

Abhishek slams CAA as BJP's 'false promise' ahead of polls

TMC leader urged people not to succumb to the purported traps set by the saffron party

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE RANAGHAT, 21 APRIL

In a rally held at Duttapulia, located within the Matua dominated Ranaghat parliamentary area in Nadia, Trinamul national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee lambasted the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), branding it as yet another instance of the BJP's "jumla" or false promises.

Addressing a fervent crowd, Mr Banerjee urged people not to succumb to the purported traps set by the saffron party.

Mr Banerjee pointed out the timing of the implementation of the CAA, just ahead of the upcoming elections, suggesting a political motive behind its sudden enforcement.

He highlighted the prolonged duration it took the BJP to formulate the rules for the act since its passage in 2019, labelling it as another instance of deceptive politicking.



"If you go through the CAA notification, 38 pages out of 40 consist of forms. People have been asked to fill up the forms without any detail and clarity," Mr Banerjee emphasised, questioning the transparency and intentions behind the cumbersome process.

Directing his criticism towards Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Mr Banerjee accused the BJP of failing to deliver on its promise of granting citizenship. He alleged that the CAA forms, which require individuals to declare their ori-

gins from Bangladesh or Pakistan, would result in the deletion of essential documents such as voter cards and Aadhaar cards, ultimately curtailing benefits.

Mr Banerjee also took a swipe at BJP leaders, questioning their conspicuous absence in filling out the CAA forms, implying their reluctance to face the repercussions of their own policies.

He cited the plight of 12 lakh Hindu Bengalis in Assam who allegedly fell victim to the National Register of Citizens (NRC) due to the CAA.

A Trinamul source disclosed the party's strategic decision to campaign against the CAA in refugee-dominated Nadia and North 24 Parganas, denouncing the CAA portal as a "BJP poll gimmick."

Turning his attention to PM Modi's recent remarks about showcasing progress in Jammu and Kashmir, where Mr Modi promised grand developments in the next five years, Mr Banerjee said: "What have you seen in the last 10 years? The trailer has only shown a huge price hike in various items from eggs to gas to petrol to diesel and kerosene. Imagine what they will show in the cinema in the next five years. Do you want to vote for them?"

Mr Banerjee also emphasized the absence of BJP's contribution during the people's troubled times, contrasting it with Trinamul Congress's active presence. "Who came to save you during your times of trouble in the last five

years? No one, including Modi, came here. Only Trinamul Congress appeared during your trouble times," asserted Mr Banerjee.

Drawing attention to local issues, Mr Banerjee highlighted the plight of the tant (cotton) workers, condemning the central government's imposition of 18 per cent GST on cotton while granting zero per cent GST for the diamond trade. He pledged: "If the government is changed at the Centre, no GST will be imposed on cotton."

He pointedly mentioned the lack of support from BJP candidate Jagannath Sarkar and highlighted instances of violence, urging voters to seek retribution through the ballot box.

In his closing remarks, Mr Banerjee reiterated his commitment to fighting against the injustices perpetrated by the BJP, urging the electorate to support Trinamul in the upcoming elections for a better future.

Rajnath Singh: No power in the world can stop introduction of CAA in the country

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA/SILIGURI, 21 APRIL

Campaigning for the Lok Sabha elections in West Bengal, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh today launched a fierce attack on Trinamul Congress chief Mamata Banerjee over the Sandeshkhali controversy.

"She's now just Mamata by name. In character and conduct, her 'Mamata' has been lost," Mr Singh said at a rally at Sagarpara Narasinghapur club playground in Murshidabad.

He asked: "What has happened to West Bengal since Mamata Didi became chief minister? Lawlessness has spread throughout the state. Criminals and hooligans are



running rampant while the decent people are terrified. West Bengal has become infamous for crime and communalism. If incidents like Sandeshkhali happen in a state with a woman chief minister, what can one understand?"

Mr Singh was addressing a gathering to campaign for BJP Lok Sabha candidate Gourishankar Ghosh.

"No power in the world can stop the introduction of Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in the country," Mr Singh added.

Two days ago, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had said that she will not allow CAA or NRC in this state as long as she is alive. Rajnath Singh was believed to have given his answer in Sunday's meeting.

Mr Singh claimed that BJP will get more than 30 seats in the Lok Sabha polls in the state this time.

supposed to be motherly. Why don't you see the suffering of the people? Where has your motherly compassion gone? Now you're just Mamata by name."

"She wants to form a government by dividing Hindus and Muslims. This politics of caste and religion should stop. If you want to do politics, do it with justice and humanity, Mamata Didi," Mr Singh said. Besides criticising the state government, Rajnath Singh also highlighted a large number of public welfare projects of the Prime Minister Modi-led government at the Centre.

Campaigning in Malda for party candidate Khagen Murmu, Mr Singh said: "TMC leaders are involved in corruption and extortion. Ministers of Mamata Banerjee's Cabinet are behind bars on corruption charges. The Mamata Banerjee-led government has failed to conduct a fair recruitment in school services and other sectors."

