,000 Palestinians and decimated the enclave. The assault came to a halt under a fragile ceasefire deal that took effect in October. Israeli Prime Minister is wanted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza. This week, the appeals chamber of the ICC rejected Israel's legal challenge seeking to block an investigation into its actions in the genocidal war in the Palestinian territory.

Multi-Purpose Health Drive Organised At Naihati Health Unit For Railway Employees And Beneficiaries

MI News Service, Kolkata, 18 Dec.25 : With the objective of maintaining a healthy body and promoting preventive healthcare among Railway employees and beneficiaries, Health & Family Welfare department, Sealdah organised a multi-purpose health drive at the Naihati Health Unit on 17.12.25.

The health drive was graced by the Principal Chief Medical Director (PCMD), Eastern Railway, Dr. Nataraj B., along with the Chief Medical Superintendent, Sealdah, Dr. Kalpana Mandal, ACMD/T&AHQ Dr. Anupam Sett, and several senior doctors from B. R. Singh Hospital and Sealdah Divisional Hospital. Specialists from various disciplines, including Physician, Dental Surgeon, Assistant Dietary Officer and Optometrist, provided comprehensive medical services to Railway employees and beneficiaries.

In addition, a detailed inspection of the Naihati Health Unit and Accident Relief Medical Equipment (ARME) Scale-II, Naihati, was conducted by the PCMD/Eastern Railway, accompanied by



CMS/Sealdah, ACMD/HQ and ACMS/Sealdah, in the presence of the Senior Divisional Medical Officer, Naihati, Dr. Shreya Choudhury. A tree plantation programme was also organised at the Health Unit, reaffirming Eastern Railway's commitment to environmental sustainability.

Expressing his satisfaction, the PCMD/Eastern Railway appreciated the successful organisation of the health drive and emphasized the importance of such initiatives in ensuring the well-being and efficiency of Railway employees and their families.

Minority Rights Protection Day observed in the state

Nurul Islam Khan : On Thursday, December 18, at a program in Kolkata organized by the All Bengal Minority Youth Federation to mark Minority Day, Mohammad Kamruzzaman spoke out about the OBC issues faced by minority students and youth in the state. He said that the way the religious freedom, dietary habits and clothing rights of Muslims are being interfered with is highly reprehensible. He added that the recent attempt by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar to force a Muslim woman doctor to remove her hijab in a public meeting is extremely reprehensible. The Bihar Chief Minister should immediately apologize to the people of the entire country for this. He further stated that the government is doing injustice to Muslim students and youth by altering the OBC list; the previous OBC list should be immediately restored to provide students and youth with opportunities in education and employment. He also demanded that all the Waqf properties of mosques, madrasahs, Eidgahs, and cemetaries in the state that have been converted to Category 1 land records should be immediately restored to their previous status.

The organization's president, Maulana Anwar Hosain Qasemi, said that the government should focus on its constitutional duties and address issues related to education, health, and employment. Building temples is not the government's job.

Social worker Chhotan Das, former president of the organization Salahuddin Ahmed, joint secretary Hafez Nazmul Arefin, teacher Ali Akbar, vice president Ghulam Rahman, central committee member Maulana Shahidul Islam, Ziaur Rahman Gayen, Pirzada Sawban Siddiqui and other prominent personalities were present. Moreover, the All Bengal Minority Association observed the day in Sheoraphuli, Hooghly. The organization's president, Abu Afzal Jinnah, organized a seminar titled 'The plight of minorities and the way forward'. Maulana Ishaq, Baizul Hossain, Azizul Haque, Sarbajit Arvind Chakraborty and other prominent figures were present. The Bengal Minority Forum also observed the day in a special way at the Academy of Fine Arts. The day was celebrated in the presence of the organization's head, Maulana Siyamat Ali, Pirzada Sawban Siddiqui and other prominent members of society. Several rights issues were discussed; and demands were raised for the return of Waqf properties.

UN Chief condemns continued detention of UN personnel by Houthis in Yemen

MI News Service, United Nations: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Wednesday condemned the continued arbitrary detention of UN personnel by the Houthis in Yemen.

