



91.41 percent voting in the last phase of West Bengal elections amid sporadic violence

Kolkata(GNS): The second and final phase of the West Bengal Assembly elections witnessed a bumper turnout amid sporadic violence. 91.41 percent voting took place for 142 seats in seven districts of South Bengal, including the capital Kolkata. Counting of votes will take place on May 4, and the results will be clear by 12 noon to determine who will form the government in the state.

According to the Election Commission, the voting that began at 7 am, saw a voter turnout of around 18 percent by 9 am, 39.97 percent by 11 am, 61.11 percent by 1 pm, and 78.68 percent by 3 pm. Purba Bardhaman recorded the highest voter turnout of 93.39 percent, while Kolkata South recorded the lowest at 87.25 percent. Additionally, Hooghly district recorded 91.41 percent voter turnout, Howrah 90.93 percent, and Kolkata North 88.91 percent. Nadia district recorded 91.35 percent voter turnout, North 24 Parganas 91.39 percent, and South 24 Parganas 91.45 percent.

In the second and final phase, the political future of a total of 1,448 candidates was sealed in EVMs. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Leader of the Opposition Suwendu Adhikari are facing off in the Bhawanipur seat. Also contesting are state ministers Firhad Hakim, Arup Biswas, Javed Khan, Sujit Basu, and Shashi Panja, along with several other ministers from the ruling Trinamool Congress, Bengal Congress President Subhankar Sarkar, and the



CPI(M)'s Meenakshi Mukherjee and Dipsita Dhar. Furthermore, Ratna Debnath, mother of the doctor who was raped and murdered at RG Kar Hospital, and Rekha Patra, the face of the Sandeshkhali movement, are also BJP candidates. Tight security arrangements were made in 142 constituencies across seven districts of South Bengal: Kolkata, Howrah, North 24 Parganas, South 24 Parganas, Hooghly, Nadia, and Purba Bardhaman. State police and central forces, along with the National Investigation Agency (NIA), monitored the voting process throughout the day. Over 200,000 personnel, representing 2,231 companies of central forces, were deployed in the polling areas. The highest number of central forces, 274, were deployed in the capital, Kolkata. 263 companies

were deployed in Purba Bardhaman district, and 236 in Hooghly (rural). In addition, approximately 40,000 police personnel were deployed on election duty. However, despite the tight security arrangements, complaints of violence and disturbances emerged from several locations. Before voting began, BJP agent Musharraf Mir was attacked while visiting booth number 53 in the Chapra assembly constituency of Nadia district. BJP alleges that Trinamool Congress supporters beat up the agent badly and broke his head. In Kolkata's high-profile constituency, Bhawanipur, security forces warned Trinamool Congress candidate and outgoing Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's brother, Kartik Banerjee, while he was sitting with some people near a polling station.



PM Modi inaugurated UP's longest Ganga Expressway

Hardoi (GNS): Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Uttar Pradesh's longest Ganga Expressway in Hardoi, Uttar Pradesh, on Wednesday. Addressing the public meeting, the Prime Minister announced that the expressway would also connect to Haridwar. He criticized the Samajwadi Party and Congress as anti-development and anti-women. Recently, the country has once again witnessed their anti-women stance. These people voted against the Nari Shakti Vandan Amendment.

According to media reports, PM Modi mentioned the second phase of voting underway in West Bengal. He said that the news coming in indicates a heavy voter turnout in Bengal. Such voter

turnout hasn't been seen in decades. Earlier, the PM planted a tree along the expressway with CM Yogi. This 594-kilometer-long expressway will connect Meerut to Prayagraj. This will reduce the distance from Meerut to Prayagraj in six hours. Previously, it used to take 11-12 hours to cover this distance. The expressway was completed in five years at a cost of approximately 37,350 crore. Consequently, the average cost of one kilometer of expressway is approximately ₹628.7 million. PM Modi laid the foundation stone for the expressway in Shahjahanpur on December 18, 2021. Previously, the Purvanchal Expressway was the longest expressway in Uttar Pradesh, with a length of 340 km.

Religion cannot be "hollowed out" in the name of social reform

Important remarks of the Supreme Court in the Sabarimala temple case

New Delhi, (GNS): The Supreme Court made significant observations during the hearing of petitions challenging discrimination against women at the Sabarimala temple in Kerala. During the hearing on Wednesday, the court said that religion cannot be "hollowed out" in the name of social reform. Justice B.V. Nagarathna said that India's civilizational and religious history cannot be ignored, as Articles 25 and 26 of the Constitution were created against this background. Senior advocate Indira Jaising argued that the ban on women's entry into the temple is discriminatory and a direct violation of their constitutional rights. She said the Supreme Court had previously allowed women's entry and there is no stay on the court's decision, yet they are still being denied entry.



Advocate Jaisingh questioned whether the right to religion could override the right to equality guaranteed by the Constitution. He argued that the rights guaranteed under Articles 14, 19, and 21 cannot be limited in the name of religion. During the Supreme Court's

debate on this issue, it was stated that a balance is essential between religious traditions and fundamental rights. Justice Joymalya Bagchi remarked that the Supreme Court must examine whether constitutional rights can be completely nullified while protecting religious identity.

During a hearing in the Supreme Court, the issue arose as to whether the ban on entry of women aged 10 to 50 violates the right to equality and dignity. Advocates argued that this provision affects a significant portion of women's lives and should be considered discriminatory. The court stated that no woman was barred from entry because of her caste, but rather, the restriction was based on age and tradition. During the hearing, the government argued that traditional rules apply in many temples across the country, and therefore religious traditions should be respected. This matter has already become a topic of debate across the country, and the court's comments have once again reignited the debate about the balance between religion, tradition, and constitutional rights.

