

ER Seeks Public Cooperation as Private Land Tree Issues Delay Pre-Monsoon Safety Drive

DOI CORRESPONDENT

Kolkata, 31 May: Following a severe spell of heavy rain and stormy weather that crippled train movements across the Sealdah Division on 29.05.2026, ER has issued an urgent awareness appeal to citizens residing along railway tracks. The railway is calling on local residents to proactively cut vulnerable tree branches on their premises or cooperate fully with railway teams to prevent life-threatening overhead wire entanglements and massive passenger delays. To ensure foolproof protection, ER has outlined a specific safety guideline for residents: trees must be trimmed in such a manner that even if the entire tree were to fall toward the tracks, the final distance between any branch and the nearest track remains a minimum of 3 meters. Maintaining this

buffer zone is absolutely vital to preventing catastrophic accidents and ensuring uninterrupted travel. During today's sudden storm, uprooted trees, heavy branches, and private banner festoons fell onto tracks and Overhead Equipment (OHE) power lines at twelve critical locations—including Dum Dum, Kalyani, Barasat, and Sonarpur. While Eastern Railway's emergency rapid action teams worked under treacherous conditions to clear the tracks and restore power safely, the incident highlights a critical vulnerability: many of the hazardous trees belong to private properties adjacent to railway land. To prevent such environmental disruptions, Eastern Railway is currently executing a massive, zone-wide pre-monsoon tree-clearing drive targeting 26,509 vulnerable trees. While 21,384 trees have already



been successfully cleared network-wide, crucial progress is being bottlenecked by private land complications. In the highly impacted Sealdah Division alone, out of the 735 remaining hazardous trees left to clear before the June 7 deadline, 351 trees are located on private land. The railway is actively serving legal notices to these property owners, but emphasizes that community awareness and vol-

untary action are vital to ensuring public safety before the monsoon heavily sets in. Property disputes and access restrictions in the Asansol, Howrah, and Malda divisions are similarly slowing down final safety clearances. ER deeply regrets the temporary inconvenience caused to commuters today and stresses that passenger safety is a non-negotiable priority. For the greater public good, it is imper-

ative that citizens cooperate with the railway administration. Moving forward, the railway urges the public to recognize that a single untrimmed branch on private property can snap high-voltage overhead lines, halting thousands of commuters and risking severe accidents. Commenting on the vital need for civic partnership, Shri Shibram Majhi, Chief Public Relations Officer of ER, stated, "Our field teams demonstrated incredible agility in restoring services after today's storm, but nature's onslaught requires a collective defense. We earnestly appeal to citizens living near railway tracks to inspect their properties, ensure the mandatory 3-meter safety margin is maintained, and cooperate with our engineering teams when approached. For the ultimate public good, safeguarding our overhead lines must be a shared responsibility."

RPF of Northeast Frontier Railway Intensifies Safety and Anti-Crime Operations

DOI CORRESPONDENT

Maligaon, 31 May: The Railway Protection Force (RPF) of Northeast Frontier Railway continued its sustained efforts towards ensuring passenger safety, preventing unlawful activities and safeguarding railway premises through a series of successful operations conducted across the zone on 25th and 26th May, 2026.

During anti-crime drives and surveillance operations conducted on 25th May, 2026, RPF personnel achieved significant success in detecting unlawful transportation of liquor and narcotic substances. Several consignments of unclaimed liquor bottles were recovered from trains and railway stations under Alipurduar, Katihar and Dalkhola areas. In separate operations conducted at Agartala railway station,

RPF teams recovered over 16 kg of ganja and handed over the seized items to the concerned authorities for further legal action.

On the same day, RPF personnel also apprehended offenders involved in unlawful activities including ticketing irregularities and theft-related offences at railway premises. Rescue operations were simultaneously carried out at Rangapara and New Bongaigaon railway stations, where minors were rescued and safely handed over to Child Welfare Committees for proper care and rehabilitation.

As part of its humanitarian initiatives on 26th May, 2026, RPF teams rescued several minors from Guwahati, Silchar, New Bongaigaon and Dibrugarh railway stations and ensured their safe custody through coordination with Child Welfare Committees and child assistance agencies.

Continuation of the service of bhagalpur - katihar - bhagalpur unreserved special train till 04.06.2026

DOI CORRESPONDENT

Kolkata, 31 May: In a major relief for commuters traveling between south and north-east Bihar, the Railway has decided to continue the service of 03407/03408 Bhagalpur - Katihar - Bhagalpur Unreserved Special train with existing path, timings and stoppages upto 04.06.2026. This vital rail link was initially introduced following severe disruptions to road

connectivity caused by damage to the Vikramshila Setu over the river Ganga, which completely halted direct vehicular movement between Bhagalpur and the Seemanchal region. Recognizing the immense hardship faced by daily commuters, office-goers, traders, and local farmers, the railways had previously stepped in to operate the special unreserved service between Bhagalpur & Katihar upto 01.06.2026.

