

Special Intensive Revision now part of class 9 NCERT textbook, EC lauded for impartial polls

NEW DELHI: The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls is now part of the NCERT's class 9 Social Science textbook, which describes it as an exercise to ensure that no eligible citizen is left out of the voter list and no ineligible person is included.

The new National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) textbook also lauds the Election Commission of India (ECI) for conducting impartial polls despite challenges such as fake news, misinformation and intimidation.

The SIR, which has so far led to the deletion of nearly 6 crore names from the



electoral rolls and led to acrimony between the opposition parties and the ECI, has completed a year and continues in 19 states and

Union territories. The pilot SIR commenced in Bihar on June 24 last year ahead of the state polls. The result was a pruned voter list, with nearly 65 lakh names dropped amid claims by the opposition and activists that the ECI was working at the BJP's behest to disenfranchise citizens for want of documents. "The ECI also conducts Special Intensive Revision (SIR), which involves updating, verifying and correcting the electoral rolls. Through SIR, it ensures that no eligible citizen is left out and no ineligible person is included in the electoral roll. "This exercise ensures the addition of all voters, especially the young voters who have just turned 18 and may be left out due to a lack of awareness of any other reason," reads a sec-

tion of the textbook titled "Understanding Society: India and Beyond". It notes that SIR also deletes names based on death of the voter, change of residence, duplicate enrolment and being permanently untraceable. "EC gives time to raise claims or objections against the revised electoral roll and settles these claims and objections before publishing the final electoral roll," it said. The old class 9 textbook, in a chapter on electoral politics, had a section on voter lists, which it mentioned that "a complete revision of the list takes place every five years and this is done to ensure that it remains up to date".

One killed, two injured as Army truck plunges off hillside in Arunachal's West Kameng

ITANAGAR: One Indian Army personnel was killed, and two others were injured when their truck veered off the road and plunged down a steep hillside along National Highway 13 in Arunachal Pradesh's West Kameng district on Friday, officials said.

The vehicle, belonging to the 18 Sikh Light Infantry (LI), was carrying three personnel toward their unit when the accident occurred at around 2 pm. According to officials, the truck broke through the chain-link fencing of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) 30th Battalion headquarters before crashing near the battalion's physical training (PT) ground. The stretch of NH-13 passing the area runs along a highly precarious, steep hillside.

A Rapid Response Team (RRT) from the 30th Battalion SSB immediately rushed to the crash site to launch a rescue operation, an official report said. "One of the injured personnel was initially rushed to the SSB Unit MI Room,



where the unit medical officer administered first aid before referring him to the district hospital in Bomdila. The other two personnel were promptly evacuated to the Community Health Centre (CHC) in Dirang," the report said. The attending doctor at CHC Dirang declared one person brought dead. The remaining two Army personnel are currently undergoing medical treatment at the Bomdila and Dirang healthcare facilities, respectively. Their conditions are being monitored.

Mission heads of 23 EU member countries call on Nitin Nabin under 'Know BJP' initiative

NEW DELHI: Mission heads of 23 European Union member countries called on BJP president Nitin Nabin at the party headquarters here and interacted with him on a range of topics including India's transformative progress in clean energy, digital infrastructure, AI and semiconductors under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership.

According to the BJP, Ambassador of the European Union Delegation to India Herve Delphin was also part of the meeting.

After the meeting, Nabin said in a post on X, "Had an engaging interaction with the Mission Heads of 23 European Union member countries

and the Ambassador of the EU Delegation to India under the 'Know BJP' initiative."

"Shared the BJP's historic journey, organisational strength and unwavering commitment to public service. We also discussed India's transformative progress under PM Narendra Modi ji in clean energy, digital infrastructure, AI and semiconductors," the BJP chief said.

With the India-EU Free Trade Agreement marking a new chapter in "our partnership", the meeting deliberated on "future avenues of deeper collaboration between the EU and India", Nabin added.

According to the BJP, Delphin in his opening remarks appre-

ciated the party's 'Know BJP' initiative and said that such interactions help deepen understanding of India's democratic and political processes.