Train brakes catch fire due to heat in Rajasthan

Wedding procession carried out with 20 coolers in MP; rain and thunderstorms in 15 cities of UP

New Delhi(GNS): Many cities across the country are reeling under a heatwave, with temperatures hovering between 40 and 46°C in most areas. In Dewas, Madhya Pradesh, a wedding procession was carried out with 20 coolers to help beat the heat. A fire broke out in the lower section of a general coach of a train at Dholpur railway station in Rajasthan. According to railway sources, the heat caused the fire in the area where the brake pedals are located. On Tuesday, Banda in Uttar Pradesh was the hottest city in the country, reaching 45.6°C. Jharsuguda in Odisha recorded temperatures exceeding 45.3°C.



Heatwave centers are being set up here, providing cold water and glucose. Thunderstorms and rain hit 15 cities in Uttar Pradesh. Hailstorms struck six districts, including Prayagraj and Agra. Earlier on Tuesday, water ATMs were installed in Prayagraj due to the heat and scorching sun. According to the IMD, thunderstorms and rain are also possible in 17 states. Winds of up to 60 kmph are also possible in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Punjab, and Haryana.

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Modi knows how to ride the coattails of power

Sanat Jain

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was sworn in as Chief Minister of Gujarat for the first time in 2001. Since then, he has demonstrated how power can be wielded. Establishing a strong hold on power and bureaucracy, Modi's political journey from 2001 to 2026 is undeniable. India has seen no comparable politician who has wielded power with such dexterity. No one has done so in independent India before. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, under all odds, has successfully managed to control the cogs of power, a feat often impossible for any previous Prime Minister. After becoming Chief Minister of Gujarat, the Godhra incident occurred, threatening his position. The then-Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, had to urge

him to follow his Rajdharma (policy duty). Narendra Modi successfully navigated that difficult situation. After winning the 2002 assembly elections, he never looked back. In Gujarat, he demonstrated his power by sending former Chief Ministers Keshubhai Patel and Shankar Singh Baghel home. He learned from Gujarat how to control the federal and central systems within a democratic system. As Chief Minister and Prime Minister, Narendra Modi also learned how to utilize opposition leaders. How to control or bring the executive, judiciary, party organizations, and opposition leaders to his side. This is no secret. By implementing demonetization, Prime Minister Narendra Modi brought the opposition to the streets in one stroke. Black money was not brought

back. Demonetization led to his victory in most state elections and the Lok Sabha elections during that period. He left the opposition desperate for money. Time has passed, and now no one talks about the elimination of black money and terrorism after demonetization. Similarly, he implemented the GST law and celebrated it. In no time, state and central revenues increased manifold. Heavy taxes were imposed on the general public, but the public welcomed it with applause. No one knows better than Narendra Modi how he fearlessly confronted any decision he made as Prime Minister, no matter how much opposition he faced. The ideology around which the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) conducted politics. The way he incorporated people

opposed to that ideology into the BJP and made them partners in power. He formed the BJP's double-engine governments in several states. In Gujarat and Delhi, he successfully overpowered the bureaucracy and judiciary without confrontation. The way he used investigative agencies to strengthen his power and eliminate opposition is being praised worldwide. The grip Prime Minister Narendra Modi currently holds within the BJP organization and the RSS is unmatched. No other organization head has ever seen such a hold within the Jan Sangh, BJP, or RSS. Former Prime Ministers Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, and Rajiv Gandhi, who commanded a two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has made the entire country realize the power that they were

unable to achieve. The executive and judiciary appear to be working in the government's favor. The conflict that the judiciary and executive had with the central government before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's presidency has been forgotten. Now, whatever Prime Minister Narendra Modi wishes happens. The executive and judiciary work at his behest. He has a monopoly on the cabinet and the party organization. No one seems to challenge him from anywhere. In this situation, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is not only discussed in India but also globally. He has emerged as a model of democracy, embracing the US President and heads of state of many other countries as role models. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's sole goal is to have 100% control over power.

Editorial

A bridge of hope amidst fears of war:

The global landscape is currently filled with uncertainties, tensions, and geopolitical tensions. Escalating tensions in West Asia, disruptions in supply chains, and competition between superpowers have raised numerous questions about the global economy. At such a time, the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) signed between India and New Zealand in New Delhi on April 27, 2026, has emerged as more than just a bilateral economic document, but a powerful message of hope amid global gloom. This agreement reinvigorates the belief that cooperation, dialogue, and partnership are the path to sustainable prosperity in the future. This agreement is historic in many ways. First, its finalization in just nine months is an achievement in itself, reflecting the commitment and pragmatic diplomacy of both countries. Secondly, this agreement comes at a time when the effectiveness of multilateral institutions in the global trade system is being questioned, and countries are increasingly turning to bilateral or regional agreements. Amid the slow pace and complexities of the World Trade Organization, this agreement marks a new direction, where flexible and objective agreements are proving more effective.

