

Sweet touch to poll frenzy

Jhimli Mukherjee Pandey | TNN

Kolkata: Sweets are always special in Bengal. And during elections, how can they be far behind? At a time when the people are busy debating on which party to vote for, the city's sweet makers are making 'sandesh' of all party hues.

While most are concentrating on symbols, there are some who have even planned specially-designed "victory sweets" for the candidates and their parties. These are also essentially sandesh that will have the words 'Joyee Hao' (be victorious) coated on them with cottage cheese.

Several sweet makers, who have started making these poll sweets or 'nirbachonimishti', as they call it, have already started displaying them at their shops. Special counters will be created for these sweets from 'Poila Boishakh' onwards after which the elections will hot up, they feel. However, curious patrons and party workers have already started buying them.

"We are happy that we have been able to capture



'Poll sweets' at Balamullick & Radharaman Mullick

the imagination of the buyers. Not only are party workers happy, even regular customers are buying these out of curiosity," said Sudip Mullick, owner of Balamullick. His Bhowanipore shop had all the symbol sandeshes on display on Thursday, weighing from 200 grams to 500 grams.

"Actually these are quite expensive because they are big, but still we decided to buy one and share among 10 of us. We are all SFI supporters and savoured the party symbol," said Joyeeta Nasikar, a student at Ashutosh College who came to eat sweets with her friends here.

At the 182-year-old Nalin Chandra Das, it has been de-

cidated that not only the big symbol sweets, but also the small varieties will be on sale. "There are many who might want to buy the small sandesh because they will be much cheaper. So, we are keeping all options," said Tapan Kumar Das, the owner.

Rose petals are being crushed to create the CPM's red hammer and sickle while raw mango and orange are being used for the Trinamool 'sandesh'.

The sweet makers are creating strawberry-flavoured and pink-coloured lotus 'sandesh' for the BJP supporters.

Though Bhim Nag, 'sandesh' king of the city, is yet to get into the poll mode, the staff said that supporters of both Somen Mitra and Sudip Bandopadhyay are regularly buying sweets from them. "We will stock up especially after the elections are over as it is the time to celebrate success. We will not focus on symbols, but will stick to our traditional prices since that will make it easier for all colours to buy our sweets," said owner Pradip Nag.