"I strongly condemn the continued arbitrary detention of 59 UN colleagues and partner personnel, as well as staff from NGOs, civil society organizations, and diplomatic missions," he told reporters after briefing the Security Council on the situation in Yemen in closed-door consultations. "I call for their immediate and unconditional release, in accordance with international law."

In recent days, Houthi de facto authorities referred three UN personnel to a special criminal court. This referral must be rescinded, Guterres said. They have been charged in relation to their performance of UN official duties. These charges must be dropped, he said.

"The continued detention of our colleagues is a profound injustice to all those who have dedicated their lives to helping the people of Yemen. The United Nations and its partners must never be targeted, arrested, or detained in connection with their official duties. We must be allowed to perform our work



without interference," said Guterres.

In the press encounter, Guterres called for de-escalation of the tensions in

Yemen.

Tensions have been simmering across Yemen, and dramatic new developments in the eastern gover-

norates are turning up the heat, he said. "A full resumption of hostilities could have serious ramifications on regional peace and security, including on the Red Sea, in the Gulf of Aden, and in the Horn of Africa."

Guterres urged all parties to exercise maximum restraint, de-escalate tensions, and resolve differences through dialogue.

"Yemen needs a sustainable, negotiated political settlement -- one that embraces the aspirations of all Yemenis and brings this devastating conflict to an end. Until then, the Yemeni people will continue to pay a terrible price," he said.

3rd Test: Conway says NZ aimed to 'bat big and well' after whirlwind innings against WI

MOUNT MAUNGANUI : Devon Conway explained that New Zealand's plan after opting to bat first in the third Test against the West Indies was clear from the outset, saying that the side aimed to "bat big, bat well, and give our bowlers an opportunity to bowl in the fourth innings".

After winning the toss, New Zealand chose to bat first, a decision they had not taken in a home Test since 2011. By stumps, the hosts were firmly in control at 334 for 1, with Tom Latham dismissed late in the day for 137 and Conway unbeaten on 178. The opening duo vindicated New Zealand's bold call to bat first on a green top surface, putting on a commanding 323-run opening stand on Day 1.

Conway said the decision to bat first was made collectively once the team finalised its playing XI. Speaking after the conclusion of

Day 1, he said, "Once we made the decision that we were going to go with Jazzy (Ajaz Patel), we decided that we were collectively going to have a bat first," Conway said. "Mentally, I really knew that we were going to bat. It was a guaranteed bat day because I had a feeling that they would have seen a green wicket, and with the make-up of their bowling attack, they probably wanted to bowl first."

The early stages, however, were far from comfortable. West Indies made full use of the conditions, and Conway admitted he struggled to find rhythm.

"In the first 15-20 overs, they seemed to be bowling in really good areas and moving the ball quite a lot. I was constantly fighting myself throughout that first hour. Funny enough, I spoke to Tom Latham at lunch, and I said I almost felt like I forgot how to bat



after that first hour... Just everything felt really awkward. The trigger, it's just part of the game, batting...That happens every now and then, but I just try to remind myself just to get through that," he mentioned.

As the day wore on, batting became noticeably easier. The ball

softened, the pitch quickened, and Conway and Latham began to dominate. Conway struck 25 fours in an innings built on patience and controlled aggression. "I think it was a combination of two things. The ball got a little bit softer, a little bit older, and the wicket actually sped up a little bit. It offered

up some good scoring opportunities for myself and Tom," he said.

Staying positive was key to cashing in. "One of my things is to play with freedom, play with a positive mindset, keep looking to score. I just try to remind myself to do that, particularly after lunch. If they miss, I want to capitalise and put them under pressure."

The innings comes at an important time for Conway, who has struggled for consistency in recent months, with two-thirds of his previous 39 Test innings ending before he reached 30. However, he downplayed any personal pressure.

"I just try and remind myself to just keep doing that - don't worry about the runs. Just keep focusing on doing a job for the team and doing a role. I'm pretty happy that it turned over for me today, but I've just got to keep focusing on being present and just, as I say,

doing a role for the team," he said.