The most significant feature of this agreement is that New Zealand provides duty-free market access to Indian exporters on almost all products. This is a golden opportunity for Indian industry, especially labor-intensive sectors. Sectors such as textiles, leather, engineering goods, and plastic products will receive an unprecedented boost. This will not only increase exports but also create new employment opportunities in India. The Indian economy, which is already making its mark globally, will be further strengthened through this agreement. This agreement also opens up new possibilities in the investment sector. New Zealand's commitment to invest \$20 billion in India over the next 15 years is not just a figure but a symbol of trust. This investment will inject new energy into the infrastructure, agriculture, technology, and services sectors. When a developed country invests at this level in an emerging economy, it sends a positive signal to other global investors.

Military spending on the world rises, India ranks fifth

Sunil Kumar Mahala



Countries around the world are making unprecedented increases in their defense budgets, or rather, military spending. In fact, military spending worldwide is rapidly increasing due to several factors. The major reasons include geopolitical tensions and wars (such as the Russia-Ukraine war), the Israel-Hamas conflict, and conflicts in the South China Sea, which have prompted countries to spend more on security. Competition among neighboring countries (such as those between India, China, and Pakistan) is also partly responsible for this. These countries are increasing their military spending to maintain their strategic balance.



Simply put, when one country purchases weapons, neighboring countries also begin to strengthen their militaries. This is called an arms race. New technology and modern weaponry have also emerged as a major factor. In recent years, there has been significant investment in drones, cybersecurity, missile defense systems, artificial intelligence-based weapons, and space defense, as modern warfare is now fought not only with soldiers but also with technology. Today, terrorism and internal security threats such as infiltration and drug trafficking have led to increased military spending by various countries around the world. The ambition to become a global power has also led to increased military spending. In fact, powerful countries like China, the United States, and Russia seek to increase their influence in global politics by demonstrating their military might. Furthermore, the arms industry is a significant component of many countries' economies. Defense deals are also linked to employment, exports, and technological development. It would not be wrong to say that increased military spending today is not only a sign of war preparation, but also of security, power balance, technological advancement, and political influence. However, excessive military spending can also increase pressure on the education, health, and development sectors.

In this context, a reputable news agency recently reported that India's defense spending increased by 8.9%, making it the fifth-largest military spender in the world. According to a recent SIPRI report, global military spending has surpassed \$2,887 billion, making India the fifth-largest military spender in the world. The report indicates that India's military spending will increase by 8.9 percent to \$92.1 billion in 2025. It is noteworthy that, according to the latest report from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), global military spending is projected to reach \$2,887 billion in 2025. Significantly, this is the 11th consecutive year that global military spending has increased. As a reminder, the five largest spenders include the United States, China, Russia, Germany, and India, which together contribute 58 percent

to global spending. Simply put, the United States, China, Russia, and Germany are the world's largest military spenders. According to available information, the military expenditures of the United States, Europe, China, Russia, and Germany have reached \$954,864,336,190 and \$114 billion, respectively. It would not be wrong to say that this has increased the burden on global GDP (gross domestic product). According to information, the burden on global GDP due to military expenditures worldwide has increased from 2.4% in 2024 to 2.5% in 2025. The average military expenditure of governments worldwide has decreased from 7% in 2024 to 6.9% in 2025. It is also noteworthy that the expenditures of Iran and Israel have decreased. As a reminder, Israel's military spending fell 4.9 percent to \$48.3 billion, while Iran's spending declined for the second consecutive year, reaching \$7.4 billion in 2025. Statistics show that NATO's military spending increased 14 percent to a total of \$864 billion, while Spain's military spending increased by 50 percent, reaching a total budget of \$40.2 billion. Meanwhile, military spending in the Middle East amounted to \$218 billion, a 0.1% decrease from 2024.

For now, let me inform readers that a major reason for the increase in India's defense spending is the conflict between India and Pakistan last May, in which fighter jets, drones, and missiles were used. This has led to an 11 percent increase in Pakistan's military spending, to \$11.9 billion. In fact, Pakistan also purchased new weapons from China. Significantly, this has pushed the global military spending burden (as a percentage of GDP) to 2.5 percent, the highest since 2009. This means that the average military expenditure per capita was \$352. The report shows that US military spending declined by 7.5% to \$954 billion, attributed to the lack of new financial assistance to Ukraine. In contrast, Europe saw an increase of 14 percent, and Asia and Oceania saw an increase of 8.1 percent. Furthermore, China is the world's second-largest military spender. In fact, China has increased its defense budget by 7.4 percent to \$336 billion in 2025. It's also worth noting that this is the 31st consecutive year that China has increased its defense spending. According to the

report, countries have increased spending on weapons and defense preparedness due to global war, geopolitical tensions, and security concerns.

However, it would not be wrong to say that excessive military spending by any country has both advantages and disadvantages. In fact, it directly impacts a country's security, economy, and social development. The benefits of excessive military spending are that it strengthens a country's national security while also increasing employment opportunities. Simply put, it creates jobs in the military, defense industry, weapons manufacturing, research, and technical fields. Excessive military spending contributes to a country's technological development. In fact, defense research develops new technologies that are later used by the general public (such as the Internet, GPS, etc.). Increased military spending increases a country's international influence. It would not be wrong to say that today, a country with a strong military power is considered more influential in global politics. Furthermore, one advantage is that excessive military spending also helps the military respond to disasters like floods, earthquakes, and epidemics, in addition to war. On the other hand, excessive military spending has its drawbacks. For example, it has a major impact on education and health. Simply put, excessive military spending leaves less money for education, health, employment, and development projects, increasing economic pressure on that country. A country's excessive military spending can lead to government deficits, debt, and inflation. Furthermore, it fuels an arms race, leading to tensions and wars. Social imbalances also arise, such as discontent if the public is struggling with poverty and unemployment and the government spends excessively on arms. So, in conclusion, I would say that while military spending is essential for any country to maintain its sovereignty and security, excessive military spending is not considered a balanced policy. Therefore, any country should pay equal attention to security, as well as education, health, employment, and development, so that it can progress and advance.

