

# Western Times

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## News Brief

### Boys outshine girls in Class 10 board exam in Assam

Guwahati, April 20 (IANS) Boys have outshined girls this time in the Class 10th board examination, results of which were announced by the Secondary Education Board of Assam (SEBA) on Saturday.

The pass percentage of boys is 77.3 per cent, while 74.4 per cent of the female candidates passed the class 10th board exam. Among the transgender candidates, 80 per cent of them successfully passed the examination.

The passing percentage of students this time stood at 75.7 per cent, more than 3 per cent increase from the previous year.

### Iranian foreign minister in New York: Ease Middle East tensions

New York/Teheran, April 20 (IANS/DPA) Iranian Foreign Minister Hussein Amirabdollahian has come out in favour of easing tensions in the Middle East in remarks to Iranian media in New York on Saturday, following tit-for-tat attacks between Israel and Iran.

"War and military tensions are of no benefit to any party in the region, and so fundamental solutions must be found," Amirabdollahian said. All sides needed to focus on a political solution, he said.

Israel had to cease "its war crimes" in the region, Amirabdollahian said. Humanitarian aid and an exchange of hostages for prisoners in the Gaza conflict would then become possible, he said at the end of a trip to the US.

While in New York, where he joined several sessions of the United Nations, Amirabdollahian emphasized that Iran would not react to attacks on military targets in Iran's central Isfahan Province on Friday that have been attributed to Israel.

### APCC prez, husband declare assets worth Rs 181 cr, have no car

Amaravati, April 20 (IANS) Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) President Y. S. Sharmila Reddy and her husband own assets worth Rs 181.79 crore.

The sister of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy owns more assets than her husband M. Anil Kumar. Sharmila revealed the details in the affidavit she submitted to the election authorities while filing her nomination for the Kadapa Lok Sabha seat on Saturday.

The couple has total liabilities of Rs 118.58 crore. She has also loans of Rs 82.58 crore from Jagan Mohan Reddy and Rs 19.56 lakh from her sister-in-law Y.S. Bharathi Reddy. Anil Kumar's liabilities include loans of Rs 29.99 crore taken from Sharmila, and Rs 40 lakh taken from her mother-in-law Y.S. Vijayamma.

Sharmila, who showed her profession as 'business and agriculture', has movable assets of Rs 123.26 crore, including bank balances, investments, loans, and advances. The affidavit shows she has given a loan of more than Rs 30 crore to her husband, who is a businessman.

The Congress leader has gold and gemstone jewellery worth Rs. 8.3 crore.

## People voted for NDA in first phase: PM Modi

Parbhani (Maharashtra), April 20 (IANS) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said that voting in the first phase of polling was in favour of NDA which made the INDIA alliance members lose their sleep.

"The bumper voting in favour of NDA in the first phase across the country has made the INDIA Alliance members lose their sleep. I am very excited to be with my family in Parbhani, Maharashtra," PM Modi said at the campaign rally for the MahaYuti partner Rashtriya Samaj Paksha founder and nominee Mahadev Jankar, who is pitted against the Shiv Sena candidate Sanjay Jadhav.

The Prime Minister said that the NDA needs the blessings of the people for the development of Maharashtra.

"Mahadev Jankar is my younger brother. Will you send him to the Lok Sabha or not?" asked PM Modi to the MahaYuti workers gathered for the rally.

PM Modi also took out a whistle from his pocket and gave it to Mahadev Jankar whose election symbol is a whistle. PM Modi gave a whistle to Jankar as a gift after which Jankar blew it on the stage itself.

"Due to our government's policies, 12 lakh people in Parbhani are getting free ration. No one in these families has to sleep hungry. Such free ration will continue for the next five years as well," PM Modi said.

He said that 17 Jan-

aushadhi centres in Parbhani will get an 80 per cent discount on medicines while more than 1.25 lakh women have been given Ujjwala gas connections.

"In Parbhani, more than 75 per cent of households are getting tap water. More than nine lakh animals in Parbhani have been vaccinated free of charge. Any government can do this only if it is sensitive to the poor," PM Modi said.

