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Oppn hits the streets in Bihar over revision of electoral roll MDL to get over ₹1L-cr submarine contracts

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PATNA: Leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday alleged that the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar was an extension of the "Maharashtra model" of rigging the polls in favour of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led coalition. The Congress leader was taking part in the Bihar bandh supported by the Opposition to protest the Election Commission of India's controversial move.

Addressing the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) bloc workers during a protest march to the EC's office in Patna, Gandhi alleged: "Maharashtra assembly elections were rigged to favour the BJP and the NDA. They want to repeat it in Bihar, which we will not allow."

The former Congress president has been targeting ECI since the November 2024 Maharashtra polls, alleging "bogus voters" were added in electoral rolls in the western state. The BJP-led Mahayuti swept the Maharashtra polls, just months after facing defeat in the state during the Lok Sabha polls. He claimed that SIR in Bihar was an extension of the "Maharashtra model" of fudging

RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, CPI general secretary D Raja, Congress MP Rahul Gandhi and CPI(ML) general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya in Patna on Wednesday.

untoward incidents."

accused ECI, which he alleged the 2003 voter list will have to comprised persons nominated by the BJP, of serving the ruling party rather than the people. Gandhi was accompanied by leaders of alliance partners, including Tejashwi Yadav, the leader of RJD, and Dipankar Bhattacharya, general secretary of the CPI(ML).

"Today, the Bihar Bandh has

been called to address how ECI

has become 'Godi Aayog'. NDA is

losing, so they are using the ECL.

Preparations have been going on

to remove the names of Bihar's

poor people from the voter list,"

Echoing the sentiment, Bhat-

tacharya described the ongoing

SIR as "votebandi", "Voters

whose names were not there in

the RJD leader added.

Yadav alleged that EC has become a part of a political assembly polls, which are likely to be held in October-November. party, calling it a "Godi Aavog".

Reacting to the opposition's protest, the BJP lashed out at the prove that they are citizens. And INDIA bloc for holding a bandh the conditions that have been set by the EC make it very difficult in the state, with senior party for the people of Bihar. It's voteleader and former Union minisbandi," the CPI(ML) leader said. ter Ravi Shankar Prasad ques-The Bihar Bandh, supported tioning whether the opposition by the state's opposition bloc. parties were trying to pressure aimed at galvanising public senthe judiciary by such tactics. "All timent against the NDA governthese leaders have approached ment and ECI ahead of the the Supreme Court, which is their right, and when the hear-

ECI 'FACT CHECKS' **RJD MP JHA'S POST** ON ELECTORAL ROLL Vrinda Tulsian

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NEW DELHI: Facing the heat from various Opposition parties over the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in poll-bound Bihar, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has launched a counter-offensive on social media using the hashtag #ECIFactCheck, labelling posts of several opposition leaders as misleading Since its debut fact check post

on Monday night, ECI's official X handle has challenged posts on SIR by Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge, RJD's Tejashwi Yadav and Manoj Kumar Jha. TMC's Sagarika Ghose, and activist Yogendra Yadav.

On Wednesday, RJD MP Jha posted on X what he claimed was an ECI letter confirming a meeting scheduled for July 10 regarding the Bihar revision, accusing the commission of reneging after initial agreement. "Dear EC ji, is this not your own letter? When we pointed out the time after noon on July 10, your people, after initially agreeing, are now refusing to meet." Jha said in a post in Hindi on X. ECI swiftly labelled Jha's assertions as "misleading" in its fact-check response, claiming it received "no communication" requesting the meeting from either RJD chief Lalu Prasad or his "authorised representative" Tejashwi Yaday. "Manoj Jha has not been authorised by President of RJD to communicate with ECI vide their letter dated April 03, 2025," ECI replied.

MUMBAI: Public sector yard Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) is likely to be awarded two separate contracts by the government worth more than ₹1.06 lakh crore before financial year 2025-26 ends for building submarines for the

Indian Navy, officials aware of the matter said on Wednesday. The first contract is the ₹70,000-crore Project 75I under

which Mumbai-based MDL and German yard thyssenkrupp Marine Systems (tkMS) will build six advanced submarines to sharpen the navy's underwater capabilities. The second contract estimated to be worth ₹36,000 crore is for constructing three more Scorpene-class submarines to bolster the country's

maritime posture in the Indian Ocean region.