The appearance of Lord Narasimha; a symbol of the total destruction of terrorist, autocratic and autocratic tendencies

Dr. Umesh Chandra Sharma

When God's own servants, under the influence of ego, start insulting the accomplished saints by doing unauthorized acts and behaving indecently, and become an obstacle in the darshan of God, then Lord Shri Hari, in the form of punishment, by cursing them and destroying their egoistic attitude, gives a pure form to their conscience, but even at the root of such punishment done by God, his grace is hidden, on receiving which the living being becomes satisfied.

The self-illuminating God, by pronouncing whose holy names a person attains eternal salvation, he is the same Purna Purushottam

Bhagwan, the soul of the entire universe, the form of the universe and the master of all. To provide divine bliss of the soul to his loving devotees and to destroy the impure tendencies, he sometimes appears on this earth in the form of Shri Ram, Shri Krishna and sometimes in the form of Narasimha, where he provides love bliss to his loved ones, at the same time, by destroying the animalistic tendencies, establishes the kingdom of Dharma and provides fearlessness to the people.

After receiving a rare boon from Brahmaji, demon king Hiranyakashipu gained control over the throne of Indra along with the unbroken

kingdom of seven islands. After conquering all the worlds, that victorious demon king became the sole emperor of all, enjoying the pleasures freely and declaring himself as God, started oppressing the followers of Dharma. As a result, all the worlds including the mortal world were terrified by his terrorizing, autocratic and self-willed tendencies, and there was chaos everywhere. But when, with his sinful and vile tendencies, he started insulting the gods, Vedas, cows, Brahmins, sages and Dharma and started hating God, then that terrorist warrior, endowed with the power generated by the boon, was killed by Lord Narasimha. At the root of the

demon king Hiranyakashipu's tyranny, terror, and arbitrariness lay not only his arrogance but also his disregard for the duty of a servant. As a result, inspired by the Lord, the sages Sanaka and others cursed two of the Lord's servants, Jai and Vijay, to be born into a clan of demons. Cursed by the Sanakas, Jai and Vijay were born into the clan of demons as Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu, and were revered by the demon community as messiahs. However, their arrogant nature ultimately led to their defeat. Through intense penance, Hiranyakashipu succeeded in obtaining a rare

boon from Lord Brahma, but those boons were not for the benefit of the people but to satisfy his own ego, ultimately leading to his own destruction.

God never kills anyone, but instead ensures appropriate punishment for their publicly condemned actions and encourages them to follow their own dharma. He does not forgive even His own people for their transgressions, but rather, through punishment, makes them realize their mistakes, destroys their flawed tendencies, and purifies their hearts. Thus, even such punishments by God are inclusive of the all-round well-being of His own people. This is why, when Lord

Vishnu's servants, Jai and Vijay, behaved arrogantly and indecently towards the sages Sanaka and others, they were cursed by those very sages and expelled from Vaikuntha. Jai and Vijay's birth in the demon clan of Hiranyakashipu and Hiranyaksha, and their return to Vaikuntha in due time after their condemnable actions, is an unparalleled example of God's grace. At the core of this incarnation of Lord Vishnu was not only the protection of Prahlad, but also his divine love and devotion, complete surrender to the Lord and unwavering faith, due to which Lord Shri Hari Vishnu was forced to take incarnation.

Differently-abled retired MCD worker dies trapped in Paharganj house fire

New Delhi, (GNS): A 60-year-old differently-abled, retired sanitation worker of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi died after being trapped inside his home during a fire in central Delhi's Paharganj on Monday afternoon. His two sons suffered burn injuries while trying to rescue him but could not reach him in time. According to police, Ramesh Kumar was alone on the third floor of his house in Chuna Mandi when the fire broke out around 2.40 pm. A PCR call was received at Paharganj police station, following which a team rushed to the spot. Delhi Fire Service deployed four fire tenders and 10 firefighters. By the time they arrived, flames had engulfed part of the floor. The blaze was brought under control by around 3.10 pm.



Ramesh, who was partially paralysed and suffered from frequent health issues, was trapped inside a room locked from within. He could not be rescued in time and was later pulled out and taken to Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, where doctors declared him brought dead. "Preliminary investigation points to a possible short circuit, though the exact cause is yet to be confirmed," a senior police officer said.

Ramesh lived with his wife Sheela (58), a homemaker, and their two sons - Rohit (35), a mehendi artist, and Naresh (40), who works with a private firm. The family occupied the third and fourth floors of the four-storey building.

Family members and neighbours tried to rescue Ramesh. Rohit told Media that he was at work when he received a call about the fire. "I rushed home and managed to help rescue my mother and brother. Naresh and I injured our hands trying to break open the door, but it would not give way," he said, adding that his father suffered from seizures and was undergoing treatment.

Rohit said his mother had served lunch to his father shortly before stepping out. "She told me she had given him lunch and that

he locked the room from inside. That is how he got trapped. She narrowly escaped," he said.

Naresh suffered minor burn injuries during the rescue attempt, police said. Neighbours also tried to alert Ramesh and force open the door after noticing thick smoke, but had to retreat as the fire intensified. A crime team and forensic experts inspected the site. Further investigation is underway.

