

Madhya Pradesh Ends Two-Child Norm for Government Jobs, Scraps Decades-Old Eligibility Rule

Bhopal, 10 June : In a significant policy reversal, the Madhya Pradesh government has decided to remove the long-standing two-child norm that earlier restricted eligibility for government employment in the state. The move effectively brings an end to a rule that had been in place for over two decades as part of population control measures.

According to official sources, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav directed the General Administration Department to withdraw the proposed provision that would have disqualified candidates

subject to disciplinary action if they violated the guideline. With the latest decision, the state has now moved away from linking employment eligibility with family size. The change is expected to open up government job opportunities for a wider pool of candidates and eliminate one of the more debated service conditions in the state administration.

Officials indicate that necessary amendments will be made to recruitment and service conduct rules to align with the new policy direction. The decision is also being

retained the provision barring candidates with more than two living children from government jobs.

The Chief Minister has also ordered that the draft be removed from the official portal immediately.

The move is being seen as a big relief for job aspirants, young families and government employees who had long objected to the rule.

For more than two decades, Madhya Pradesh followed a provision introduced in 2001 as part of population-control measures.

Under this system, a candidate having more than two living children on or after January 26, 2001, was deemed ineligible for direct recruitment and departmental appointments in government service. Even now, the price of crude oil in the international market hovers around \$93-94 per barrel. During this period, international LPG prices have also surged by more than 46%.

On Friday, RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra warned, "The global economic situation is deteriorating. Prolonged supply chain disruptions and elevated energy prices are likely to impact both the growth rate and the inflation rate."

Malhotra said India's real GDP growth rate for the current financial year is projected at 6.6%, against the RBI's previous estimate of 6.9%. While releasing the Monetary Policy Statement, the RBI Governor noted that crude oil prices (Indian basket) have averaged \$110 per barrel over the last two months.

viewed as part of a broader shift in administrative approach, focusing more on inclusive employment norms rather than demographic restrictions. The rollback marks the end of a policy that had remained largely unchanged for years and is likely to have implications for future recruitment drives across Madhya Pradesh's government departments.

Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav has directed the General Administration Department to scrap the proposed draft of the Madhya Pradesh Civil Services Rules



with more than two children from applying for government posts. The directive also includes removing the draft rule from official records and portals, signalling a complete rollback of the earlier framework.

The two-child norm, introduced in the early 2000s, was originally designed to encourage family planning and manage population growth. Under the rule, candidates with more than two living children were considered ineligible for recruitment in several government services. In certain cases, serving employees were also

Meenakshi Natarajan Nomination Row Exposes Congress Rift as BJP Gains Upper Hand in Madhya Pradesh Rajya Sabha Battle

Hyderabad, 10 June : A major political storm has erupted in Madhya Pradesh after Congress leader Meenakshi Natarajan's Rajya Sabha nomination was rejected, triggering a chain reaction of allegations involving Congress internal divisions, BJP's electoral strategy, and legal scrutiny over affidavit disclosures. The rejection of Natarajan's candidature has not only weakened Congress's position in the upcoming Rajya Sabha polls but has also intensified speculation over behind-the-scenes political maneuvering. According to official scrutiny findings, her nomination was invalidated over alleged non-disclosure of details related to a pending legal matter in Telangana, a charge the Congress has strongly contested, calling it a politically motivated action. The Congress party has alleged that the move reflects a coordinated effort by the BJP to alter the electoral arithmetic in Madhya Pradesh, where the ruling party was initially expecting a smoother path in the upper house elections. Senior Congress

leaders have accused the BJP of strategically fielding an additional candidate to force a contest, thereby increasing pressure on Congress legislators and opening the door to possible cross-voting dynamics. Within the Congress camp, the controversy has also exposed internal friction and coordination gaps,



particularly around how the legal issue linked to Natarajan was handled prior to filing nomination papers. Party insiders suggest that differences between state and organisational leadership may have contributed to delays in addressing the court-linked notice, which ultimately became central to the rejection