Attacking Congress, PM Modi said that after independence, they divided the country and also ignited the Kashmir issue and even Babasaheb Ambedkar's constitution was not allowed to apply to Jammu and Kashmir.

"Congress is like a vine, one who supports this vine gets destroyed,"

PM Modi said.

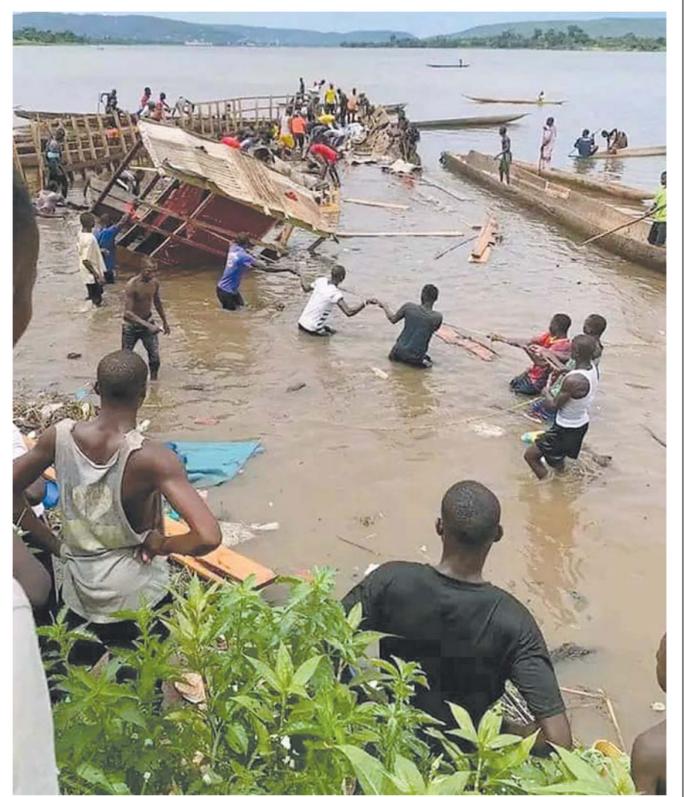
He said that the Congress also did not allow Dalits to get any rights.

"Having the same mentality as the Nizam, the Congress did not allow the development of Marathwada. I appeal to people that don't give any space to the people who have Razakar mentality," PM Modi said.

He said that Parbhani would help make India self-reliant and that the ongoing Lok Sabha election is the beginning of the economic development of the country.

"I know the pain of the poor. I am thinking about how to ease their pain. The opposition worked to block the schemes brought to Marathwada," PM Modi said.

--IANS



YAOUNDE, People salvage a boat in Bangui, the Central African Republic, April 19, 2024. At least 15 people died on Friday when a boat sank on the Mpoko River in Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic (CAR), witnesses told Xinhua. More than 300 people boarded a boat bound for the village of Mokelo, in the commune of Bimbo, Ombella-Mpoko prefecture, for the burial of the remains of a group leader, when it sank, several witnesses at the scene told Xinhua. The provisional toll is at least fifteen dead and many wounded, including children and women, and several victims remain unaccounted for. UNI

## Bengal school job case verdict by Calcutta HC Bench on Monday

Kolkata April 20 (IANS) A Special Division Bench of Calcutta High Court will pronounce its verdict in the case related to irregularities in recruitment of teaching and non-teaching staff in government schools by the West Bengal School Service Commission (WBSSC) on Monday.

Following a direction by the Supreme Court, the Special Division Bench of Justice Debansu Basak and Justice Shabbir Rashidi had been hearing the matters relating to irregularities in recruitments of secondary and higher secondary teachers as well as non-teaching staff in Group-C and Group-D categories, done by WBSSC. Although the hearing in the matter concluded on March 20, the Division Bench had kept the verdict on reserve as on date. However, a notification has been finally issued by the Calcutta High Court claiming that the much-awaited verdict in the case will be pronounced on Monday. On the last day of hearing on March 20, Justice Basak made two important observations.