Fire call data shows an overall rise in 2026 compared to 2025. In Jan, calls increased to 2,785 from 2,185 last year, while Feb recorded 2,471 calls against 2,083. March, however, saw a marginal dip, with 2,838 calls compared to 2,952 last year. Despite this, the first quarter remained about 12% higher, rising from 7,220 in 2025 to 8,094 in 2026.

Students oppose RSS-linked event at Jamia Millia Islamia

New Delhi, (GNS): Nearly 70 students protested at Jamia Millia Islamia on Tuesday against a programme organised on campus to mark 100 years of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

Raising slogans of "Inquilab Zindabad", the protesters gathered outside the venue, holding placards that read "Jamia is our university, not your shakha" and "Reject saffronisation of our campus".

The students, affiliated with Left-leaning groups, including the Students' Federation of India (SFI) and the All India Students' Association (AISA), demanded that the organisers leave the campus.

A student alleged that while demonstrations were happening outside, the organisers attempted to bring the chief guest into the auditorium through alternative entry points. The programme, held under the RSS-linked Yuva Kumbh initiative to mark its centenary, drew objections a day earlier from the SFI's campus unit, which termed it a "direct provocation".



University authorities, however, said the event was academic in nature. "The programme focused on themes such as youth, Indian Knowledge Systems and future prospects. We see no issue with discussions on these subjects," a university official said.

Students also questioned what they described as selective permissions on campus. They alleged that while student groups often face restrictions in organising discussions, the programme was allowed in a fully equipped auditorium.

"For some time now, such programmes have been organised across universities in a coordinated manner, with auditoriums booked under the name of Yuva Kumbh.

CBI joint director, retired inspector get 3 months' jail in 'malafide' raid case

New Delhi, (GNS): Public servants cannot be permitted to abuse their official position to settle personal scores, and if they dare to do so, they must bear the brunt of their actions by facing strict legal action, a Delhi court has held while sentencing retired CBI inspector V K Pandey and CBI joint director Rameesh Geer. Judicial magistrate first class Shashank Nandan Bhatt directed the duo to undergo simple imprisonment for three months under various provisions of IPC, including house trespass and volun-



tarily causing hurt. They were also ordered to pay Rs 50,000 each as compensation to the complainant within 30 days.

The case arises from a pre-dawn raid in 2000 on IRS officer Ashok Aggarwal, during which Pandey and Geer forcibly entered his

residence, manhandled him and caused injuries to his right forearm. The court found that the arrest was carried out in a malafide manner to "frustrate and nullify" a Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) order directing review of his suspension.

The counsel for Aggarwal submitted that the 1985-batch IRS officer underwent 38 days of incarceration due to the unlawful arrest and fought a 25-year legal battle for justice, urging the court to impose a stringent sentence to send a strong message. The defence argued

that Pandey and Geer acted under the "directions of their seniors", had no personal animosity, and maintained distinguished service records without criminal antecedents. It also contended that Pandey is retired and Geer is nearing retirement, while also citing the latter's national and UN honours to seek leniency.

Rejecting these submissions, the court held that the duo, by virtue of their positions, were "duty-bound to exercise independent judgment" and could not evade responsibility by citing superior orders.

LG reviews NDMC's heatwave preparedness at command centre

New Delhi, Agency: Lieutenant governor Taranjit Singh Sandhu on Tuesday visited the New Delhi Municipal Council's (NDMC) Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC) at Palika Kendra to review its functioning and assess the civic body's preparedness to deal with the ongoing heatwave in the capital.

During the visit, LG said the prevailing extreme weather conditions posed both a challenge and a test of preparedness for civic agencies. He stressed that departments should adopt best practices that could serve as a model for other cities.



142 guest teachers in Delhi may face termination for refusal to perform census duty

New Delhi, Agency: As many as 142 guest teachers in Delhi may face termination of service for allegedly refusing to perform their statutory duty as census enumerators, with the administration terming the act "gross negligence and indiscipline".

In a letter to the director of education dated April 24, Old Delhi district magistrate said, "The teachers had declined to carry out assigned census work despite an earlier communication issued on April 16 highlighting the difficulties caused by their unwillingness to participate in the exercise."

The district magistrate requested that their services be discontinued or terminated with immediate effect, saying that tolerating such acts of indiscipline could affect other staff members currently engaged in census duty. Meanwhile, the Government Teachers Association (GTA) of Delhi has requested education minister Ashish Sood to withdraw the proposed termination of the guest teachers. GTA general secretary Ajay Veer wrote to Sood and claimed that the refusal to join census duty was not an act of deliberate disobedience but a result of practical difficulties, lack of adequate resources and low remuneration.

"Guest teachers are already working under precarious and temporary service conditions, and such harsh actions can severely impact their financial stability and morale," Veer said. He also demanded that guest teachers continue to receive regular remuneration and be given additional honorarium for census duty.

CNG auto catches fire in Gurugram, driver burnt alive

New Delhi, Agency: An auto-rickshaw driver was burnt alive after his CNG auto-rickshaw suddenly caught fire near Rajiv Chowk in Gurugram. Passersby alerted the fire brigade and police. The deceased driver has not yet been identified.

Eyewitnesses said the fire spread so rapidly that the driver didn't have a chance to get out and was burned alive inside the auto-rickshaw. Fire and police teams reached the spot and brought the fire under control but the driver was burnt alive and the charred body was found on the driver's seat.