Addressing another gathering in Siliguri, Mr Singh claimed that the people belonging to Gorkha, Rajbanshi, Adivasi, Rabha, Toto and other communities are being deprived of their legitimate claims during the tenure of the TMC government.

Mamata Banerjee has stopped implementation of several Central government's welfare schemes and changed the name of PM Awas Yojana and showcased it as Bangla Awas Yojana, he claimed.

Jailed Jyoti Priya Mallick falls sick due to extreme heat

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, 21 APRIL

Former forest minister Jyoti Priya Mallick unexpectedly fell ill yesterday afternoon due to severe diabetes and blood pressure issues. Currently, he is under observation at the Presidency Jail.

According to jail sources, he felt unwell due to the extreme heat, which has exacerbated his physical condition. Initially examined by jail doctors, he was later referred to specialists in medicine, diabetology, and cardiology at the jail hospital.

After a day of treatment, there was improvement in his condition by the evening. Jail sources further reported that Mr Mallick's family has been informed about his illness and subsequent recovery. Mr Mallick was arrested in connection with the ration distribution scam on 26 October. The next day, he was brought to court. During the hearing, he fell ill and was subsequently admitted to a private hospital. After a few days, he was transferred to ED custody from the hospital.

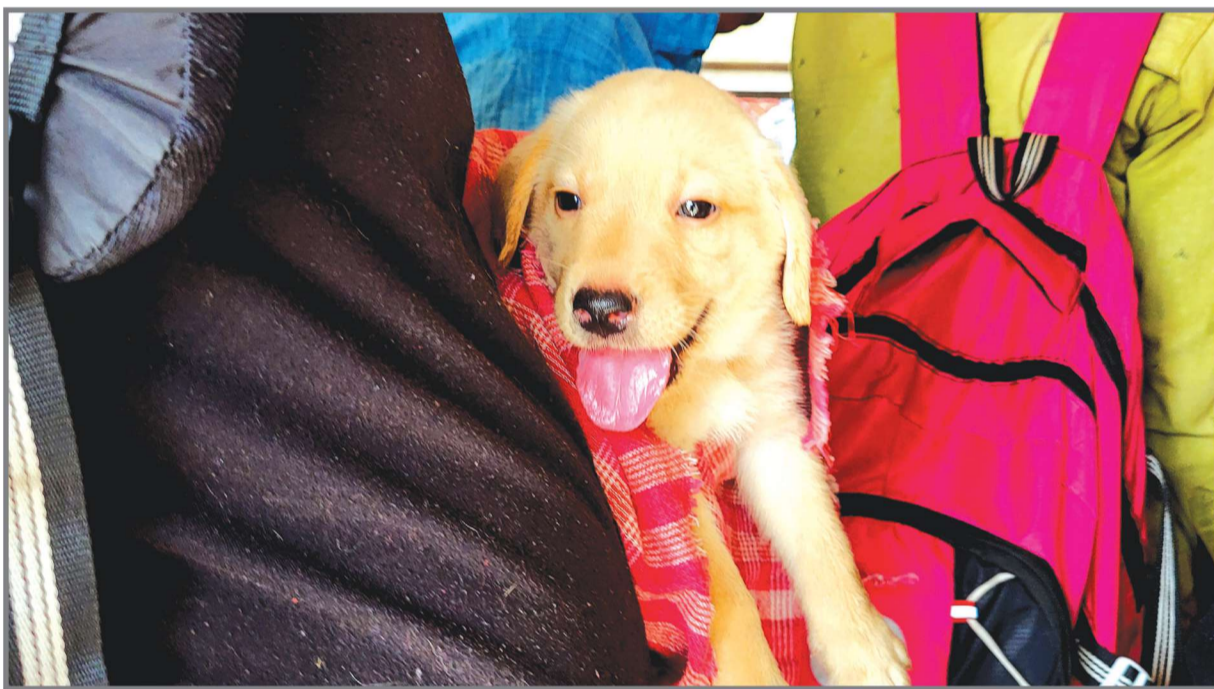
Last November, he was admitted to the SSKM Hospital for treatment.

Since then, he had been there until 13 January, when he was transferred to the Presidency Jail. However, this time, he will not be sent to an outside hospital on account of his illness, according to jail sources.

His family has applied for bail multiple times citing his health condition, but the court has not approved it yet. On 16 February, he was removed from the state cabinet. According to a TMC source, his family had requested the chief minister to remove Mallick from the ministry to get bail.

Interestingly, this is the first election in which Jyoti Priya Mallick is absent since he entered politics.

COOLING OFF



A man carries a puppy covered with a gamcha (towel) while he pants due to the excessive heat in Kolkata on Sunday. #BISWAJIT GHOSHAL

CA student falls to death from high-rise building in Kasba

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, 21 APRIL

A female Chartered Accountancy (CA) student named Tamanna Hiraawat (19), fell to her death from the roof of a multi-storey building in Kasba.

