

Koregaon Bhima Violence: 7 months after Fadnavis says political cases to be withdrawn, govt says set up panel

Agency
Mumbai Oct 13,

Nearly four months after a committee headed by Maharashtra ADGP (Law and Order) submitted a report to the state DGP stating that of the 642 cases registered in the aftermath of January's Koregaon Bhima violence, only 54 are of serious nature that need to be investigated, the state home department has directed the police to form a committee to probe how many of these 642 cases could be withdrawn. While the direction came on Tuesday, in the absence of a formal communication from the government so far, the police had already constituted a committee under the ADGP in June and submitted a report to the DGP stating that only 54 cases need to be investigated.

After Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said in the Assembly on March 13 that cases of political nature would be withdrawn, the police had sent three letters to the home department. While the first communique pertained to seeking a formal written order on forming a committee, the other two sought suggestions and made recommendations on forming a committee at every district and commissionerate.

Amitabh Gupta, Principal Secretary (Security), home department, said: "We have replied to their query."

"In March, the chief minister told the Assembly that cases of political nature would be withdrawn. The communication about the same has been sent to the police recently... they have been asked to constitute a committee headed by ADGP (Law and Order) and submit a report on the cases that could be dropped. Under section 321 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), the government is empowered to withdraw such cases," said a senior home official.

In its communication to the home department, the state police had said that instead of going by the findings of the committee, the government could constitute a fresh panel as per a general resolution (GR) — allowing the withdrawal of political cases — it had issued in January, 2015 at every district and commissionerate. The committee comprising public leaders and police officers could decide on the cases, sources in the police said. The police had also said that the GR was only applicable on cases registered up to November, 1, 2014 and therefore, a fresh GR has to be issued for withdrawing

cases registered before February, 2018.

"In March, the chief minister had promised to constitute a police committee to probe serious cases but till date, we haven't received any communication from the government. Since the matter was serious, a committee headed by ADGP (Law and Order) was formed. The other members of the committee included inspector general (Protection of Civil Rights), joint commissioner (Information Department) and inspector general (Law and Order)," said a senior official. "The committee submitted its report saying that only 54 cases were of serious nature. These included cases of arson, deterring a public servant from performing his duties and those of voluntarily causing hurt or grievous hurt," the official added.

"While the government promised that political cases should be withdrawn, this could be done only if there is a GR to that effect. The government had issued its last GR on withdrawal of political cases in January 2015... it had stated that cases lodged up to November 1, 2014, which are political in nature, should be withdrawn. However, the Koregaon Bhima cases were registered in January 2018 and therefore, the old GR doesn't

stand," said the official.

"We have written multiple times to the government, suggesting that committees be set up at every district and commissionerates to probe cases registered under their jurisdictions," said the official, adding that they were yet to hear from the home department. The last communication was sent to the department in September. Sources said that among the 54 cases found to be serious, one was in Kolhapur where violent clashes had broken out between the Sainiks and the Dalit agitators and another case registered in Aurangabad where two police officers and eight constables were injured after 3,000 to 3,500 agitators gathered to protest near Cidco police station. The police fired 10 rounds of pellets and lobbed 18 tear gas shells. Another case was registered by Latur police, in which five policemen sustained minor injuries after agitators pelted stone on the police party. When contacted, a home department official said that there was no need to set up a committee at the districts. "CrPC entitles the government to withdraw the cases. So, once we receive the report on the findings of the police on the cases that could be dropped, the government will act accordingly," he said.

J-K: Suspected militants gun down policeman in Sopore

Agency
Srinagar Oct 13,

A policeman was shot dead by suspected militants at his residence in North Kashmir's Sopore town late on Friday night. The policeman, identified as Javid Ahmad, was a resident of Warpora area in Sopore. He was working as a "follower" with the Jammu and Kashmir Police and was posted in nearby Singpora Parihaspora. Superintendent of Police, Sopore, Javid Iqbal told *The*

Indian Express, "He had come home. Three militants came his home and fired at him. He sustained injuries and succumbed." He added that investigations in the case are yet to commence. Soon after the incident, the area was cordoned off and a manhunt was launched to nab the attackers.