The first observation was that there was nothing good in the entire recruitment process.

His second observation was that recruitments had been made in excess of the vacant posts and those extra appointments need to be terminated.

--IANS

## Iraq: One dead, 8 injured in blast at pro-Iran militia's facility

Baghdad, April 20 (IANS/DPA) An explosion at a military base of a powerful Iran-allied militia in Iraq left one militiaman dead and eight others injured, the Iraqi army reported on Saturday amid reports that the facility came under airstrikes.

The casualties resulted from a blast and a fire early Saturday at Camp Kalsu in the province of Babil in Iraq, housing premises of the Iraqi security forces and the Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), the Security Media Cell added, according to Iraq's official news agency INA.

A committee has been formed to investigate the cause of the blast and fire, it said, citing initial findings

ruling out that military action was behind the incident. However, an Iraqi security official earlier said the Kalsu base had been struck by missiles or drones. The attack triggered a fire in the site that houses brigades of the PMU and Iraqi security forces, Babil security committee chief Muhaned al-Enazi added in televised remarks. "The fire was put out. An investigation is underway to determine if the attack was carried out by drones or missiles, and who stands behind it," the official said. The purported attack came a day after a suspected Israeli strike in the Iranian province of Isfahan, home to some of the Islamic Re-

public's nuclear facilities. A pro-Iranian militia grouping accused Israel of being behind the alleged attack in Babil.

The self-styled Islamic Resistance in Iraq Saturday claimed to have fired drones at a "vital target" on the southern Israeli coastal town of Eilat in response to the attack. The Israeli military did not comment. The Islamic Resistance in Iraq is an umbrella group for pro-Iranian militias operating together under this general name since the war in the Gaza Strip broke out in October last year. The grouping has also repeatedly claimed hitting US bases inside Iraq and Syria with drones and missiles.

## J&K: Arms & ammunition recovered, hideout busted

Jammu, April 20 (IANS) J&K Police on Saturday claimed to have recovered arms and ammunition in the Arnas area of Reasi district in Jammu division after busting a hideout. Police said that acting on the reliable information regarding the presence of a hideout in the Arnas area, an operation was launched to sanitise the area. "We have recovered two detonators, 12 cartridges of Assault Rifle, one pull-through, one-hand held Tape recorder IED-enabled, one calculator IED-enabled, one battery and few connecting wires," the Police said. Police said that the search operation is still going on in the area.



HYDERABAD, Dosuri Ananya, who secured the third rank in the All India Civil Service Examination, met Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy in Hyderabad on Saturday. UNI

## BJD announces sixth list of candidates for Odisha Assembly elections

Bhubaneswar, April 20 (IANS) Odisha Chief Minister and Biju Janata Dal (BJD) president Naveen Patnaik on Saturday announced sixth list of candidates for the state Assembly elections. With the declaration of nine more candidates, the party has announced nominees for 135 seats. Former minister Ganeswar Behera, who joined the BJD from the Congress on April 2, has been nominated for the Kendrapara assembly segment. Meanwhile, CM Patnaik declared prominent cine actress Varsha Priyadarshini as party's nominee for the Barchana assembly segment under the Jajpur parliamentary constituency. The BJD has nominated Priyadarshini replacing senior leader and the sitting Barchana MLA Amar Prasad Satpathy. The party has re-nominated Basanti Hembrum from Karanjia seat of Keonjhar Lok Sabha constituency. The party has fielded Sanatan

147-member Assembly will be held in four phases -- May 13, May 20, May 25 and June 1. The results will be announced on June 4. The results of the polls will be announced on June 4.

## Reunited with family, 95-yr-old great grandma from Bihar seeks to cast vote

Kolkata April 20 (IANS) A 95-year-old woman from Bihar's Banka district, who was found lying unconscious on a pavement in Howrah, near Kolkata, was reunited with her family on Saturday, thanks to efforts made by the police and members of the West Bengal Radio Club (WBRC) -- an organisation of amateur radio operators.