She used to stay on one of the upper floors of a building in the Picnic Garden area within Kasba Police Station limits. She fell from the 25th floor of that building this morning. The police are investigating whether the incident was an accident or a suicide. According to police sources, the incident occurred at Meghmani Apartment on Naskarhat Road in the Picnic Garden area between 3:00 and 4:45 a.m.

The residents quickly rushed her to the hospital. She was taken to Chittaranjan Medical College and Hospital, where she was declared

dead after examination. Preliminary investigation revealed that Tamanna was preparing for her CA exams. She had also recently appeared for an exam. She used to stay with her brother in an apartment on one of the upper floors of the building, while their father, Deepak Hiraawat, lived abroad. Local residents revealed that she had previously attempted suicide by cutting her wrist.

The police are investigating whether the incident was an accident or a suicide. Local residents revealed that she had previously attempted suicide by cutting her wrist. However, it is being investigated if she jumped from the 25th floor on her own on Sunday morning.

Panta Bhat finds favour with foodies



TARUN GOSWAMI KOLKATA, 21 APRIL

The two-day Banga Bhumir Baishakhi Panta Utsav which concluded today evoked tremendous response among ordinary people and foodies.

Panta Bhat (water rice) has gained global recognition and in many star hotels it has been included in the break-

fast menu. The festival coincided with the scorching heat when the mercury in the city touched 40 degrees Celsius. In Panagarh the mercury touched 45 degree Celsius and the weather office has sounded orange alert in several south Bengal districts.

In many districts like East and West Burdwan, Jhar-

gram, Bankura, Purulia, Nadia and South and North 24 Parganas, Panta Bhat is consumed by more than 90 per cent rural people.

The farmers, labourers take panta bhat in the morning before setting out for fields for work. The festival was organised by Pausthik Life.

To make the programme attractive panta-themed songs



in different languages were played. Panta Bhat is fermented rice and is both delicious and hygienic.

Panta Bhat has got pan-India recognition through a song "Aanki Chali, Baanki chali" in the Hindi film Namkeen. In folklore there are often references to Panta Bhat. It is interesting to note that Panta Bhat is referred to in Sri Sri Ramakrishna Lee-

laprasanga by Swami Saradananda. During her pregnancy Sri Ramakrishna's mother Chandramani Devi used to have spiritual visions. In one such vision she saw a god riding on the back of a swan and the face of the god had turned red because of excessive heat.

Out of compassion Chandramani Devi asked the god to have some rice which had been prepared the day before, and get refreshed. The guests were treated to Panta Bhat accompanied by typical side dishes like note shak bhaja, narkoler bora, amodi mach bhaja and begun bhaja among others.

Mr Dipankar Dasgupta, leading culinary author was present at the festival and chatted with the visitors about the history of Panta Bhat.

At the festival 32 varieties of rice, Balam, Dadkhani, Ramchandra Bhog, Tulaipanjan and Chamatkar among them, were displayed.

Bengal CID busts multi-state cyber fraud, arrests mastermind from Gujarat

AGENCIES KOLKATA, 21 APRIL

West Bengal Police's Crime Investigation Department (CID) has busted a cyber fraud gang operating across multiple states and apprehended the ringleader from Gujarat, police said.

The CIDWB arrested Shah Darshil Pareshbhai, a resident of Bhavnagar, Gujarat, the mastermind of a multi-state scam racket, on April 19, the police said.

This arrest was the result of an investigation into a complaint by a retired person who lost around Rs 5 lakh due to a bank KYC update scam, leading to the registration of an FIR, the police added.

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during their investigation that the main operation was being conducted from Gujarat.

The gang, led by Shah Darshil Pareshbhai, is active in at least 3-4 different states, police said. Following his arrest, he will be produced in a local court and taken on remand for further investigation, police said.

CELEBRATING SUCCESS



Celebration of 30,000 free pediatric cardiac surgeries performed at Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospitals at Rotary Sadan. #SNS

Seminar discusses agriskills enhancement

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, 21 APRIL

The Department of Agriculture at Brainware University hosted a one-day National seminar on 20 April.

The topic of the national seminar was "Agriskills towards Nutritional Security and Sustainability".

Notable guests at the seminar included Prof. (Dr.) Dharani Dhar Patra (former VC, BCKV), Prof. (Dr.) Pranab Hazra (former Dean, PG Studies, BCKV), Prof. (Dr.) Subhra Mukherjee (former Associate Dean, BCKV) and Dr. Asish Ghosh (Executive Director, Bharat Nursery Pvt. Ltd.). The event commenced with a lamp-lighting ceremony by the esteemed guests followed by the Saraswati Vandana.

Prof. (Dr.) Dharani Dhar



Patra shed light on sustainable agriculture and food security amidst recent climate changes. Prof. (Dr.) Pranab Hazra stressed sustainability through scientific Agri-Education in Indian agriculture.

Prof. (Dr.) Subhra Mukherjee provided insights into nutrient biofortification as a powerful tool against hidden hunger and Dr. Asish Ghosh discussed agri-seed business start-ups for rural development. Interactive sessions followed each lecture and the seminar concluded with poster presentations by participants.