A few days ago, a Special Police Officer (SPO) was injured after suspected militants had fired at him in South Kashmir's Pulwama district. Last month three policemen

were killed after they were abducted by suspected militants from their homes in South Kashmir Shopian district and later killed. The killings triggered resignations of SPO's of J&K police on social media. Encounter in Pulwama: One militant killed. One militant was killed in an encounter in South Kashmir's Pulwama district on Saturday morning. A senior police official said that the encounter is over, and the identity of the militant is being ascertained.

BSF conducts free medical camp



IT News
Imphal, Oct 13,

54 Battalion under the aegis of Sector Head quarter, Border Security Force, Koirengai conducted free medical camp and distributed sports items at SMI

Orphanage. Home, Churachandpur. During the Camp Medical Officer and supporting staff of 54 Bn BSF provided consultation and free medicines to the inmates of the orphanage. Later, Sh MKT Simte, 2 i/c of 54 Bn BSF

distributed various sports items to the SMI Orphanage. Speaking on the sidelines, he highlighted the various initiatives of Battalion through its Civic Action Programs for making cordial relation with the civil populace of the area.

Supreme Court rejects Congress pleas on VVPAT, draft voter list format

Agency
New Delhi Oct 13,

The Supreme Court Friday dismissed petitions filed by Congress leaders Kamal Nath and Sachin Pilot who had sought directions to the Election Commission to conduct Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) verification on random basis for 10 per cent of votes in poll-bound Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan and to provide soft copies of the draft electoral rolls for Madhya Pradesh in text format.

Justices A K Sikri and Ashok Bhushan, who went into the conduct of election rules, rejected the petitions, saying it was "of the opinion that the format in which the draft electoral roll is supplied to the petitioner fulfils the requirement contained in the Election Manual". On the plea for random VVPAT verification, the bench noted that similar prayers had been raised in an earlier petition and the Attorney General had then informed the court that "guidelines have already been brought by the Election Commission of India".

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal had argued that as per this, "the ECI was required to prepare the draft roll in text mode, albeit without photographs". This, he said, was necessary because the search option was available only in text format and only then would political parties be able to analyse and scrutinise the data and give suggestions or submit objections if duplicate or fake voters are found. Sibal said that the voter list for Rajasthan was made available in text format and questioned why the Madhya Pradesh voter list cannot be so provided. Countering this, the ECI said it had put out the voter list on its website in text mode and even images on the website were in text mode and



public domain, at Chief Electoral Officer's website, in a PDF format on the same day. The draft roll shall be put on website in a text mode and no photographs would appear against the elector's details. Instead, it would indicate in the box meant for the photograph of elector whether the photograph is available or not.

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Sibal said that the voter list for Rajasthan was made available in text format and questioned why the Madhya Pradesh voter list cannot be so provided. Countering this, the ECI said it had put out the voter list on its website in text mode and even images on the website were in text mode and

that it had taken a "conscious decision not to give copies of these voter list to the political parties in scannable text mode keeping in view the issue of privacy of voters".

The Commission also informed the court about the representation dated June 3, 2018 that it received from the Congress party regarding the entries in the rolls and said it had carried out the corrections on May 25 itself, even before receipt of the complaint.