Conway also reflected on the challenges of opening the batting, particularly in New Zealand conditions. "It is a very underappreciated job around the world, not just here. Yeah, it has been a tough ride. Quite often, you rock up day one of a Test match, and you see it's pretty green," he stated.

He was quick to praise his opening partner. "Already mentally you think, well, it's going to do bits here on this pitch. I think a lot of credit needs to go to a guy like Tom Latham, who's played 90-odd Tests, and he's done so well. I think he's scored his 15th Test century, and a lot of those centuries have been here in New Zealand."

Discipline, Conway noted, remains non-negotiable. "I think you've just got to try and remind yourself to get yourself into a good position and look to score because

there is probably a ball with your name on it here in New Zealand. You've just got to be disciplined."

Conway's top Test score is still the double century he made on his debut at Lord's. He will resume on day two, just 22 runs shy of that achievement, but milestones are not at the front of his mind.

"I think if you look too far ahead, particularly when you're batting, you can get yourself in trouble," he said. "I think it's very important for us as a batting group to keep putting (West Indies bowlers) under pressure. Bat for a long period of time because that wicket is going to get flatter, and it will give our spinners an opportunity to do a role later in the Test."

For now, his focus is straightforward. "I just want to go out there, stay in the process ball by ball, and just keep doing my thing - building a partnership with others at the other end."

AFTER LUCKNOW T20I ABANDONMENT, UPCA TO BEGIN TICKET REFUND PROCESS FROM FRIDAY

NEW DELHI : Following the abandonment of the fourth T20I between India and South Africa due to excessive fog and poor visibility, Prem Manohar Gupta, the Secretary of the Uttar Pradesh Cricket Association (UPCA), said that the full ticket refund process will commence from Friday.

Gupta confirmed that arrangements are being put in place by the governing body to ensure smooth reimbursements are done for spectators who had purchased tickets for the match in both offline and online mode.

"The ticket refund process will start from tomorrow morning. Those who purchased online will be refunded online. Only the service charges will be deducted. Rest, all the money will be refunded."

"For refunding those who purchased offline, we are going to set up booths at the Ekana Stadium. The process of refund will start from there and an advertisement for the same will be put in the newspapers. All the money will be refunded to all spectators," said Gupta to IANS on Thursday.

Repeated inspections by on-field umpires K.N. Ananthapadmanabhan and Rohan Pandit, along with reserve umpire J.R. Madanagopal, didn't yield the desired outcome as the game was eventually called off at 9:30 pm at the BRSABV Ekana Cricket Stadium.

NATIONAL SHOOTING C'SHIP: KETAN MALIK STRIKES GOLD IN WOMEN'S 10M AIR PISTOL



NEW DELHI : Haryana's Ketan Malik overcame a strong field which consisted of Paris Olympic double medallist Manu Bhaker and Asian Games champion Palak Gulia to be crowned as the winner in the Women's 10m Air Pistol (APW) event at the 68th National Shooting Championships currently underway at the Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range in New Delhi on Thursday.

Ketan struck the gold with 240.0, ahead of Meenu Pathak of Delhi, who took silver with 238.4, and Surbhi Rao, who claimed bronze with 219.5. In the Junior Women's category, Vanshika Chaudhary from Uttar Pradesh emerged on top, edging Anjali Shekhawat by 0.2 for gold, while Palak Gulia secured bronze, and Army Marksmanship Unit's Lakshita Bishnoi claimed the youth title after a narrow 0.6 victory over Rashmika Sahgal, with Sanskriti Bana completing the podium.

The final followed an extensive qualification phase that saw over

900 shooters compete across 39 relays. Palak Gulia topped the qualification with 582-24x. She was joined at the top by Manu Bhaker, who also shot 582, finishing second on inner-10 count with 19x. Ketan qualified third with 581-16x, while Mohini Singh (580 -19x), Anjali Shekhawat (579 -22x), Surbhi Rao (579 -22x), Anjali Choudhary (579 -19x), and Meenu Pathak (579 -14x) completed the list of finalists.

In the final, Manu Bhaker finished seventh with 137.2, followed by Anjali Choudhary on 110.1, while Mohini Singh ended fourth with 197.9 and Anjali Shekhawat placed sixth with 157.5.