Will not hesitate to demand CBI enquiry into 'horse trading' by TVK: AIADMK whip

Tiruvannamalai, 31 May: IADMK whip Agri S S Krishnamurthy on Friday said that the party will demand a CBI investigation if the alleged poaching of lawmakers via "multi-crore cash" transfers by the ruling TVK continues. Four AIADMK legislators -- K Maragatham Kumaravel (Madurantakam Assembly constituency), S Jayakumar (Perundurai), P Sathyabama (Dharapuram) and Esakki Subaya (Ambasamudram) resigned as MLAs and joined the TVK, triggering an intense debate among political parties in the state. They were among the rebel AIADMK MLAs who voted in favour of the TVK government in the Assembly during the floor test on May 13.

Accusing that TVK had forced four AIADMK MLAs to resign through horse-trading involving "crores of rupees", Krishnamurthy said, "If they continue to commit such wrongdoings, I am duty-bound to firmly state at this moment that we will not hesitate to place a demand for a CBI enquiry into this, with the approval of party's general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami." Targeting TVK leader and Minister Aadhav Arjuna, Krishnamurthy claimed that he was focusing entirely on poaching AIADMK functionaries rather than serving the public.

He further alleged that Arjuna was utilising his ministerial chamber in the Secretariat to induct members from other political parties. "Is that a government Secretariat or TVK office? The public and neutral observers are asking this question," Krishnamurthy said. The AIADMK whip claimed that Arjuna had previously approached Palaniswami, seeking to join the party and secure a deputy general secretary

post.

"Palaniswami flatly refused to admit him into the AIADMK, citing his track record of being expelled or suspended from previous parties, including the DMK and the VCK, for wrongdoings," Krishnamurthy said, adding that Arjuna joined TVK only after being rejected by the AIADMK.

Brushing aside the impact of recent defections, Krishnamurthy cited the late Chief Minister J Jayalithaa's 1996 remarks, characterising those who betray the party as "shed hair" that does not affect the core strength of the organisation. He emphasised that while top-level leaders can be replaced by creating hundreds of new ones, the real strength lies in the party's 2.16 crore grassroots workers who remain fiercely loyal to Palaniswami's leadership.

He also categorically rejected rumours of a covert understanding or coalition talks between the AIADMK and the DMK, asserting that the AIADMK was founded by M G Ramachandran specifically to oppose the DMK. "Oil and water can never mix. Our general secretary has never spoken to anyone about a coalition government with the DMK," he clarified. Taking a swipe at Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay's promise of providing a "clean administration", the AIADMK leader claimed that the state's law and order situation had completely collapsed. He alleged that more than 20 murders, an equal number of sexual assaults, and rampant instances of robbery and ganja smuggling have gripped Tamil Nadu recently. He further cited recent violent clashes between VCK and DMK workers in the Ponnampalayam area as proof of public distress.

UP: 'World's largest' gallbladder stone removed with laparoscopic surgery at Saifai medical college

Etawah (UP), 31 May: In a rare medical feat, Uttar Pradesh University of Medical Sciences, Saifai, has claimed to have successfully removed the "world's largest gallbladder stone" through a laparoscopic procedure, a minimally invasive surgical technique. As per a press statement issued by the university, the gallbladder stone measured 14 cm x 8.3 cm x 4.2 cm and weighed about 200 grams.

The procedure was performed by gastro surgeon Dr Kanhaiya Lal Chaudhary and his team on a 62-year-old woman suffering from abdominal pain and digestive problems for a prolonged period. The Uttar Pradesh University of Medical Sciences (UPUMS) said that such exceptionally large gallstones are generally considered suitable for removal through open surgery because of the technical challenges involved.

However, Dr Chaudhary and his team carried out the operation using laparoscopic techniques and success-

fully removed the stone after a complex surgery.

Dr Chaudhary said that removing a gallstone of such size through laparoscopy requires a high degree of surgical expertise, caution and technical proficiency, adding that the patient is recovering well following the surgery. UPUMS Vice-Chancellor Dr Ajay Singh congratulated the surgical team and described the achievement as a matter of pride for the institution.