The judgment noted that "the ECI also accepts that during the process of continuous updation from January 19, 2018 to July 31, 2018, there was a net deletion of around 24 lakhs entries from the electoral roll and it is also correct that more than 2 lakh photo entries were flagged as being unclear/blank/ repeated photos but out of these entries, 1,04,284 entries were found to be valid and only 97,687 entries had to be corrected during the aforementioned continuous updation of the electoral roll". Senior advocate Vikas Singh and advocate Amit Sharma, who appeared for the ECI, told the court that supplying voter list in text form will enable data

mining of various nature. The court, which went into the question, praised the role of the ECI and said "there is no doubt about the bonafides of the ECI. It is a matter of record that in the last 25-30 years, ECI has built up the reputation of an impartial body which strives to hold fair elections. It is a Constitutional Authority and has been discharging its functions quite satisfactorily. People of this country, by and large, trust this institution for its impartial manner of discharging its functions". After examining the rules, the court concluded "The clause nowhere says that the draft electoral roll has to be put up on the Chief Electoral Officer's website in a 'searchable PDF'. Therefore, the petitioner cannot claim, as a right, that the draft electoral roll should be placed on the website in a 'searchable mode'. It has only to be in 'text mode' and it is so provided". The court said that if the petitioner wanted, "he can always convert it into searchable mode which, of course, would require him to put his own efforts".

Lakshya Sen wins silver at Youth Olympics

Emulates Pronnoy as India adds a badminton medal after 8 years

From a correspondent
New Delhi, Oct. 13,

India's Lakshya Sen settled for the silver medal after he went down to China's Li Shifeng 15-21, 19-21 in the men's singles badminton final at Youth Olympics Games in Buenos Aires late last night. The final lasted for 42 minutes.

Thus, the rising badminton star and World Junior No. 3, Sen became the second Indian only after H.S. Prannoy who achieved the honour eight years ago in Singapore. The former Junior World No. 1 Sen, who won a dramatic semifinal against Japanese Kodai Naraoka the previous evening, could not repeat his performance against the Chinese who maintained a good lead from the beginning to wrap up the first game in mere 17 minutes.

The Indian found it difficult to cope with the pace of the Chinese who not only sent

down withering smashes but also the clever use of drop shots to keep Sen engaged. Li, who hit a nice tempo in the opening act, marked by pinpoint clears to the deep with constricting net game brooked little challenge from Sen.

However, the fourth seeded Indian, playing a better game, matched his rival's stroke for stroke and kept within reach just after the midway of the second game, only to lose steam despite holding four match points. The Chinese, handling the crunch situation pushed for the win without dropping a game.

Sen admitting to his early mistakes gave full credit to his Chinese rival. "He was very good and won the crucial points. I couldn't push myself tough I managed to prolong the inevitable," said Sen after his final. "But I am happy to be the second Indian to bring back a medal in badminton from such an elite

championship," he added. It was a sort of a revenge for the Chinese whom the Indian had beaten in the quarterfinals of the Asian Championships earlier this year.

Congratulating on his silver-medal performance, BAI President Himanta Biswa Sarma said, "Lakshya (Sen) is a world class prospect and I would like to congratulate him on his medal winning performance at the Youth Olympics. I was particularly happy with the way he fought his way back in the semifinals and can certainly say that World Badminton has a new rising star in him", said the BAI Chief. He showed tremendous character and fighting spirit and this surely is not the end of it," he further added.

Ajay K Singhana, Secretary General of BAI, too complimented the reigning Asian Junior Champion. "You did us all proud. On behalf of the entire BAI I congratulate you on your medal win as you add the seventh medal to the list of wins at the 2018 Youth Olympics," he said, in his congratulatory message to Lakshya.

Lakshya, next plays the World Juniors in Markham (Canada) from November 5 to 18 and is a part of the 24-member Indian squad.

Name changed

I, the undersigned, Nongthombam Sanjit Singh of Khurai Thangiam Leikai, P.O Lamlong, PS Porompat, Pin No. 795010 Imphal East, Manipur, do hereby declare that, I am the father of Teresa Nongthombam and that she had renounced, abandoned and relinquished the use of her earlier name Nongthombam Teresa Devi as she has assumed her new name Teresa Nongthombam.

Sd/-
Nongthombam Sanjit Singh
Khurai Thangiam Leikai
Imphal East