decision. The BJP, on the other hand, has defended the nomination scrutiny process, maintaining that the rejection was based purely on legal grounds and mandatory disclosure requirements in election affidavits. Party leaders have dismissed Congress allegations of conspiracy, asserting that transparency rules apply equally to all candidates and that the Returning Officer acted within the framework of election law. Natarajan herself has described the decision as politically driven, alleging that the BJP is attempting to "manipulate the electoral process" after failing to break Congress unity in the state assembly numbers game. Her supporters have also pointed out that the matter in question had not reached the stage of a full criminal case, further intensifying the legal debate surrounding the rejection. The development has significantly reshaped the Rajya Sabha contest in Madhya Pradesh, giving the BJP a potential numerical advantage and altering expectations about seat distribution.

Boat Carrying 35 Pilgrims Overturms In Maharashtra's Beed, Two Dead

Mumbai, 10 June : A boat carrying 35 pilgrims overturned in a river in Purushotampuri in Maharashtra's Beed district on Wednesday. Two people died in the accident. Witnesses said the boat operators packed more passengers than the vessel's capacity, leading it to lose balance and topple over.

The boat was reportedly caught in a strong current and sank within seconds.

"The boat operator had packed the boat with passengers many times more than its actual capacity, like cattle. As the overloaded boat reached the deep waters in the middle of the Godavari, the weight and unevenness of the boat caused it to lose balance. This resulted in men,

women and children falling into the deep waters," said the witness. Two women named Pramila Rathod and Sindhubai Mawal died.

District Collector Vivek Johnson has ordered a Sub-Divisional Officer (SDO)-level probe into the accident. He has asked the probe team to submit a detailed report soon. He said the probe will determine how the boat exceeded its capacity and where safety standards were ignored. Anyone found responsible or guilty for this negligence will face the strictest legal action, he added.

Under the revised setup, the former chief ministers were to receive security from the Bihar Special Armed Po-

lice, including house guards, bodyguards, and a pilot vehicle, replacing the earlier Z-plus category cover.

The controversy intensified when RJD supporters assembled outside the family's residence after appeals from party leaders, alleging that the security downgrade was politically motivated. Visuals showed workers standing guard at the bungalow, turning the security issue into a major political flashpoint ahead of crucial electoral battles in the state. The dispute comes amid another ongoing tussle over the government bungalow at 10 Circular Road in Patna, which has been allotted to a state minister.

Rabri Devi has publicly

refused to vacate the residence, accusing the government of targeting her family. With opposition leaders accusing the ruling alliance of political vendetta and the government insisting the move is purely administrative, the security controversy has added another layer to Bihar's increasingly heated political landscape.

The operation ended without any arrest as Majithia was reportedly not present at his home when the police teams arrived.

According to the police, Bikram Majithia was part of an unlawful gathering of people, which attempted to free the detainee Jobanpreet at Majithia police station on Sunday.

Swapan Dasgupta Gets Finance Portfolio as Bengal Finalises Cabinet Distribution, Sparks Political Debate

Kolkata, 10 June : In a significant political development that has drawn sharp attention across West Bengal's political spectrum, veteran parliamentarian and columnist Swapan Dasgupta has been allotted the Finance portfolio as the state government finalised its ministerial responsibilities on Wednesday. The reshuffle, announced after days of internal consultations, signals a recalibration of priorities within the state cabinet as the administration moves to streamline fiscal strategy and governance delivery. According to official sources familiar with the deliberations, the decision to assign the Finance department to Dasgupta was taken after multiple rounds of discussions involving senior leadership and key advisors.

The move is being interpreted as an attempt to inject fresh economic thinking into the state's financial planning apparatus at a time when West Bengal is navigating competing demands of welfare expenditure, industrial revival, and infrastructure expansion. Dasgupta, known for his background in political commentary and legislative experience at the national level, is expected to bring a distinct policy-oriented approach to the role.

While he has not previously held a full-fledged finance ministry position in a state government, insiders suggest his appointment reflects a broader strategy to diversify the economic advisory base within the cabinet. The portfolio distribution exercise also comes amid heightened political com-

petition in the state, with opposition parties questioning the rationale behind certain key assignments. Critics argue that the reshuffle is as much about political balancing as it is about administrative efficiency.