"During the interaction, Nitin Nabin spoke about the BJP's historical journey, ideology, organisational structure and growth as the world's largest political party. He highlighted the party's deep grassroots connect, disciplined organisational framework and commitment to public service," the party said.

Nabin also shared the "transformational journey" of India under Prime Minister Modi's leadership.

"He referred to the digital revolution in India, the expansion

of digital public infrastructure and the role of technology in empowering ordinary citizens. He also mentioned India's growing focus on clean energy, artificial intelligence, semiconductor development and emerging technologies," the BJP said.

Speaking on India-EU relations, Nabin appreciated the conclusion of the India-EU Free Trade Agreement negotiations and said that it marks an important milestone in strengthening the economic partnership between India and the European Union, the party said.

Nabin noted that the partnership between India and Europe is not limited to trade alone

but it also includes technology, innovation, clean energy, education, connectivity and people-to-people ties.

The BJP further said that the interaction also provided an opportunity to familiarise the diplomatic community with the BJP's governance vision, organisational model and on-going activities.

"The Mission Heads appreciated the 'Know BJP' initiative and the opportunity to engage directly with the BJP leadership," it said.

The meeting was also attended by BJP foreign affairs department in-charge Vijay Chauthaiwale and party MP Anil Baluni, who is also the chief spokesperson.

HP: Man sentenced to life imprisonment for murder in Mandi

A court in Mandi on Friday sentenced a man to life imprisonment and another to one year in prison in connection with a murder. Sessions Judge Mandi (Family Court) Aman Sood sentenced Karam Kumar, a resident of Mandi's Sawar Dhar area, to life imprisonment. The court also sentenced Shiv Dass to one year's rigorous imprisonment under Section 201 of the IPC for destroying evidence of murder.

The incident took place on May 31, 2022, when police received information that Karam Singh had committed the murder of Gursai, a resident of the same area. During the investigation, it was revealed that Kumar and Gursai were going by the side of the house, and a crying sound was noticed. Nearby people rushed to the spot and saw Gursai on the floor, while Kumar fled. They also noticed Dass destroying the evidence (blood-stained clothes and knife). The police registered a case under Sections 302 and 201 of the IPC against the convicts. The prosecution examined 23 witnesses to prove the case, but the witnesses present at the spot did not fully support the case.

Pune realtor murder: Accused duo deleted all logs and recycle bins before and after crime

PUNE: The investigation into the murder of 25-year-old realtor Ketan Agarwal has intensified after police discovered that the accused, Siya Goyal and Chetan Chaudhary, systematically wiped their entire phone chat history and recycle bins before and after the crime, officials said on Friday.

The mobile instruments have been sent to a forensic laboratory to retrieve the logs of deleted chats, they said.

"During our investigation, it was revealed that both the accused deleted their chats before June 18 and after the Lohagad incident from their phones. The chats were deleted from the recycle bins of their respective phones," said a police officer, who is a part of an investigation team.

Investigations by the Pune Rural Police indicated that Goyal (20) and her lover Chaudhary (22) had been in constant contact for nearly six months before the incident, log-

ging an extraordinary 2,004 phone calls totalling 238 hours of conversation.

On the day of the crime, the duo allegedly met at a cafe to finalise the murder plot, mapping out the precise spot at Lohagad Fort in Maval taluka where Agarwal would be pushed.

Gajanan Tonpe, Deputy Superintendent of Police for the Lonavala division, said that investigators have firmly established the active roles of both suspects. Police have also summoned Goyal's brother and are calling in other relatives and friends for questioning.

"We summoned Siya's brother for the questioning, and other members and friends will also be summoned. So far, the roles of both Siya and Chetan have been established in the alleged murder of Ketan," Tonpe said. While Chaudhary initially claimed he was not at the exact location of the cliff, police officials noticed his narrative quickly fell

apart during interrogation, leading both suspects to confess.

"It was evident that he was lying," another police official said, adding that both of them finally admitted to their roles and narrated the entire sequence of events.

Police claimed that according to the final plan, Goyal gave a pre-decided signal by sitting down, prompting Chaudhary to approach from behind and push an unsuspecting Agarwal into the gorge.