According to the police, the incident took place at 2.30 am in the wee hours on Tuesday, on the main road near Rajiv Chowk, when a moving auto-rickshaw suddenly began to smoke and was engulfed in



flames. Due to the presence of CNG gas, the fire spread rapidly within seconds.

Bystanders tried to rescue the driver, but the flames were so intense that no one dared to approach. As a result, the driver was trapped inside and burnt alive.

The fire brigade team,

which reached the spot in time, managed to control the fire after a lot of effort, but by then the auto had completely turned into a metal frame. Police extricated the charred body of the driver with great difficulty and sent it to the mortuary for a postmortem.

"Investigation so far revealed that the auto-rickshaw involved in the accident was registered to a resident of Arjun Nagar, Gurugram. When the police team reached his address, he was not found there. A mobile number was also found on the auto rickshaw but the number is not in use. We are trying to identify the deceased and the owner of the auto. An FIR has been registered at Sadar police station and a further investigation is underway," said ASI Mahender Singh, the investigating officer.

DDA put 142 major plots on sales to generate revenue

New Delhi, Agency: To boost revenue from its land disposal segment, Delhi Development Authority (DDA) has offered more than 140 sites and plots for residential, industrial, institutional and group housing projects, as well as commercial uses, kiosks and food courts, including a cafe at Baansera. These properties are being put up for sale through an e-auction, as part of DDA's efforts to enhance annual earnings by monetising vacant land and assets.

The 22 mega e-auction scheme opened registrations on April 22 for plots located in prime areas, and the process for submitting earnest money deposit (EMD) for these plots will continue till May 22. Officials said the sites fall

under 12 categories and include reclaimed and newly identified plots that are free from legal encumbrances.

The auction portfolio includes 24 residential plots, 21 industrial plots and 16 commercial plots. Additionally, 57 built-up commercial estate shops, 10 institutional plots, including those designated for religious use, and five multi-level car parking sites are part of the offering. The inventory also features smaller commercial and licence-based units. These include four kiosks available on a monthly licence fee basis, a food court in Dwarka, a fuel station, one group housing plot, a shop at Janak Place, and a cafe site at Bamboo Oasis in Baansera.

Delhi University to set up new centre for Buddhist studies

New Delhi, Agency: Delhi University (DU) is set to clear proposal for establishing a Centre for Advanced Studies in Buddhist Studies (CASBS) as a new multidisciplinary academic centre under the Faculty of Arts, in university's executive council meeting scheduled on April 29.

The proposed centre would focus on various facets of Buddhism, including its historical and philosophical perspectives, interaction with other knowledge traditions, and contemporary relevance. The proposal states that the centre may also offer doctoral, postgraduate, diploma and certificate programmes depending on operational feasibility.

Also, the Centre aims to create a repository of ancient and contemporary reference materials related to Buddhist traditions, undertake comparative studies with other belief systems, coordinate with institu-



tions for academic collaboration, and publish a research journal in due course. The proposal also mentions evolving 'Bharat-centric perspectives' as one of its objectives.

If approved, the move would mark a significant institutional expansion of Buddhist Studies at the university through a dedicated standalone centre.

However, Buddhist studies as a subject is not entirely new to academia or university spaces, and the current proposal specifically concerns the

creation of a formal specialised centre at Delhi University rather than the first introduction of Buddhist studies as an academic discipline.

The proposal comes amid a series of curriculum and institutional changes being considered by the university under ongoing academic reforms.

A separate proposal contains multiple syllabus approvals and continuations for language courses under the National Education Policy (NEP) framework.

These include semester-wise approvals for one-year and two-year postgraduate routes, reflecting restructuring of course pathways rather than any reduction of departments.

Under the revised framework, students with a four-year undergraduate degree may pursue a one-year postgraduate programme, while others continue through the two-year route. The same model has been reflected across several language programmes listed in the agenda papers. The executive council, the highest decision-making body of the university, is expected to deliberate on the proposal during its meeting. The development is likely to draw attention in academic circles, particularly over the proposed scope of the centre, its future programmes, and the broader direction of knowledge initiatives being prioritised at one of the country's premier central universities.

Delhi high court judge in Arvind Kejriwal row recuses from hearing Congress MP Karti Chidambaram plea



New Delhi, Agency: Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma of the Delhi HC Tuesday recused herself from hearing Congress MP Karti Chidambaram's plea seeking quashing of a criminal case lodged by CBI against him, citing a "gross delay" of nearly two decades.

CBI has alleged Chidambaram helped an alcoholic beverage company in connection with a ban on duty-free sale of its whisky. Posting the



matter for July 21, Justice Sharma said it should be listed before another bench.

The same bench had recently refused to recuse itself from hearing matters involving Arvind Kejriwal and Manish Sisodia in the Delhi liquor policy case. They had sought Justice Sharma's recusal citing conflict of interest. Karti argued the case is related to the period 2004-2010 but the FIR was lodged in 2025.

'Papa, aadhe ghante mein ghar aarhe hai'

Teen's last words before fatal Delhi crash after IPL outing

New Delhi (GNS): "Papa, bahut enjoy karke aaye hain, hum aadhe ghante mein ghar pahunch jayenge (Papa, have enjoyed a lot. We will reach home in half an hour)," were the last words of 14-year-old Abhav Bhatia during a two-minute phone call with his father while returning from Monday's IPL match with his cousin, Yagya (20). A truck hit them while Abhav, who was riding pillion on Yagya's motorcyle, was still on the call.