Sajmu Nisha Sajoman had made two pleas to her rescuers. She was eager to return to her great-grandchildren as they would only have their meals if she told them stories and she wanted to cast her vote for the last time at a booth close to her house in Salmanpur village.

"Some passersby had first spotted her as she lay unconscious. The authorities at Golabari police station were informed and they swung into action. Sajmu was shifted to a hospital where she was diagnosed with severe dehydration due to the immense heat. She was administered intravenous fluids till she recovered. Thereafter, the police got in touch with us as the WBRC has reunited hundreds of lost people with their families through its wide network. The woman spoke of her great-grandchildren and said that she was from Salmanpur. She

also said that she was eager to cast her vote," said Ambarish Nag Biswas, secretary of the WBRC.

While the police started looking for Salmanpur in Uttar Pradesh, the WBRC searched in Bihar. Finally, it came to be known that a woman matching her description had been reported missing from Salmanpur village in Banka, Bihar. The HAMS got in touch with her family and Saimu's grandchildren broke down on being shown her photograph. One of them immediately boarded a train for Howrah.

"Her family members informed us that they are facing trouble in feeding Sajmu's great-grandchildren since she went missing. They also said that a dilapidated school building next to their house will act as a polling centre for the last time during the ongoing Lok Sabha polls. Sajmu is aware of this and is keen to vote. Though her age in the Elector's Photo Identity Card (EPIC) is 89 years, she is actually 95, they said. We are touched by her enthusiasm to participate in the election process," Nag Biswas added.

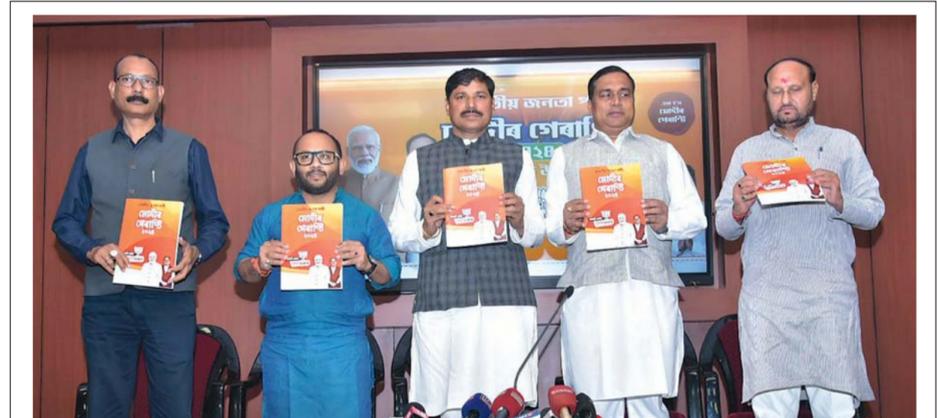
--IANS

## CM Vijayan living in perpetual fear of PM Modi: LOP Satheesan

Kochi, April 20 (IANS) The Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Kerala Assembly, V.D. Satheesan, claimed on Saturday that Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan is living in perpetual fear of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"CM Vijayan is living in perpetual fear of Prime Minister Narendra Modi because of the numerous scams in the state that are under the scanner of the national agencies. His agenda is to please PM Modi and for that he is continuing his tirades against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi," Satheesan told mediapersons here.

While campaigning for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, CM Vijayan has repeatedly attacked Rahul Gandhi on various issues. "At the 23rd Party Congress of the CPI-M held at Kannur in 2022, where practically every Left leader attacked PM Modi, CM Vijayan kept mum and it's now proved beyond doubt that he is a coward who tries to portray himself as a bold leader," Satheesan said. "A case has been registered against Congress leader Shama Mohamed for criticising PM Modi in her election speech. Such things do not happen even in the BJP-ruled states. But it appears as if CM Vijayan just can't stand anyone taking on the Prime Minister," the senior Congress leader said.



GUWAHATI, BJP Assam president Bhabesh Kalita releasing Assamese version of Modi guarantees at BJP office, in Guwahati on Saturday. UNI

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