The gravity of the crime has drawn immediate intervention from the state government, with Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, who met with the victim's father Vishal Agarwal in Pune. He assured the family of total support.

The state has officially accepted the family's demands to try the case in a fast-track court and has appointed Ujjwal Nikam as the special public prosecutor for the case.

Later, talking to report-

ers, the chief minister said the Lohagad Fort incident reflected a disturbing social trend that required deeper introspection.

"It is an extremely shocking and incomprehensible incident. As a society, we need to reflect on why educated young men and women from good families develop such criminal intent and a desire for revenge. This is not merely a criminal issue; it also has a social angle," he said. Society must create a strong support system to ensure such vengeful thinking does not develop among young people. Overall, this is an extremely shocking incident, Fadnavis added.

"We met Fadnavis ji and sought a speedy trial in the case. We also sought that the truth should be unravelled, and if there are any other people involved, they should also be booked. All those responsible for the murder of my son should get severe punishment," said Vishal Agarwal.

Bengal will bring strict anti-conversion law, implement UCC and NRC: CM Suwendu

KOLKATA: West Bengal Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari on Friday said his government would enact a stringent law against religious conversion, while also implementing the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in the state as part of measures to strengthen national security and preserve Bengal's cultural identity. Addressing a programme at Rabindra Sadan to mark the 150th anniversary of 'Vande Mataram', Adhikari alleged that infiltration through the state's international border had contributed to religious conversion, 'love jihad' and demographic changes, posing a threat to West Bengal's social fabric and national security, though he did not provide evidence to support the claims.

"Give us some time. A strict law against religious conversion, Uniform Civil Code and NRC will be introduced in West Bengal," he said. Claiming that his government had strengthened border security by providing land required for border infrastructure, the chief minister said holding centres had been set up in border districts to identify and send back "infiltrators" to their place of origin.

"Those entering illegally and engaging in activities that threaten India's culture and national security will be sent back," he said.



Drawing a distinction between illegal immigrants and refugees covered under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), Adhikari said Hindus who had come to India after facing religious persecution were "not infiltrators" and would be granted citizenship under the law.

He asserted that his government would not allow any force to weaken West Bengal's cultural identity or national character, describing the state as India's "cultural and spiritual capital".

Paying tributes to Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Adhikari described the author of Vande Mataram as a visionary litterateur, journalist and administrator whose writings continue to inspire generations. Calling Vande Mataram a "Sanjivani Mantra" for the nation, he said the song symbolised patriotism and national unity.

He added that the state government had, for the first time, organised official programmes at Bankim Chandra's ancestral house at Kathalpara in Naihati and his residence in Kolkata to commemorate his birth anniversary. The chief minister alleged that during an earlier visit to Bankim Chandra's Kolkata residence during the previous TMC regime, he had been prevented from entering as the premises had remained locked.

Recalling the Emergency imposed in 1975, Adhikari announced that a state-level felicitation programme would be held on August 9 to honour people who had resisted the Emergency and faced persecution. He also accepted a proposal to constitute a coordination committee of "Loktantra Senanis" (democracy fighters) to facilitate the recognition process and said eligible persons would be issued official recognition certificates in accordance with government rules. Adhikari further said the government had accepted proposals submitted by the Citizen Government Forum, including organising seminars on social, constitutional and national issues to promote civic rights and social justice, celebrating the birth anniversaries of eminent national personalities, and undertaking relief and charitable activities during natural disasters.

SIR completes one year: 6 crore names deleted so far

NEW DELHI: The Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls, which has so far led to the deletion of nearly six crore voters and triggered acrimony between the Opposition and the Election Commission, has completed one year as the poll roll cleanup exercise continues in 19 states and Union territories.

The pilot SIR exercise was commenced in Bihar on June 24 last year, ahead of the assembly polls.

Post Bihar SIR, its voters' list was pruned by nearly 65 lakh amid allegations by opposition and activists that the poll authority was working at the behest of the BJP to disenfranchise citizens for want of documents.

In March, the Supreme Court unanimously upheld the constitutional validity of the EC's move to carry out SIR.

Individuals whose names were deleted during SIR are being excluded from state welfare benefits in West Bengal and Bihar.