Speaking to Media on Tuesday, Abhav's father, Sumit Bhatia, said it was just before 10.27 pm when he



dialled his son. He insisted Abhav stay on the line. Everything seemed normal for a while. Then, Sumit heard a loud bang over the

phone. In an instant, he knew something terrible had happened to the cousins. Panicking, he kept hollering

on the phone, but there was no response. After a few minutes, an unknown person took the call and informed him about the accident. The family rushed to the spot at central Delhi's Ashoka Road.

At the mortuary of Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital on Tuesday, Sumit and Yagya's father broke down as they struggled to come to terms with the loss of their only sons. Friends and relatives stood helplessly at the enormity of the tragedy started sinking in. The Bhatias, who have been living in west Delhi's Ashok Nagar for several decades and run a dry

fruit business, were preparing for Abhav's birthday on April 30. He had just completed Class 9 at Hansraj School. Planning and decoration for the party were on; now the family has to live with the unbearable loss. The cousins were inseparable, bound not only by family ties but also by their shared love for cricket. Yagya, a BSc student at a DU college and a passionate enthusiast of the game, represents his college team and even bowled at the nets for IPL players. His social media profile reflects this love: His bio reads "cricket enthusiast" and "join the journey."

Delhi Cops urge chemists, docs to expand anti-drug drive

New Delhi, (GNS): The Delhi Police's week-long anti-drug campaign, "Nasha - Not Cool", is widening its footprint across the capital, with Day 5 focusing on mobilising chemist shops and the medical community to strengthen public awareness against substance abuse.



Pharmacists and medical store staff across markets and hospital clusters joined the drive by wearing armbands carrying anti-drug messages, while banners were displayed prominently to increase visibility.

Police teams from various districts visited these outlets, interacted with customers, and distributed awareness material to encourage community participation.

The initiative has also drawn strong backing from the medical fraternity. Experts including Dr. Yatan Pal Singh Balhara, Professor of Psychiatry at the National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre, AIIMS; Dr. Anusha Garg, Senior Resident at Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Sciences; Dr. Anshuman Kaushal; Dr. Rohit Gupta; and Dr. Vartika Vishwani are contributing to the campaign through awareness messages on Delhi Police social media platforms.

HC grants DU more time to file its objections in PM's degree disclosure case

New Delhi (GNS): Delhi High Court has granted two weeks' additional time to Delhi University (DU) to file its objection in connection with an appeal filed over its refusal to disclose details of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's bachelor's degree. The counsel for the appellants has urged the court to condone the delay even as DU wants it to be dismissed on grounds of delay at the very outset.

HC had earlier given three weeks to the varsity to file its objections, but on Monday, its counsel said objections to the delay will be filed within two weeks and requested that the issue be decided after filing the response. A bench of Chief Justice DK Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia then listed the matter for next hearing on Aug 20.

Earlier, DU, represented by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, had said "there was nothing in the matter" and an appeal against a single-judge verdict was being preferred "only to sensationalise".

Appeals have been filed challenging a single judge's order which had set aside a Central Information Commission (CIC) decision directing disclosure of PM Modi's degree. The appellants are RTI activist Neeraj, AAP's RS member Sanjay Singh and advocate Mohd Irshad.

Last year, the single judge had set aside the CIC order, saying only because PM Modi held a public office, it did not render all his "personal information" to public disclosure. It ruled out any "implicit public interest" in the information sought, and said the RTI Act was enacted to promote transparency in govt functioning and "not to provide fodder for sensationalism". Following an RTI application by Neeraj, CIC on Dec 21, 2016, allowed inspection of records of all students who cleared the BA exam in 1978 -- the year PM Modi also passed it. The single judge had passed the combined order in six petitions, including the one filed by DU, challenging the CIC verdict by which the varsity was directed to disclose the details related to Modi's bachelor degree

Assembly marks 108th anniversary of 1918 War Conference

New Delhi (GNS): The Delhi Legislative Assembly on Tuesday commemorated the 108th anniversary of the 1918 War Conference held at the historic Old Secretariat, with Speaker Vijender Gupta paying tribute to thousands of Indian soldiers who lost their lives during World War I. Addressing the House, Gupta recalled that on April 27-29, 1918, the then Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, had convened a landmark War Conference in the same chamber, attended by around 120 representatives, including princely rulers and national leaders, to deliberate on India's role in the war.

He noted that Mahatma Gandhi was present at the conference and had supported cooperation with the British Empire, hoping it would lead to self-rule. "History stands witness that this trust was betrayed," the Speaker said, referring to subsequent events such as the Rowlatt Act and the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. Highlighting the scale of India's contribution, Gupta said nearly 13 lakh Indian soldiers served in the war across regions such as Flanders, Gallipoli and Mesopotamia, with over 74,000 laying down their lives. He described the Old Secretariat, constructed in 1912 and designed by E. Montague Thomas, as the birthplace of India's parliamentary history, noting that the first meeting of the Central Legislative Council was held there in 1913. Prominent leaders such as Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Bipin Chandra Pal, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Lala Lajpat Rai and Vitthalbhai Patel had spoken within its walls.

Delhi hit-and-run: Truck crushes 2 cousins returning from IPL match

New Delhi (GNS): Two cousins, aged 20 and 14, returning home on a bike from Monday night's IPL match, became the city's latest hit-and-run victims after being crushed to death by a truck in central Delhi's Ashoka Road.

The victims were identified as BSc student Yagya Bhatia and Abhav, residents of Ashok Nagar in west Delhi. Police said the two came under the truck's wheels as the vehicle was turning into Ashoka Road at the Mahadev Road T-point. The truck drove away, leaving the two lying on the road.