However, ruling party leaders have maintained that the changes were necessary to accelerate decision-making and improve departmental coordination. Speaking informally to reporters, a senior



government functionary said the Finance department will focus on three immediate priorities: revenue mobilisation, expenditure rationalisation, and boosting private sector participation in key industrial zones.

The government is also expected to revisit pending fiscal reform proposals and review ongoing infrastructure financing models. The announcement has already triggered debate within political

circles, with analysts divided over its potential impact. Some view Dasgupta's appointment as a bold experiment that could introduce sharper policy scrutiny and economic discipline. Others remain cautious, pointing out that the complexities of state finance require administrative continuity and deep institutional experience. Opposition leaders, meanwhile, have criticised the reshuffle as "cosmetic" and argued that structural economic challenges facing the state cannot be addressed through portfolio changes alone.

They have also demanded greater transparency in how key financial decisions will be taken under the new arrangement. Despite the political noise, officials indicate that the Finance department under Dasgupta is expected to move quickly on preparing the upcoming fiscal roadmap, including budgetary revisions and sectoral allocation reviews. Special focus is likely to be placed on employment generation schemes, urban infrastructure funding, and strengthening the state's borrowing framework.

With the portfolio distribution now complete, attention shifts to how effectively the new cabinet configuration can translate policy intent into administrative action. As West Bengal enters a crucial phase of economic planning, the performance of the Finance department is likely to remain under close scrutiny from both political stakeholders and financial observers.

Massive Blaze Erupts at South 24 Parganas Administrative Office in Alipore; One Person Rescued Amid Panic

Kolkata, 10 June : A sudden and massive fire broke out at the South 24 Parganas district administrative office located in Alipore on Wednesday afternoon, triggering panic among employees and prompting an urgent emergency response. Firefighters managed to rescue at least one person trapped inside the building as thick smoke rapidly engulfed parts of the premises. According to initial reports, the blaze originated in one of the office sections of the South 24 Parganas administrative complex before spreading quickly to adjacent rooms, fueled by paper records and office materials.

Employees working inside the building were seen rushing out as alarms were raised and visibility dropped due to dense smoke. Fire and emergency services were immediately alerted, and multiple fire tenders were dispatched to the site. After an intense operation, firefighters were able to bring the situation under partial control and safely evacuate individuals trapped inside. Officials confirmed that one person was rescued from a smoke-filled section of the building

and provided immediate medical attention on-site.

The administrative office, which handles a wide range of district-level governance work including revenue, land records, and public services, is a key operational hub for South 24 Parganas. The incident has raised concerns about fire safety protocols in government buildings that house critical records and daily administrative functions. Preliminary observations suggest that the fire may have been triggered by an electrical short circuit, though authorities have not issued a final confirmation. A detailed investigation has been launched to determine the exact cause of the incident and assess the extent of damage to official documents and infrastructure.

Eyewitnesses described chaotic scenes as staff members attempted to evacuate quickly while smoke spread through corridors and stairwells. Some employees reportedly used emergency exits to reach safety, while others were assisted by fire personnel during the rescue operation. Senior district officials reached the spot shortly

after the incident and are monitoring the situation closely. They have ordered a preliminary assessment of damage and instructed departments to begin contingency arrangements to ensure continuity of essential services.

Fire department officials



stated that while the blaze was intense, swift response helped prevent a larger disaster. "The situation could have escalated further, but timely intervention ensured that we could control the fire and carry out rescue operations," one official noted. As cooling operations continue and investigators comb through the damaged sections, authorities are also reviewing safety

measures in similar government buildings across the district.

The incident has reignited discussions about upgrading fire safety infrastructure, particularly in older administrative complexes that handle sensitive public records. Further updates are

expected once a full assessment report is submitted by the fire department and district administration. "It has barely been a month. Even the election ink on their (rebels) fingers has not faded, and BJP has not even allocated portfolios to its ministers, and they are doing this," he said. "They won because of Mamata Banerjee's name. Their actions speak volumes

about their character. But the party workers are still with us". The NIA has expressed confidence that the former legislator will be traced soon. The latest development marks a major escalation in the Bhangar blast investigation, which has already led to multiple arrests and seizures of documents, electronic devices, and other evidence. With Molla now officially declared absconding, the case is expected to intensify political and legal pressure on the ruling Trinamool Congress ahead of the next phase of the probe.