Following recent state assembly elections, both governments announced that voter roll purification data is being linked to social security. SIR is now part of the NCERT's Social Science textbook, describing it as an exercise to ensure that no eligible citizen is left out and no ineligible person is included in the electoral roll.

In the second phase of the exercise -- announced on October 27, last year -- in Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh,

Kerala, Puducherry, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Goa, the combined voters' list was pruned by 10.2 per cent. The voter base before the poll roll clean-up across these states and Union territories stood at more than 50.99 crore. Post the exercise, the voters' list stands at 45.81 crore -- a decline of over 5.18 crore. In percentage terms, the electoral rolls have been reduced by 10.2 per cent. As many as 66,88,636 deceased elec-

tors were removed from the rolls, with the maximum of 25.47 lakh from Uttar Pradesh, followed by 24.16 lakh from poll-going West Bengal.

Additionally, 63.16 lakh names were deleted following objections and adjudication during the SIR exercise. The final rolls for the 12 states and Union territories were released on different dates, with Uttar Pradesh being the last to release the data. Third phase of the SIR in 16 states and three Union territories -- Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Punjab, Sikkim, Tripura, Telangana, and Uttarakhand, National Capital Territory of Delhi, Chandigarh, and Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu -- involving 36.73 crore voters was rolled out on May 14 and would conclude later this year.

Woman strangled to death after argument in Gurugram, accused held

GURUGRAM: Gurugram Police have solved the blind murder of a 25-year-old woman with the arrest of the accused, who fractured both his legs after falling into a roadside drain while allegedly trying to flee from the police, officials said on Friday.

According to police, the victim's husband filed a complaint at Kherki Daula police station on June 12, stating that his wife, Shabina, had gone missing from their rented accommodation in the Sikanderpur area of Sector 85 on June 8, following which a case was registered. The woman's body was recovered from Sector 93 on June 13. Following the post-mortem examination, murder charges were added to the case on June 17, police said. During the investigation, a Crime Branch team from Manesar identified the accused and launched efforts to apprehend him.

Police said the team reached Rampura Chowk on June 21

to arrest the accused. On seeing the police, he allegedly attempted to flee but fell into a roadside drain, fracturing both his legs. he was admitted to hospital and formally arrested on June 24.

The accused has been identified as Deepu Rai (28), a native of Netaji Colony in Siliguri, West Bengal, who was staying in New Delhi.

During the interrogation, the accused allegedly told police that he worked as a toilet cleaner in Sector 89, while the deceased earned a living by collecting recyclable waste.

Police said that on the morning of June 9, around 4.30 am, the two got into an argument near Antariksh Chowk in Sector 89. The argument escalated into a quarrel, and when the woman raised an alarm, the accused allegedly strangled her to death with her dupatta.

The accused is being questioned in police remand, a Gurugram Police spokesperson said.

Nearly 1.80 lakh vehicles checked during 15-day drive by Punjab Police

CHANDIGARH: Nearly 1.80 lakh vehicles were checked during a 15-day special statewide drive by the Punjab Police against the illegal use of hooters, sirens, flashers and the unauthorised use of black films on vehicles.

Special DGP (Law and Order) Praveen Sinha said police teams checked a total of 1,79,980 vehicles. During the extensive checking, teams successfully removed 202 hooters, 49 sirens and 2,430 flashers from unauthorised vehicles. Furthermore, strict action was taken against tinted windows, leading to the removal of illegal black films from 2,445 vehicles on the spot, he said, adding that 39,872 violators in total were issued challans and 412 vehicles were impounded.

The drive focused heavily on private vehicles unlawfully using signalling equipment or dark window tints to bypass traffic rules, evade identification and project undue authority.

Sinha, while sharing details of the operation, specified that hooters, sirens, and flashers are strictly meant for emergency vehicles and essential services, whereas black films violate security and traffic regulations. Private individuals cannot be allowed to misuse these devices, he said.

Warning violators of strict legal consequences, Sinha stated that this drive will continue across the state, with regular checking and rigorous legal action will be initiated against anyone found indulging in the unauthorised use of flashers, sirens, hooters, or black films.