

# 'Border residents support land acquisition for fencing'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
Bongaon, 17 May

Residents living along the unfenced stretches of the India-Bangladesh border in North 24 Parganas have expressed support for the state government's move to acquire land for border fencing, stressing that national security should not be compromised. However, they demanded fair compensation for their land.

The issue came to the fore on Sunday when West Bengal Food Minister and Bongaon North MLA Ashok Kirtania (photo right) visited several unfenced areas along the Petrapole border to interact with local residents and assess the situation on the ground. During the visit, villagers informed the minister that they were willing to part with their land in the interest of the country's security and



protection, provided that they received appropriate compensation.

Many residents also highlighted the difficulties they have been facing for years due to the absence of barbed-wire fencing in several stretches of the international border. According to local residents, repeated incidents of cattle theft, crop damage and illegal cross-border movement from Bangladesh have created a sense of insecurity in the

border villages. They alleged that miscreants often take advantage of the unfenced areas, leaving villagers vulnerable to criminal activities and constant fear.

Addressing the residents, Mr Kirtania assured them that the government stood firmly beside the affected families and that there would be no compromise on issues relating to national security. "The safety and security of the country remain our top priority. I have

already discussed the matter with the district magistrate, and necessary steps are being taken," the minister said. The land acquisition process for construction of border fencing has remained stalled for years in several areas due to disputes and legal complications involving landowners.

However, after the political change in the state, the government has reportedly intensified efforts to hand over land to the Border Security Force (BSF) for fencing work along vulnerable stretches of the border.

On Sunday morning, Mr Kirtania visited Kalliani village in the Petrapole border region, one of the areas where fencing work is yet to be completed. He interacted with residents and listened to their concerns regarding compensation and rehabilitation. Villagers told the minister that while they had no objection to giving land for the larger interest of

the nation, they were still unaware of the compensation amount they would receive. "We are ready to cooperate for the country's security, but the government should ensure that landowners get proper prices for their land," a resident said.

Responding to the concerns, the minister said the district administration was looking into the compensation issue and assured that the process would be completed transparently. He further stated that there was no problem regarding land valuation and that discussions had already been held with senior district officials.

Mr Kirtania also mentioned that land-related disputes still persisted in three mouzas under the Basirhat subdivision. He said officials had been instructed to resolve the issues at the earliest so that fencing work could begin without further delay.

# VP Radhakrishnan concludes Sikkim visit after Statehood Day celebrations

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
Siliguri, 17 May

The Vice President of India, CP Radhakrishnan, on Sunday concluded his two-day official visit to Sikkim after participating in the State's 51st Statehood Day celebrations and attending a series of official engagements focused on development, culture and governance.

Before departing from Lok Bhavan for Bagdogra by road on Sunday morning, Vice President C.P. Radhakrishnan planted a sapling of Sikkim's State Tree, the Rhododendron (Gurans), at the Old Lok Bhavan complex, commemorating his first official visit to the Himalayan State after assuming office as the Vice President of India.

During his stay in Sikkim, Mr Radhakrishnan attended the 51st Statehood Day celebrations held on Saturday. Sharing the dais with Governor Om Prakash Mathur and Chief



Minister Prem Singh Tamang, the Vice President joined the commemorative programme attended by ministers, legislators, senior bureaucrats and members of the public.

As part of the celebrations, Vice President Radhakrishnan laid foundation stones and inaugurated several major developmental projects aimed at improving road connectivity, tourism infrastructure, educational facilities and public services across the State. Officials said the projects are expected to further strengthen Sikkim's infrastructure and socio-economic growth.

Addressing the Statehood

Day gathering, Mr Radhakrishnan described Sikkim as a model State known for harmony, environmental sustainability and disciplined living. He praised the State government and people for their achievements in organic farming, biodiversity conservation and inclusive development, stating that Sikkim continues to inspire the rest of the country through its balanced approach towards progress and preservation.

The Vice President also visited the Orchidarium at Ridge Park and the at Deorali, where he appreciated the State's efforts in preserving its rich Buddhist heritage, traditional knowledge systems and ecological diversity.

Prior to his departure, Vice President Radhakrishnan held a formal meeting with Governor Om Prakash Mathur at Lok Bhavan. Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang was also present during the interaction.