He said the success highlighted the capabilities of modern surgical techniques and the expertise of Indian medical professionals, while underlining the university's commitment to serving patients in rural areas. He further claimed that the stone removed at Saifai was larger than a previously reported gallstone removed laparoscopically in Trinidad and Tobago, which measured 12.8 cm x 7 cm and weighed 178 grams, as documented in a medical journal.

Allahabad HC imposes Rs 20,000 personal costs each on Lucknow DM, ADM (judicial)



Lucknow, 31 May: The Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court imposed a personal cost of Rs 20,000 each on the Lucknow district magistrate (DM) and the additional district magistrate (judicial) for acting beyond their jurisdiction and initiating proceedings without statutory authority. The court observed that the actions of the officials had unnecessarily harassed the petitioner. Justice Pankaj Bhatia passed the order on May 20 on a petition filed by Nivas Colonizers Private Limited. The court set aside an order of March 10 issued by the ADM (judicial), which had restrained the company from selling the disputed land and carrying out construction activities. The petitioner had alleged that advocate R P Singh, who had no apparent connection with the disputed property, first served a legal notice on the company and later filed a complaint before the DM.

The complaint alleged that the land had been transferred illegally and construction work was being undertaken on it. The DM entertained the complaint and forwarded it directly to the ADM (judicial), who passed

an interim restraint order without recording any prima facie satisfaction. The court noted that proceedings under Sections 104 and 105 of the Uttar Pradesh Revenue Code can be initiated only by a subdivisional magistrate (SDM). It further observed that Rule 103 mandates a report from the Lekhpal and issuance of notices to the parties by the SDM before any action is taken. In the present case, the prescribed procedure was completely bypassed.

The bench also remarked that the advocate had misused his legal knowledge in an attempt to intimidate and blackmail the petitioner. It held that the DM acted without jurisdiction in registering the matter, while the ADM (judicial) passed the order without the legally required satisfaction and without proper application of mind. Quashing the entire proceedings and the ADM's order, the court directed both the DM and the ADM (judicial) to pay costs of Rs 20,000 each from their personal accounts within six weeks. The court specifically clarified that the amount shall not be paid from government funds.

US national arrested in UP's Maharajganj for trying to cross illegally to Nepal

Maharajganj, 31 May: A US national was arrested while he was allegedly trying to cross illegally to Nepal, police said. In a statement issued here, the police said, "As part of the ongoing campaign against crime and criminals, as well as efforts to maintain vigilance in border areas, personnel of Farendra police station on May 30 arrested a foreign national near Chhatra bridge during a routine security check while he was attempting to cross the border illegally." The arrested accused has been identified as Phelan Travis Anthony, a resident of Missouri, the United States of America (USA). A case has been registered against the foreign national at the local police station under the provisions of the Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025.

When the foreign national was interrogated, it came to light that he violated visa rules.

During detailed interrogation of the arrested US citizen, it was revealed that the accused had arrived in India in August, 2025. His authorised period of stay had expired on February 2, 2026. Subsequently, due to a bout of food poisoning, Anthony proceeded to Hyderabad Airport in February with the intention of leaving the country.

However, upon inspection by the airport authorities, it was discovered that he had overstayed his authorised duration by eight days. He was informed that a fine would be imposed upon him for this violation of regulations. To arrange for the payment of this fine, the American citizen contacted the

US Consulate located in Hyderabad.

The Consulate offered to provide Anthony with a loan to cover the fine and facilitate his return to the United States, which he would have to repay upon his arrival back home. However, the accused expressed his inability to repay this loan. In an attempt to evade legal proceedings and avoid paying the fine, the accused stayed in Hyderabad for some time, the police said in the statement. "Ultimately, he was attempting to enter Nepal illegally via the Maharajganj border, with the intention of travelling onward to his home country, the United States, from there. He was apprehended by the Farendra police near the Chhatra Bridge during a routine security check," the statement added.

Udaipur: 18,000 litres of adulterated ghee seized; yellow food colour found during raid

Jaipur, 31 May: Around 18,000 litres of suspected adulterated ghee (clarified butter) and yellow food colour were seized during a raid in Rajasthan's Udaipur, officials said on Saturday. Acting on complaints related to food adulteration and product quality, a central enforcement team of the Food Safety Commissionerate carried out joint inspections at two locations in the district. Food Safety Commissioner Dr T Shubhamangala said the team inspected Shri Madhur Dairy Farm and Food Products, where ghee was being manufactured and stored under multiple brands, including "Udaipur Fresh Desi Ghee", "Udaipur Fresh Cow Ghee", "Madhya Desi Ghee" and "Jayant Cow Ghee".