In the Junior APW final, Vanshika Chaudhary emerged on top, shooting 240.5 to claim the gold medal. Anjali Shekhawat put up a strong challenge but finished just 0.2 behind to take silver, while Palak Gulia won bronze with 218.0. Payal Khatri (195.8) finished fourth, followed by Lakshita Bishnoi (177.7). Ketan Malik, competing in the junior final as

well, finished sixth with 156.1, while Mohini Singh (131.8) and Rashmika Sahgal (117.2) completed the final lineup.

Palak Gulia also topped the junior qualification, followed by Ketan Malik, Mohini Singh, and Anjali Shekhawat. Vanshika Chaudhary qualified fifth with 578-18x, narrowly ahead of Payal Khatri, who also shot 578 but finished sixth on inner-10 count. Lakshita Bishnoi (577-21x) qualified seventh, while Rashmika Sahgal (577-18x) secured the final qualifying spot.

In the Youth APW final, Lakshita Bishnoi claimed the gold medal, edging past Rashmika Sahgal by 0.6 after a closely fought final. Rashmika, who had led the field until the 22nd shot, settled for silver, while Sanskriti Bana won the bronze with 218.5. Suruchi Singh finished fourth with 197.9, while youth qualification topper Priyanshi Purva (581-23x) finished fifth in the final with 177.6, followed by Aaradhya Mishra (156.5), Janvi Vidhyadhar Manatkar (135.2), and Sneha (110.5).

In the Senior APW team event, Haryana clinched the gold medal with an aggregate score of 1735, led by Palak Gulia, Suruchi (577-17x), and Rhythm Sangwan (576-7x). Delhi finished second with 1725-48x, anchored by Meenu Pathak, Rashmika Sahgal, and Parisha Gupta (569-16x), while the Army Marksmanship Unit secured bronze with 1723 - 57x through Lakshita Bishnoi, Himanshi (573 -18x), and Sejal Raju Kamble (573-18x).

'Told Aniket if you get selected, I will also get in,' says SRH's newest recruit Shivang Kumar

NEW DELHI : Manifestation met reality for Madhya Pradesh's left-arm wrist-spin all-rounder Shivang Kumar when Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) picked him in the IPL 2026 auction at his base price of Rs 30 lakh.

The move to rope him in by SRH reunites Shivang, who bats right-handed and is capable of producing big hits, with best friend and Madhya Pradesh teammate Aniket Verma, who was one of the finds for the franchise in a disappointing 2025 season.

"First of all, I am very excited to play for SRH. It's a team of my teammate and best friend Aniket Verma. With me now going to his team, there is also this excitement feeling because I told him last year that if you get selected, then I will also get selected in it."

"So, a lot of things have been manifested. At that time (when the auction was on), I was in the room. My friend came and told me that 'bhai, you have been selected'. So, I felt very good," said Shivang in an exclusive conversation with IANS.

Shivang, 23, had trials with multiple franchises before the auction and that was enough to tell him that he will be a part of the IPL for the first time. "Before the auction, I went to trials of Punjab Kings, Mumbai Indians and Rajasthan Royals. So, I got a good response from them."

"SRH also called me twice, but unfortunately, I could not go as at that time, I was in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy. The other time, it got cancelled for some reason. But the trials were quite good and there was a good response everywhere. SRH showed their trust in me and I am feeling good."

Shivang views playing in IPL 2026 as his gateway to fulfilling his ultimate goal: playing for India. "IPL is a launching pad for an uncapped player to the Indian team. So, as per my skills, I think SRH will like me a lot."

"I do both batting and bowling, so I can be very useful for the team. I have heard a lot about Murali sir (Muttiah Muralitharan). He talks a lot about cricket. So, it will be good to talk to him as well because I also talk mainly about cricket," he added.

It also helps that Shivang sees Aniket as a huge source of motivation and belief to leave his mark in the IPL, after SRH scouts noticed his rare bowling skillset and penchant for hitting big shots. "Because of Aniket, we felt that we can also do well at this level. Aniket's season was very good and he played very well in SRH for 2-3 innings. So, we also believe that we can also do well at the top."