## WBSEDCL begins restoration drive after storm

**A THUNDERSTORM WITH HEAVY RAIN HIT SOUTH DINAJPUR EARLY SUNDAY, DAMAGING WBSEDCL INFRASTRUCTURE. AROUND 250 PCC POLES WERE REPORTEDLY DAMAGED ACROSS THE DISTRICT.**

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
South Dinajpur, 17 May

A severe thunderstorm accompanied by heavy rainfall struck South Dinajpur district around 3 a.m. today, causing extensive damage to the power distribution infrastructure of the West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Limited (WBSEDCL).

Strong gusty winds uprooted numerous trees, which fell onto electrical installations, snapping conductors and crippling supply lines. Multiple 33 kV, 11 kV, and low-tension (LT) lines were affected, leading to widespread disruption of electricity supply across the district.

Preliminary assessments indicate that nearly 250 PCC poles were broken, with the worst damage reported from Tapan Block and adjoining areas of Balurghat and Gangarampur.

Despite the scale of destruction, WBSEDCL officials said restoration work began immediately on a war footing. Additional field personnel and resources were mobilised to expedite repairs. The company is closely monitoring the situation and assured that every possible effort is being made to restore power supply at the earliest.

## Students visit world of justice

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
Hooghly, 17 May

At a time when education often remains confined within classrooms and textbooks, Serampore Girls' High School has attempted something refreshingly real and socially meaningful. Under the Summer Project 2026 initiative of the Paschim Banga Samagra Shiksha Mission (PBSSM), students of Classes XI and XII participated in a two-day educational court visit, stepping directly into the living theatre of justice - not as passive spectators, but as alert learners confronting the realities of law, rights, and society.

The sight of young students engaging with issues of justice, child protection, cyber safety, and legal rights reflects the larger role schools can play in building an informed citizenry. Organised in collaboration with the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Hooghly, the programme offered students a rare opportunity to witness the judiciary at close quarters. Accompanied by teachers Manisha Mukhopadhyay and Chandrani Mukherjee, the students visited courts in the Serampore Sub-Divisional Court complex and interacted with legal professionals and judicial officers.

They observed both civil and criminal proceedings, gaining firsthand exposure to courtroom procedures, evidentiary practices, and frameworks such as the POSH (Prevention of Sexual Harassment) Act and the POCOA Act. They also learned about police files and the functioning of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR),



an area unfamiliar to many adults.

One of the most impactful aspects was direct interaction with legal experts. Assistant Sessions Judge and DLSA Secretary Advocate Manali Samanta played a pivotal role in facilitating the programme. Headmistress Dr Iry Sarkar expressed gratitude to Judge Samanta for her active support and guidance. Judge Samanta herself addressed the students on cyber law, online safety, and digital-age legal protection - topics of immense relevance for adolescents today.

Students reportedly engaged enthusiastically, asking questions about victim statements under Section 164, the legal meaning of consent, punishments for heinous crimes, and the misuse of child-protection laws.

Class XII student Tuhisa Chakrabarty described the visit as "highly educational and informative," noting the firsthand understanding gained of courtroom proceedings and laws like POCOA. Class XI student Ambica Bhattacharya reflected on observing marriage disputes and child harassment cases, learning how the law safeguards minors. Another Class XI student, Shreyashree Ghosh, said the experience changed her perception of courts, helping her understand FIRs, statements, camera trials, and the distinction between civil and criminal law, while encouraging students to stand firmly for their rights.

## 'Do not misuse photographs for influence,' says Siliguri MLA Sankar Ghosh

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
Siliguri, 17 May

Claiming that a section of people often tries to misuse photographs with political leaders to establish influence and further personal interests, Siliguri MLA Sankar Ghosh (photo middle) on Sunday urged residents not to judge political proximity merely through pictures shared in public.

Addressing a series of felicitation programmes organised across Siliguri before leaving for Kolkata, the BJP MLA said that many individuals

project themselves as politically influential by displaying photographs with elected representatives, which, according to him, should not be taken at face value.

"Just because someone has taken a photograph with me does not mean that the person is close to me. People should not believe attempts to influence others by displaying such photographs," Mr Ghosh said.

He further maintained that politics should not be used as a platform for personal business or vested interests. "Politics is not a business," he remarked while interacting with supporters



and members of various organisations who gathered in large numbers to felicitate him at different venues across the city.

Visibly emotional at the public response, Mr Ghosh said he no longer desired flowers, shawls or ceremonial honours. "I have been involved in politics since my school

days. Politics is my passion. Instead of felicitations, give me work and constructive suggestions for the development of Siliguri," he said.