The officials said they found large quantities of ghee stored in large tanks and containers, besides several tins without proper labels or mandatory product details, in violation of food safety regulations. During the inspection, bottles of yellow food colour were also re-

covered from the premises. Preliminary findings suggest the colour was being mixed into ghee allegedly to market it as cow ghee, officials said. Samples have been collected and sent to the state food laboratory for scientific testing under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.

Keeping public health concerns in view, the authorities seized about 18,000 litres of ghee on the spot and banned its sale and distribution. During the drive, another private company was also inspected, where a stock of over 42,000 kg of ghee, butter and other dairy products of various brands was found. Detailed investigation into the stock is underway, officials added.

A four-year-old boy was allegedly killed by his father for repeatedly crying for milk in Powai area of the city, police said on Saturday. Rajesh Prakash Singh (27) was arrested following the incident on Friday. Singh lived with his mother, wife, and two sons aged five and four in Gautam

Nagar locality, said a police official. His younger son Yash (4) was a special child and survived primarily on milk, the official said. Rajesh was unemployed, and his wife reportedly left him and their children around 15 days ago due to his alcoholism and inability to support the family, the official said, adding that the elder son was staying with one of Rajesh's sisters.

In the early hours of Friday, Yash began crying for milk. The child's cries woke Rajesh, and in a fit of rage, he allegedly slammed the boy against a door before repeatedly banging his head on the floor. Rajesh informed his sister in the morning that Yash had died. Upon receiving information about the incident, Powai Police rushed to the spot. The child was taken to Rajawadi Hospital, where doctors declared him dead on arrival. Initially Rajesh gave evasive answers, but during sustained interrogation, he confessed to killing his son, the police official said. Further probe is on.

One day of extreme heat causes 3,400 excess deaths across India, study estimates

New Delhi, 31 May: A single day of extreme heat causes about 3,400 excess deaths across India, while a five-day heatwave causes nearly 30,000, a study has estimated. Researchers Piyush Narang and Ashok Gadgil from the India Energy and Climate Center at the University of California Berkeley, US, said that even though global studies highlight a surging heat-related mortality, granular spatial-temporal data on how heatwaves affect mortality in India's districts remain inaccessible to common researchers. The team adapted findings from a multi-city analysis of heat-related mortality across 10 cities in India to estimate excess deaths across all districts in the country. 'Excess deaths' is a public health metric that refers to the difference between total deaths over a specific period and deaths that could be expected to occur based on historical data.

The study, published in the journal *Frontiers in Environmental Health*, integrated district-level mortality rates from the Civil Registration System

and population projections for 2024 to obtain district-level excess death estimates under one-day and five-day heatwave scenarios. "We estimate that a single day of extreme heat causes approximately 3,400 excess deaths nationally; a five-day heatwave causes nearly 30,000," the authors wrote. Heatwave to severe heatwave conditions were prevailing in north, central and east India, with temperatures consistently exceeding 45 degrees Celsius in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, parts of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana over past few days.

Mapping heat-induced mortality risk to individual districts revealed that the state of Uttar Pradesh alone accounts for about 8,100 excess deaths during a five-day heatwave, while excess deaths in districts, including Ahmedabad, Jaipur and Surat, each exceed 250 in a single event. A 2.3-fold disproportion between mortality burden and economic capacity was found in the five highest death-burden states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Ra-

asthan, and Gujarat, which together accounted for 66 per cent of the country's excess deaths while contributing only 29 per cent of India's GDP. The result has direct and urgent implications for how India designs and funds its heat resilience architec-

ture, the researchers said. "The 2.3x GDP disproportion documented here provides a quantitative basis for arguing that federal adaptation investment, including funding under the National Disaster Management Authority and the National Action Plan on Climate Change,

should be weighted toward high-burden, low-GDP states rather than allocated in proportion to population or administrative capacity," they wrote. The top 100 districts, comprising nearly one-third of India's population, accounted for 44 per cent of excess

with the least fiscal capacity to invest in adaptation," the authors said. They added that the district-level estimates presented in the study align with findings from an increasing body of epidemiological and modelling evidence that suggest South Asia, especially India, is particularly vulnerable to heat-related mortality.

Maratha quota activist Manoj Jarange has ended his indefinite fast after talks with Maharashtra government representatives, who submitted a 12-point proposal to him. Jarange, who began his indefinite hunger strike, his ninth in last three years, at his Antarwali Sarati village in Jalna district on Saturday morning, ended it shortly after midnight. Jarange sat under a scorching summer sun on Saturday, putting pressure on the Maharashtra government, whose representatives submitted the 12-point proposal to him with an appeal to end the strike. The government team was led by minister Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil and BJP MLC Prasad Lad.



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