"I told Aniket that you have done well there, then I will also do well. So, there was a lot of support from the Madhya Pradesh Premier League because under the lights, we actually play less matches on an international ground."

"So, the player gets a lot of experience and exposure there on how he will play internationally. The world also watches him - whatever he does, good or bad. So, it is also a benefit that we learn how to deal with it."

Growing up in Rewa, a place that has produced notable pacers Kuldeep Sen and Ishwar Pandey, Shivang was first taught about cricket by his father Praveen Kumar, a Chief Ticket Inspector (CTI) in the Railways currently posted in Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh. Praveen himself played cricket in Bengal, including the Ranji Trophy, and who harbored dreams of playing for India himself.

"We used to practice cricket in our MPCA camps in Indore. When I was 22, I went to Rewa. Before that, I used to play in the Gwalior division. Rewa supported me a lot and it was an opportunity for me."

"Actually, my father put me into playing cricket. He also had a dream that my child should play for India. He also had a dream that he should play. But this dream has been passed on to me. Hopefully, I will be able to fulfill his dream."

Seeing him being picked by SRH for IPL left Praveen jubilant. "My father is a very positive person. So, he was like, 'Okay, beta, you have been selected. So, learn and go upwards from here. Your ultimate goal is to play for India'. He was also very happy that I was selected for SRH, which is known for a lot of power hitters and are known for their fearless approach and excellent batting."

It was Praveen, Shivang's first coach, who transformed him from a right-handed bowler into a left-arm spinner. "He taught me batting and actually, I bowled right handed. But he made me a lefty bowler. I do everything from the right hand, but just do bowling from the left hand. So, you can call it his masterpiece, as he made me like this. After I started my cricket under him, I found my way through MP and MPCA supported me a lot."

Shivang's journey in the cricketing world wouldn't have happened if the MS Dhoni biopic movie hadn't reignited his passion for the game. "When I didn't get selected for the U-14 team, I decided to leave cricket. I didn't play for 5 months. Luckily, I got a chance to watch the movie on MS Dhoni."

SHOOTING LEAGUE OF INDIA ADD UP PROMETHEANS AS FRANCHISE AHEAD OF INAUGURAL EDITION

NEW DELHI : The Shooting League of India (SLI) on Thursday announced the addition of UP Prometheans, a Uttar Pradesh-based franchise, for its inaugural season scheduled from February 16 to 26, 2026.

The new team strengthens the league's growing footprint and reinforces its vision of building a robust, inclusive ecosystem for the sport of shooting in India.

Welcoming the UP Prometheans to the league, President of the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) Kalikesh Narayan Singh Deo said, "We are delighted to welcome UP Prometheans to the Shooting League of India family. Uttar Pradesh has immense sporting potential, and the entry of a franchise driven by a strong educational and developmental philosophy adds great value to the league."

The UP Prometheans franchise is owned by Mukesh Sharma, founder and chairperson of Prometheus, an international school located in Noida.

"Mukesh Sharma's commitment to creating opportunity through infrastructure and education aligns perfectly with the vision of SLI-to build a sustainable ecosystem that nurtures talent, inspires youth, and takes Indian shooting to the next level."

Notably, Prometheus School offers shooting as a structured sport from Grade 5 (9 years and above), with a focus on building technical ability, mental resilience, precision, and hand-eye coordination among students.

The campus houses an Olympic-standard indoor shooting facility comprising a 10-metre range with 10 manual targets and one SIUS electronic target system. The range is additionally equipped with two electronic pistols and one rifle, and all training and operations are conducted in strict compliance with ISSF regulations. Students are coached by certified professionals, supported by Khelo India (SAI) talent identification experts, and regularly benefit from workshops and seminars led by Arjuna Awardees and Olympians. Reflecting the school's growing impact, Prometheus athletes are currently competing at the national level - Siya Marwah, Vaivaswat Vijay Singh Deo, Siana Monga, Sidhaan Gandhi, Ayaana Chinaria, Aarish Goel, Ayaan Khan- highlighting how access to world-class facilities is enabling young shooters to pursue high-performance pathways. Speaking on the franchise's entry into the league, the owner of UP Prometheans said, "Shooting is one of India's strongest Olympic sports, and Uttar Pradesh has the talent and potential to play a far bigger role in this journey."