The MLA also announced plans to open a dedicated public office shortly to improve communication with residents. According to him, citizens would be able to submit grievances, suggestions and development-related proposals either through an office assistant or via WhatsApp even in his absence.

Later in the day, Mr Ghosh inspected the city's under-construction second

flyover along with PWD engineers. Speaking to mediapersons, he said Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari is expected to visit Siliguri on 20 May for an administrative meeting, during which the early operationalisation of the flyover is likely to come up for discussion.

The second flyover project in Siliguri was initiated during the tenure of former minister and current Mayor Gautam Dab , while the city's first flyover had been constructed during the Left Front regime under the initiative of former minister Asok Bhattacharya.

## BJP victory sparks hope in Tarakeswar gram panchayat

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
Hooghly, 17 May

The BJP's victory has ignited hope among residents of a gram panchayat in Tarakeswar who say they have been deprived of government services for the past three years.

Tarakeswar block in Hooghly has 10 gram panchayats. In the 2023 panchayat elections, Trinamul Congress won nine, while one went to the Left. Among the nine Trinamul-controlled panchayats, the BJP secured booth number 160 of Astara Dattapur gram panchayat, where Shrikant Roy was elected as a BJP village member from Chakdaha.

However, villagers allege that since BJP's victory in booth 160, they have been denied multiple government services and beneficiary

**PANCHAYAT PRADHAN PALASH LOHAR ACKNOWLEDGED CIVIC ISSUES AND PROMISED ACTION AGAINST EXTORTION COMPLAINTS.**

schemes. Drinking water supply has stopped, irrigation facilities are unavailable, and roads remain in deplorable condition. Local Trinamul leaders allegedly targeted BJP members, their families, and supporters for voting against the party.

Residents claim they were forced to pay "cut money" to access benefits under Avash Yojana. They were denied solar-powered pumps and had to rely on hand pumps for water. Even crop-loss compensation reportedly required extra payments to local Trinamul leaders. Farmers

also allege they were denied water from cooperative-run mini submersible pumps, forcing them to spend more on irrigation.

The BJP member elected in 2023 has not received any allowance for the past nine months, and villagers say all state-run beneficiary schemes have been withheld. Panchayat Pradhan Palash Lohar admitted there are problems with drinking water and irrigation.

With the BJP now in power in the state, affected families have appealed to the victorious BJP MLA to focus on the villages deprived of schemes for three years and to free them from alleged extortion by local Trinamul leadership. Lohar has assured that strict action will be taken against anyone found demanding cut money or extorting villagers.

## College student hacked to death in Katwa

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE  
Katwa, 17 May

Sensation gripped Katwa after a college student was hacked to death by unidentified miscreants at Multi village in East Burdwan on Saturday night. The victim, 21-year-old Shaheed Midya, was attacked while sitting with friends beside a pond near his home.

According to police, the incident occurred around 9 p.m. Shaheed, a student of Katwa College, was chatting with two friends near a pond to escape the summer heat when a group of assailants attacked him with sharp weapons.

His panicked friends fled, and by the time locals rushed to the spot, the attackers had escaped. Shaheed was found lying in a pool of blood and

died on the spot. His father, Abdullah Midya, expressed shock: "We don't understand why my son was attacked and murdered so brutally. We never had enmity with anyone." His brother, Masud Midya, questioned the role of Shaheed's friends, who fled without seeking help.

Police have detained the two friends for questioning. The motive behind the murder is yet to be ascertained, and investigations are underway.

This incident recalls a similar tragedy on 18 September 2024, when 14-year-old schoolgirl Arshida Khatoun of Haripur village was stabbed to death on a running passenger bus at Komorpur in Ketagram, Katwa. The accused, Babu Sheikh, a mason by profession, was arrested shortly after from a paddy field.

