Weekly News Wrap: WB from October 10, 2026 – October 16, 2026

Synopsis of the main developments reported in leading newspapers
October 10, 2026 – October 16, 2026
Key Developments

CM promises industrial revival in Bengal, Haldia gets Rs 6,000-crore chemical complex

Bengal Chief Minister Shri Suvendu Adhikari unveiled a Rs 6,000-crore phenol and acetone complex at Haldia, while declaring an end to the country's dependence on imports of the two industrial chemicals. Seeking to turn West Bengal into an industrial destination, the chief minister promised a fresh investment push backed by a new industrial policy before Diwali. The new facility, billed as India's largest integrated phenol and acetone plant, is expected to generate around 400 direct jobs and another 1,000 indirectly, invoking Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative and calling for West Bengal to build its own economic self-reliance. The inauguration of AdPerMa Private Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of Haldia Petrochemicals Limited, was accompanied by announcements of two more industrial projects in Haldia, a proposed data centre in Bengal and a 50-bed trauma centre for industrial workers by June 2027. Describing the complex as a landmark for domestic manufacturing, the chief minister said a further Rs 10,000 crore in investment was in the pipeline. The chief minister announced that a Pepsi manufacturing plant would come up on 98 acres in Haldia, with the Haldia Development Authority having already provided the land. Another 50 acres would be allotted to Truviss for a medical equipment manufacturing unit. With further proposals involving Indian Oil Corporation and Haldia Energy, the government aimed to accelerate industrial growth in Haldia within a year. The chief minister urged Haldia Petrochemicals chairman Purnendu Chatterjee to establish a data centre in Bengal, assuring him of the government's full support. The chief minister said a new industrial policy incorporating investment incentives, land-allocation provisions and power tariffs would be unveiled before Diwali. The government, was determined to create a business-friendly environment and attract investors through improved infrastructure and a predictable policy framework. the chief minister also stressed the need to match industrial expansion with local skills, proposing closer coordination between companies and technical institutions, including CIPET and Durgachak ITI, to train fitters, welders, fire-safety personnel and other skilled workers. The chief minister announced that a 50-bed trauma centre with a burn unit would be opened in Haldia by June 2027 to provide emergency care to workers injured in industrial accidents. The project would receive ₹18 crore from the Haldia Development Authority, Rs 5 crore from Indian Oil Corporation under its corporate social responsibility programme and Rs 5 crore under the National Health Mission. The chief minister said the government would work with industry to expand investment, improve connectivity and generate jobs, expressing confidence that West Bengal would emerge as a preferred destination for industrialists within a year.
https://www.thestatesman.com/cities/kolkata/suvendu-promises-industrial-revival-in-bengal-haldia-gets-rs-6000-crore-chemical-complex-1503651010.html/amp

New 24-coach Vande Bharat Sleeper on track

Indian Railways plans to launch 24-coach Vande Bharat Sleeper trains with 1,431 berths by 2027, aiming for more overnight travel capacity and enhanced passenger amenities after advanced design finalization. According to a report by news agency PTI, the Integral Coach

Factory (ICF), Chennai, is aiming for November 2026, to finalise the design. The development comes more than four years after ICF issued technical specifications for the proposed train in April 2022. The proposed train will comprise 1,431 berths across three air-conditioned classes. The proposed configuration would offer more accommodation than the existing 16-coach Vande Bharat Sleeper trains. However, the final layout remains subject to design approval. The Railway Ministry has proposed manufacturing 50 trainsets in the 24-coach configuration at ICF Chennai. In December 2024, the ministry placed orders for propulsion equipment with Medha and Alstom. Medha is likely to supply systems for 33 trainsets, whereas Alstom will supply the remaining 17. The ministry had earlier projected full-scale production during the 2026-27. However, the latest prototype timeline raises questions about whether that schedule can be maintained. Meanwhile, 10 Vande Bharat Sleeper trainsets with 16 coaches were planned through ICF and BEML. One pair has entered service between Howrah and Kamakhya, whereas two additional pairs are ready for introduction. Separately, Kinet Railway Solutions is tasked with manufacturing 120 trainsets, whereas another 80 are planned under the BHEL-Titagarh consortium. At present, two Vande Bharat Sleeper trainsets have been manufactured and introduced following trials in July 2026. The existing trains are equipped with Kavach train protection, fire detection and suppression systems, centrally controlled automatic doors and emergency communication facilities. Other amenities include improved upper-berth access, UV-C-based air-conditioning disinfection systems and accessible toilets. The Railway Ministry stated that the existing sleeper trainsets have a design speed of 180 kmph and an operating speed of 160 kmph. The final specifications, routes and fares for the proposed 24-coach trainset are yet to be announced.
https://www.financialexpress.com/business/railways-new-24-coach-vande-bharat-sleeper-on-track-heres-when-passengers-can-expect-it-4361095/

