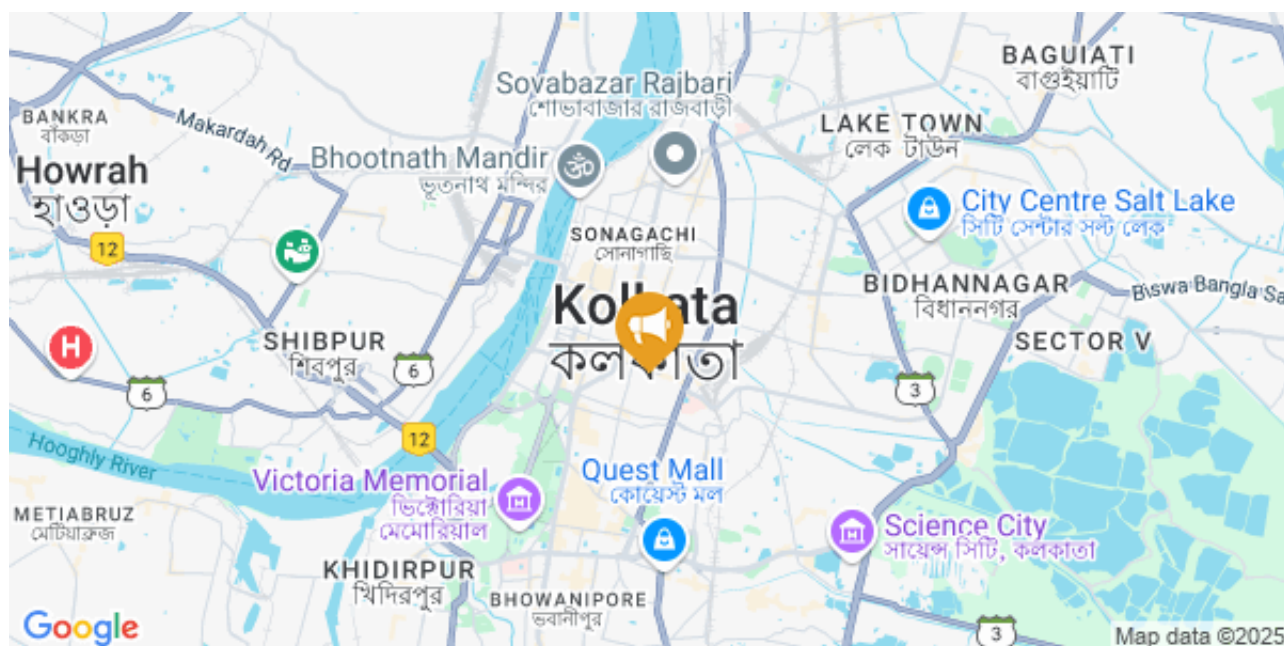


Protest

**03**APR
5:13 UTC

India Tactical: TMC announces statewide protests in West Bengal against hike in medicines prices on April 4-5; maintain vigilance

Current Situation:

- The West Bengal ruling All-India Trinamool Congress (TMC) party announced statewide protests across West Bengal on April 4-5.
- The protests will be held at the block and ward levels throughout the state. The exact timing remains undisclosed, as of writing.
- The protests, called by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, will condemn the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority's (NPPA) order increasing the prices of essential medicines by up to 1.74 percent from April 1.

Source: [X/Twitter](#), [X/Twitter](#)

Assessments & Forecast:

1. The turnout at the scheduled protests is anticipated to vary. In urban centers like Howrah, Kolkata, and Siliguri, the turnout is likely to range between the low-to-mid hundreds, given the mobilization capabilities of TMC in the state. A higher participation can be expected should prominent TMC leaders attend the demonstrations. Meanwhile, the participation in rural areas and smaller towns

will likely range between the low-to-mid dozens. The authorities are likely to bolster security measures at potential protest locations. Measures such as deployment of police personnel and setting up of barricades are particularly likely in Kolkata, in the vicinity of prominent government buildings and public spaces.

2. While there remains a risk of scuffles between the police and protesters, particularly if the latter engage in unruly behavior, the authorities' response will likely be restrained given the TMC's ruling status. In addition, inter-group tensions are also likely should the state opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) cadres launch counterprotests. In such cases, the police are likely to employ crowd dispersal measures such as baton charges to control the crowd. Significant travel disruptions are anticipated in the vicinity of anticipated protest locations due to the expected turnout and associated security measures on April 4-5.

Recommendations:

Those operating or residing in West Bengal, including Kolkata, on April 4-5 are advised to maintain vigilance in the vicinity of the aforementioned locations due to the statewide protests and related risk of scuffles while allotting for travel disruptions.