Ravi Bhatia, a relative, alleged that the victims lay on



the road for at least 30 minutes without receiving any help from passersby. He said police were eventually informed and they took the two to hospital.

According to family members, the accident took place

at 10.30pm. Police received a PCR call at 11pm, after which a team reached the spot.

Sachin, a family friend, claimed the truck was speeding when it hit the Bullet motorcycle. He added there was minimal visible damage

to the bike but the riders were thrown under the truck.

Friends and family members present at RML Hospital, where the post-mortem was conducted, claimed they had not received any information about developments in the case, including whether the suspect had been identified.

Police said after the collision, the truck was driven to northeast Delhi and the driver handed over the keys to the owner, from where it was seized. "The owner told us that the driver left after that. The truck was transporting construction debris," police said.

The site of the accident is a

heavily secured area, close to Election Commission of India and police headquarters. The Parliament Street police station and the district DCP office are just a few metres away.

Cops are checking CCTV footage to ascertain whether the cousins were wearing helmets. A friend of the Bhatias said that upon reaching the spot, they spoke to bystanders who reported hearing a loud noise and assumed a vehicle had hit a barricade. However, when they went to check, they found the bodies.

A cop said raids are on in neighbouring states to trace the absconding driver.

Relief from heat as rain lashes parts of Delhi-NCR IMD issues alerts for thunderstorms, dust storms

New Delhi (GNS): Relief from heat as rain and strong winds lashed parts of Delhi-NCR on Wednesday, bringing respite from the ongoing heat-wave.

The India Meteorological Department has issued 'orange' and 'yellow' alerts for thunderstorms, dust storms and rain in different parts of Delhi. An 'orange' alert has been sounded for southwest Delhi, with authorities warning of thunderstorms accompanied by winds reaching up to 60 kmph, along with the possibility of lightning and brief spells of rain.

A 'yellow' alert has been issued for parts of northwest Delhi, west Delhi, north Delhi, south Delhi and southeast Delhi, signalling the likelihood of thunderstorms and gusty winds, while advising resi-



dents to remain cautious.

Experts said the national capital should also brace for dust storms in the coming days, attributing the changing conditions to a cyclonic circulation prevailing over central Pakistan and adjoining regions of Rajasthan, Haryana and Punjab.

The system, according to experts, is likely to transport dust from the desert regions of Rajasthan towards Delhi.

The changing weather pattern is expected to bring short-term relief from the heat but may also lead to sudden changes in wind conditions and air quality across the city.

DDA leans on zoo authority for Hauz Khas deer

New Delhi (GNS): After Supreme Court upheld a high court order directing the relocation of around 400 deer from A N Jha Deer Park in Hauz Khas to various tiger reserves in Rajasthan, Delhi Development Authority (DDA) plans to pursue Central Zoo Authority (CZA) to determine the next course of action. "All protocols will be followed for the relocation and to take care of the remaining 38 deer in Hauz Khas," a DDA official said on Tuesday. Prior to the SC order, inspections were carried out by CZA and a court-appointed central empowered committee, and their reports were submitted to the court along with DDA's report.

SC directed that the relocation should be carried out in a time-bound manner in accordance with updated guidelines and after preparation of a detailed plan. DDA will adopt the African Boma method (a gentle herding technique



aimed at minimal stress, injury or mortality) previously used for translocation. So far, 261 deer have already been shifted to Rajasthan's Ramgarh Vishdhar Tiger Reserve and Mukundara Hills Tiger Reserve between 2023 and 2025.

In its March 6 report, the committee stated that the enclosure at the Hauz Khas deer park can sustainably accommodate 38 spotted deer, recommending an optimal sex ratio of 15 males to 23 females.

Referring to the Guidelines for Establishment and Scientific Management of Zoos in India, 2008, the panel noted that a minimum of 1,500 sq metres of outdoor space is required for every pair of spotted deer.

Jamia students protest RSS centenary event, claim manhandling

New Delhi (GNS): Hundreds of students staged a protest at Jamia Millia Islamia on Tuesday against an event linked to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) centenary year celebrations, leading to heavy security deployment outside the campus and tension near the university's engineering faculty.

Personnel from the Delhi Police were stationed at key entry points as students gathered to oppose the programme, reportedly being held inside the Faculty of Engineering and Technology auditorium. Protesters raised slogans and demanded the cancellation of the event, saying such a programme was not suitable for a central university campus.

The protest was led by several student organisations, including the Left wing student organisations Students' Federation of India (SFI) and All India Students' Association (AISA), All India Revolutionary Students Organisation,



Congress affiliate National Students' Union of India (NSUI), Delhi Independent Student Citizen Collective, and Fraternity Movement. SFI members alleged that they were injured in clashes during the protest, a claim the administration of Jamia denied. The programme was described by student groups as part of 'Yuva Kumbh', an event marking 100 years of the RSS.

Agraj, a BA (Hons) Mass Media Hindi student, who is not affiliated to any student organisation, alleged that he saw Rapid Action Force (RAF)

personnel inside the campus control centre and was wondering how they were there.

The student claimed security personnel manhandled him after he photographed them, asking him to delete the pictures from his phone. However, The Tribune has accessed the pictures of RAF personnel inside the campus. Students also levelled allegations against Abdul Rashid, who currently holds the newly created post of security advisor at the university. Protesters accused him of repeatedly misusing authority and mistreating students.