Officials stressed that unauthorized structures posed safety concerns and hindered planned development projects around the busy transport hub. The incident has sparked a fresh political debate, with opposition parties criticizing the manner in which the eviction was carried out, while authorities defended the move as a necessary step to enforce regulations. As protests continue, attention is now turning to whether rehabilitation or relocation measures will be offered to those affected by the demolition drive.

Monsoon Likely to Hit Kolkata in a Day or Two as IMD Forecasts Early Onset Over City

Kolkata, 10 June : The much-awaited southwest monsoon is expected to reach the city within the next 24 to 48 hours, with weather officials indicating that conditions are rapidly turning favourable for its onset over Kolkata and adjoining districts. The development has brought relief to residents who have been grappling with intense pre-monsoon heat and humid conditions over the past several days. According to the latest forecast issued by the India Meteorological Department, the monsoon current has advanced steadily across parts of eastern India and is now poised to cover south Bengal soon. Meteorologists said that atmospheric moisture levels, wind patterns, and cloud formation over the Bay of Bengal region are aligning in a way that strongly supports an imminent arrival. Officials tracking the system noted that the monsoon trough has become more active, and moisture incursion from the sea has increased significantly over coastal and southern districts of West Bengal. As a result, Kolkata is expected to experience the first spells of sustained monsoon rainfall either late tonight or within the next two days, depending on local atmospheric conditions. The early signs of the approaching monsoon were already visible on Tuesday, with intermittent showers and overcast skies re-



ported in several parts of the city. Weather experts say these pre-onset activities are typical indicators of a strengthening monsoon system, which often brings sudden bursts of rainfall followed by longer wet spells once fully established. If the forecast holds, this year's monsoon arrival over Kolkata could be close to the climatological schedule, possibly even slightly earlier than average in some pockets of southern West Bengal. This is expected to bring much-needed relief to agriculture-dependent regions, especially in rural districts where paddy cultivation depends heavily on timely rainfall. However, officials have also cautioned that the initial phase of monsoon activity may be accompanied by intense showers, gusty winds, and localized waterlogging in low-lying areas of the city. Municipal authorities have been advised to remain on alert and ensure that drainage systems are cleared in anticipation of heavy downpours. Commuters in Kolkata are likely to face disruptions during peak rainfall hours, as water accumulation on key roads and underpasses is a recurring issue during the first spells of the monsoon season. Traffic authorities have already begun reviewing contingency plans to manage congestion and prevent gridlock in vulnerable stretches. The meteorological department has also urged fishermen along the Bay of Bengal coast to exercise caution, as sea conditions are expected to become rough with strengthening monsoon winds. Small craft advisories may be issued depending on the intensity of the system's progress over the next 48 hours. For residents of Kolkata, the imminent arrival of the monsoon marks a seasonal shift from scorching pre-summer conditions to cooler, rain-drenched days. While the showers are expected to provide relief from rising temperatures, experts emphasize that preparedness for urban flooding and weather-related disruptions will be crucial in the coming days. As all eyes turn to the skies, meteorologists say the final confirmation of monsoon onset over the city will depend on sustained rainfall activity and wind pattern stabilization over the region. For now, Kolkata appears firmly on the cusp of welcoming the season's first major rains.

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Emergency Nos.

Airlines

Air India : 2211- 6869 Dum Dum airport : 2511- 8787

Railway

Howrah Station Old Complex : 2638-7412 New Complex : 2638 2217 Sealdah Station : 2350 3535/3537 Reservation : 139, Women Security : 182

Emergency Services

Lalbaraz Police Control Room : 2214- 3230 Bengal Police : 2214 3230 South 24 Parganas Police : 2479 1870 Fire Brigade: 2252 6666 Bhabani Bhavan : 2479 1761 Missing : 2450- 6100

Night Medicine, Oxygen

Life Care : 2475 4628 Nandan Medical : 2358 1723 Jivandwip : 2455 0962 South Kolkata Bureau : 2484 4322.