Work Begins on Balagarh Port Road Link as ₹539 Crore Hooghly Project Moves to the Ground

Construction of the road and bridge connecting the proposed Balagarh port in West Bengal's Hooghly district began on October 12, marking the first physical works on the ₹539 crore project. Developed by Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port, Kolkata, the barge terminal is designed to handle 2.7 million tonnes a year of container and coal cargo and ease congestion at the Kolkata Dock System. Work on the access road and bridge for the Balagarh port began with a foundation ceremony on Monday, October 12, 2026, the first on-ground step for the upriver cargo facility planned by Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port (SMP), Kolkata. The port is planned at Sripur Char in Balagarh, and officials expect the connectivity works to be completed within two years. The overall project, officially called the Extended Port Gate System at Balagarh, has an estimated cost of ₹539.17 crore. It comprises a publicly funded engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) component of ₹131.97 crore and a public-private partnership (PPP) component of ₹407.2 crore. The works include:
a 4 km approach road; a road over bridge; and a barge terminal with two berths, one for coal and one for containers. Each berth is planned to be about 120 metres long and 30 metres wide. The terminal is projected to handle 2.7 million tonnes of cargo a year, supported by road and rail links and dredging to maintain year-round navigation. Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the Extended Port Gate System at Balagarh, including the inland water transport terminal and road over bridge, at Singur on January 18, 2026. Shri Subrata Gupta, Adviser to the West Bengal Chief Minister, said that Balagarh is a unique example of Centre-State coordination, wherin the Centre is providing rail, road and

waterway connectivity, while the state is making industrial land available. Officials expect around 1,500 direct jobs once the port is operational, with ancillary industries adding an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 more. Balagarh lies about 75 km north of Kolkata. SMP plans to use it as an extended gate for the Kolkata Dock System: cargo trucked from the north can be unloaded at Balagarh and moved by barge to the docks, and vice versa, reducing the number of trucks entering Kolkata. The facility is also expected to boost cargo movement on National Waterway 1. Its value will depend on how quickly the terminal and berths follow the connectivity works, and how well road, rail and waterway links are integrated to draw cargo away from congested city routes.
https://www.maritimegateway.com/balagarh-port-road-project/

SEPC inks ₹854 cr-order with SAIL in West Bengal

Engineering solutions provider SEPC has signed a contract with steel major SAIL for a ₹854.57-crore project at the Burnpur plant. The contract, formally signed on October 8, 2026, covers the pellet plant BOP, including civil & structural works, at the SAIL-IISCO Steel Plant in Burnpur, West Bengal. SEPC said its consolidated order book has crossed the ₹10,000-crore mark. SEPC focuses on turnkey solutions in power, water infrastructure, and process & metallurgy.
https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/companies/sepc-inks-854-cr-order-with-sail-in-west-bengal/article71567802.ece

India to be theme country in 50th International Kolkata Book Fair

Commemorating the 150th year of Vande Mataram and 80 years of Independence, India (Bharat) is going to be the focal theme country of the 50th International Kolkata Book Fair (IKBF) 2027 to be held from Jan 22 to Feb 3, with a focus on nationalism and Swachh Bharat, where the country's journey towards Independence like the Partition and great riots of 1946 will be documented. It was earlier proposed that Israel would be the theme country of the book fair, but the proposal did not work out, officials said, adding that this would be the second time that India will be the theme country of the book fair. The previous time when India was the theme country was in 2001. Representatives of the Publishers & Booksellers Guild and the book fair advisory board on Wednesday visited the Salt Lake Central Park fairground to inspect the ground. Officials said that they would attempt to accommodate more stalls according to demands. Now "Vande Mataram will be the primary theme and there will be more thoughts on nationalism. There will be special focus on cleanliness as Swachhata is one of the prime agenda. The 125th birth anniversary of Syama Prasad Mookerjee, 100 years of Rakta Karabi, the Partition and great riot of 1946, will be documented and showcased in the IKBF 2027. This time an online registration portal has been opened for national and international publishers and publishing houses to apply for participation in the book fair to bring more transparency in the stall allocation process. IKBF 2027 will be organised by the Publishers and Booksellers Guild in collaboration with Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre and National Book Trust under the guidance of the 24-member book fair advisory board formed by the state govt.
https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/india-to-be-theme-country-in-50th-international-kolkata-book-fair/articleshow/134950335.cms