Junior WC hero Prince Deep Singh eager to learn from veteran David Harte at HIL 2026

NEW DELHI : Fresh from his impressive performance at the FIH Hockey Men's Junior World Cup, where he played a key role in India's bronze medal victory, young goalkeeper Prince Deep Singh is entering the Hockey India League (HIL) 2026 full of confidence. The Tamil Nadu Dragons goalkeeper was one of India's top performers during the tournament, making crucial saves in a shootout against Belgium in the quarterfinals and maintaining steady performance throughout the matches.

Prince Deep reflected on how the FIH Men's Junior Hockey World Cup has influenced his mindset, saying, "I am much more confident now after this tournament because I played well in front of such a big home crowd. When I used to make saves, the fans cheered me a lot and it was a great motivation for me."

"During the shootout, when I saw so many fans behind me in the stadium, I told myself that I have to stop the ball for them. After I saved the fourth shootout, there was a lot of noise again and my confidence went even higher. When the fifth one came, I believed that I would stop it, and it became a double-save. That moment was the best for me and it went viral as well," Prince Deep recalled.

As he gears up for the HIL, Prince Deep will rejoin the Tamil Nadu Dragons, playing alongside legendary Irish goalkeeper David Harte, with whom he also shared the dressing room last season. Talking about how David Harte influenced his growth last season,

Prince Deep explained, "He is like one of the world's best goalkeepers. He taught me how to handle pressure, which is the most important thing for us. Earlier, I used to fall very fast and commit early, but he told me to stay on my feet and react at the last moment. Playing and practising with such a big player will help me a lot and I am looking forward to learning more from him."

The young goalkeeper also emphasised how watching Harte closely during training helped him refine his fundamentals and decision-making skills. "I used to watch him from behind during practice, to see what he does at different moments. He told me that during penalty corners you have to stay relaxed and keep yourself cool because there is so much pressure. He always said that negativity has to be kept out of the ground and you should only focus on what you are doing inside the field," Prince Deep said.

Since last season, Prince Deep feels he has made significant progress, thanks to regular exposure at the international level and extended training at national camps under the guidance of PR Sreejesh, the former Indian goalkeeper and current head coach of the men's junior team. In addition to all the training and international tours, Sreejesh helped Prince Deep secure medals in two major tournaments-winning a silver at the Sultan of Johor Cup and a bronze at the recent Junior World Cup.

"There is a lot of change in my game now. Earlier, I was a lit-



tle scared during matches, but now I am very different. My last two tournaments went well. In training, coach sir (Sreejesh) always taught me to not focus too much on the result, but to play simple, make basic saves, communicate more on the field, and stay connected with the game," he explained.

Both Sreejesh and David Harte are iconic figures in international hockey, having competed against each other in major tournaments and even played together in the initial seasons of the Hockey India League in 2014. Having trained under both, Prince Deep noted the similarities in their playing styles and said, "Both of them have taught me how to handle pressure and control myself. They always say that whatever decision you take, take it with full conviction. If you concede a goal, don't lose confidence; forget it quickly and think about the next action. They both focus a lot on decision-making, defensive shape and staying calm." Prince Deep addressed the Tamil Nadu Dragons,

expressing regret over their semi-final loss last season but remaining hopeful about the team's prospects for the upcoming campaign. "Last time, we made a few mistakes and we will work on that this season. Most of the team is the same and our camp starts soon. We have a good balance in the squad, and everyone is focused on improving from last year," he stated.

As the Hockey India League prepares to start, Prince Deep feels that the competition and knowing his opponents will enhance the excitement, especially since his teammates from the Junior World Cup will now be competing against him. "I know how many of these players play and their strengths and weaknesses, so it will be fun competing against them in the league. It's going to be a very exciting season," he concluded on an amusing note.

The Men's Hockey India League 2026 starts on January 3rd, with Tamil Nadu Dragons hosting Hyderabad Toofans in Chennai for their opening match.