### Classified

<p><b>CHANGE OF NAME</b></p> <p>I, <b>DEBASISH</b> Mallik residing at 195/187, Ramkrishna Park, P.O.: Bandipur, Kolkata-700119, declare that my father name Kalachand Mallik recorded as Kalachand Mallik instead of Kalachand Mallick before the 1st Class Judicial Magistrate, Barrackpore, North 24 Pgs., vide Affidavit No. 13594, dated: 22-08-2025. Kalachand Mallick and Kalachand Mallik both are same and one identical person.</p> <p>All Advertisements are carried Free of cost on our website <a href="https://epaper.thestatesman.com">https://epaper.thestatesman.com</a></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TENDER</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>NOTICE INVITING TENDER</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>THE INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS OF INDIA (ICAI)</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Head Office : 'ICAI Bhawan', Indraprastha Marg, New Delhi-110002 Kolkata Office : 'ICAI Bhawan', 7 Russel Street, Kolkata-71</p> <p>ICAI invites bids in prescribed format from experienced &amp; reputed Contractors for the following two tenders:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tender 1</b></p> <p>Appointment of Contractor for Renovation of Civil, Interior &amp; Furnishing Works of the <b>Secretariat Room</b> at 4th Floor of The Institute of Chartered Accountants - Eastern India Regional Council, ICAI Bhawan, 7 Russel Street, Kolkata-700071.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tender 2</b></p> <p>Appointment of Contractor for Renovation of <b>Canteen Kitchen &amp; Dining Room</b> at 2nd floor of 'ICAI Bhawan', 382/A, Prantik Pally, Kasba, Kolkata-700107.</p> <p>The last date of receipt of duly filled in bids for both the above tenders is <b>7th June, 2026, upto 5:00 P.M.</b> The detailed terms and conditions of the tenders are available at ICAI's website - <a href="http://www.icaic.org">www.icaic.org</a> &amp; <a href="http://www.eirc-icaic.org">www.eirc-icaic.org</a>.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Secretary, ICAI</p>	<p style="text-align: center; color: green;">The Statesman</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: green;">CLASSIFIED</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: green;">BOOK COST</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: green;">FRIENDLY</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: green;">CLASSIFIED</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: green;">AD.</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: green;">98307 80924</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: green;">033 4801 8471</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: green;">The Statesman</p> <p>Readers are requested to make appropriate enquiries and seek appropriate advice before sending money, incurring any expenses, acting on medical recommendations or entering into any commitment in relation to any advertisement published in this publication. The Statesman Group does not touch any claim made by the advertisers of products and services. The printer, publisher, Editor and owners of The Statesman Group publications shall not be held liable for any consequences, in the event such claims are not honoured by the advertisers. For any loss incurred, the onus lies entirely with advertisers and not with the publication.</p>
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## Minister promises action on drinking water, illegal constructions in Asansol

DEBAJYOTI CHAKRABORTY  
Asansol, 17 May

State Urban Development and Municipal Affairs, Women and Child Development, and Social Welfare Minister Agnimitra Paul said that the full state Budget will be presented in June, with priority given to resolving the drinking water crisis in the state.

She said many development projects under municipal corporations had remained incomplete due to lack of monitoring during the previous government, and investigations would be conducted into those pending works. Projects under the Jal Jeevan Mission and Amrit 3 will be reviewed to provide relief to the people at the earliest.

Paul made these remarks after an administrative meeting



at the West Burdwan district headquarters in Asansol, presided over by District Magistrate S. Ponnambalam and attended by all nine BJP MLAs from the district. She also ordered action against projects constructed without permission.

This was the new government's first interaction with senior administrative officials in Asansol. Paul directed strict measures against illegal commercial buildings and encroachments, and instructed correction of parking arrangements in the city. She

emphasised the need for proper parking facilities in market areas, with rate charts displayed for public convenience. She also called for rehabilitation of poor families affected by anti-encroachment drives.

Among those present were Jitendra Tiwari (MLA, Pandeshwar), Lakan Gharai (MLA, Durgapur West), Chandrashekhar Bandopadhyay (MLA, Durgapur East), Dr Ajay Poddar (MLA, Kulti), and Arijit Roy (MLA, Barabani), along with senior officials from various departments. Issues related to water, roads, sanitation, and infrastructure were discussed in detail.

Paul assured that "the people of Asansol and across West Bengal will witness real development." She added that municipal elections, pending for years, would soon be held

on the Chief Minister's instructions to strengthen the administrative system. Elections in Durgapur Municipal Corporation have been pending since September 2022, while the five-year term of Kolkata Municipal Corporation ends later this year. Polls for Asansol, Howrah, and 106 other civic bodies are scheduled for next year.

Highlighting the neglect of the past 15 years, Paul said all incomplete projects would be investigated for quality and accountability. Work under Jal Jeevan Mission and Amrit Yojana will also be reviewed. She further directed police to take strict action against illegal businesses such as coal, sand, cattle, and scrapiron smuggling. Cases of post-2021 election violence will be investigated, with firm action promised against the culprits.