The contract negotiation com-

negotiations for the additional Scorpene-class submarines have been completed, said Commodore SB Jamgaonkar (retd), director (submarine and heavy

engineering), MDL. "We are looking forward to executing the two projects. The two deals are likely to be signed before March 31, 2026," he said. The first submarine under P-75I will be delivered to the navy seven years after the con-

tract is signed, with the rest at the rate of one per year, Jamgaonkar said. These advanced submarines. a variant of HDW Class 214 vessels, will come with air independent propulsion (AIP) systems. AIP significantly increases a submarine's underwater endurance and reduces the risk of detection. As part of the contract, tkMS will transfer the sub-

turing sector.

11

The first submarine under P-75I must have a minimum of 45% indigenisation, with the local content going up to 60% in the sixth. MDL and tkMS edged out their only competitor the Larsen & Toubro-Navantia combine for this order.

MDL has the capability to simultaneously build II sabmarines and 10 destroyers, said Commander V Puranik (retd). director (corporate planning and personnel), MDL. The first of the three new Scorpene-class submarines will be delivered six years after the contract is signed, Jamgaonkar said. The other two will be at the rate of one per year.

"MDL is ready and configured for this project. We will hit the ground running as skilled labour is there and the supply chain is in place," he said.

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electoral rolls, adding it would 'steal not just people's right to vote but their entire future."

"They want to replicate the Maharashtra model elsewhere. This time they may try to delete the names of many voters. But they must know this is Bihar. People here can see through the designs," Gandhi said.

Terming the SIR exercise a mockery of democracy", he

ALLEGES CASTE-BASED HARASSMENT MP judicial officer opposes proposed elevation of judge

Utkarsh Anand

the top court collegium to recon-

panion judges in the collegium, Sharma called the proposed ele-Kumar Gupta a "gross misjudgment that threatens the credibility of judicial institutions".

July 2 recommended by the col-

Gupta declined HT's request for comment, citing ethics and

On her part, Sharma also

OFFICER'S DISMISSAL WAS OVERTURNED BY THE SC FOUR MONTHS BACK

service as "arbitrary and illegal",

Her letter outlined multiple

ing is scheduled for tomorrow. Meanwhile, the Bihar bandh why are they engaging in street evoked mixed response in the politics today to exert pressure?" state. Supporters and workers of Prasad told reporters in Delhi. the opposition parties burnt In a press release on Wednestyres and blocked roads in Patna,

day, ECI said that enumeration while long-distance trains were forms of nearly 57.48% of the stopped at multiple places. total 78,969,844 existing electors in Bihar have been collected ADG (law and order) Pankaj Darad said all preventive measwhile 98% forms (77.1 million) ures were taken to maintain law have already been distributed in and order. "There were no major the first 15 days of the exercise with 16 more days left.





'Maha to have law on conversion'

MUMBAJ: Maharashtra revenue Agrawal and others in the state enacted in the state," he said. minister Chandrashekhar assembly, Bawankule said he Bawankule on Wednesday said would speak to chief minister Devendra Fadnavis on how to a stringent law to prevent relibring an anti-conversion law gious conversions will be enacted in the state. with stringent provisions.

Replying to a debate on the "A strict law to prevent reliissue raised by BJP's Anup gious conversions will be

He said he has instructed the divisional commissioner concerned to conduct a detailed investigation into unauthorised churches in Dhule-Nandurbar

belt and demolish them in six months. PTI

Shot on OnePlus #FramesofIndia

School students during plantation drive at a wetland park in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, on Wednesday. The UP government is conducting a state-wide campaign during which is aims to plant 520 million saplings through the year, CM Yogi Adityanath said on Wednesday. In the last eight years, the government has planted 2,040 million saplings. SUNIL GHOSH/HT PHOTO



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