Nurses / Nurse Assistant

South Kolkata Nurses : 2484 4322 City Point : 2567 4113 Janakalyan : 2867 5012 Health Care : 2416 4675 Alo : 2472 1039 Sister: 2442 6385 Loknath : 2372 2763 Life Care : 2578 8720 Nivedita : 2284 7810 Anandamoyee : 2464 7294 Relief : 2289 7362 Care : 2334 7068 Sanjibani : 2360 7881 Trend Nurses : 2554 2757 Nurses Association : 2241 682

Ambulance

Garpar Srijan : 2354 5847 South and Policlinic : 2466 2433 Life Care : 2475 4628 Okhard : 2475 4320 Diganta : 2474 5455 Sisir Kumar Institute : 2533 0382 Rani Rashmoni Mission : 2431 9885 Jamnangal : 2466 2879 Medical Bank : 2554 0084 Alipore Chetla Basti Unnayan : 2449 0286 Meera Seva : 2411 8316 Matri Sangha Janakalyan Ashram : 2475 4527 Dr. Bidhan Roy Memorial : 2574 9738 Kumartuli Institution : 2530 5561 Taltala People : 2265 3239 MAR Care : 2320 3181

Blood Bank

Central Blood Bank : 2351 0619 Peoples Blood Bank : 2455 5164 Lions : 2248 5780 Life Care : 2284 6940 Ashok Lab : 2472 0333 Hemophilia Society : 2426 3739 Ramkrishna Seva Pratishthan : 2475 3636-9

Hospital

SSKM : 2204 1100 Vision Hospital : (033) 71-222-000 R N Tagore : 2436 4000 Thakurpukur Cancer Research : 2453 2781 CMRI : 2456 7700 NRS : 2265 3214 Ram Krishna Mission Seva Pratishthan : 2475 3636 National Medical College : 2289 7122 R G Kar : 2555 7675 Shambhunath Pandit : 2302 2800 Nitangle : 2282 7462 Peerless : 2462 2394 Priyambada Birla Aravind Eye : 2289 4343 Ruby General : 3987 1800 B M Birla : 2456 7890 Renaissance : 4014 4014 Medical College : 2241 4901 Matribhavan : 2464 4189 Kalpataru : 2562 2280 West Bank : 2644 5516 Bangur : 2473 3354 Balananda Brahmachari : 2478 7801 Sushrut : 2358 0201 Apollo Glanigles : 2320 2122 Eye Care : 2287 2809 North City : 2321 1101 B P Poddar : 2445 8901 Barasat Cancer Research : 2552 2222 Escag Sanjiboni : 2554 1818 Medik Rehab : 2281 7881 Vinayak Health World : 2532 9950 Dafodil : 2534 6649 Mission Hospital, Durgapur : (0343) 2535 555

Nursing Home

EEDF : 2473 3601 Speed Edge : 2534 3170 Repose : 2287 1442 Mind Care : 2534 6220 Belle View : 2287 2321 New Life : 2570 8090 Woodlands : 2456 7079 Capital : 2350 7272 Ekbalpore : 2449 5151 Medica ENT : 2426 4901-03 Dr. Nihar Munshi Eye Foundation : 2461 8733

Dead body Carriage

Hindu Satkar : 2241 3849 New Alipore Suruchi Sangha : 2400- 9950 Garpar Srijan : 2354 5847 Park Circus Puja : 2287 1793 Sarkar Bagan. : 2554 1881 Baranagar Karmisangha : 2558 7526 Meera : 2411 8316 Rajib Memorial : 2454 9550 Lake Town Committe : 2521 9578 Kumartuli Institute : 2530 5561 Sribhumi Sporting : 534 0002 Udayer Pathe : 3250 1089

Burning Ghat

Keoratala : 2466 6602 Siriti : 2403 2013 Kashipore R K Mahasman : 2558 3484 Kashi Mitra : 2554 2967 Nimtala : 2269 1955