

Madhya Pradesh bandh today: Upper castes anger over SC/ST Act amendment brews

Courtesy Indian Express New Delhi, Sept. 6

Five months after Madhya Pradesh witnessed caste violence over alleged dilution of SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, the ruling BJP is facing heat over the amendment to the Act that reversed the effects of a Supreme Court order concerning the law. Upper-caste protesters have been targeting elected representatives over the issue. "Bring a sword and slit my throat," BJP MP Riti Pathak told protesters who gheraoed her vehicle in Biohari, part of the Sidhi constituency she represents, on Monday. "I tried to reason with them for half-an-hour. I told them I was not the only person voting, my presence or absence would have made no difference (to the passage of the Bill), but they continued to argue," Pathak told The Indian Express, admitting that it would impact campaigning. A day earlier, a shoe was thrown at Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan when he was addressing a public meeting in Sidhi as part of his Jan Ashirwad Yatra. While the BJP claimed the Congress was behind the attack and disturbances during the yatra, some upper-caste protesters raised slogans against the BJP for passing the legislation. Elected and non-elected members of both the major parties were avoiding taking a stand on the protests saying "it's a sensitive issue".

A BJP Rajya Sabha member said the protests would die down soon because they were reactionary. "Most of the protesters are unemployed and are taking out their anger against something that is enshrined in the Constitution. We have only restored what was there in the Constitution for decades," he said, adding that the protests will have no impact on the upcoming elections. Admitting that he was also targeted by protesters, he said he told the group that he himself belongs to an upper caste. Over the past few days, the state has witnessed protests in districts like Morena, Bhind, Gwalior, Mandasaur and Neemuch, with upper-caste people — and at many places people belonging to Other Backward Classes — joining hands to gherao legislators, demanding that reservation be rolled back and the checks introduced by the apex court be re-introduced. BJP leaders, including state BJP chief Rakesh Singh, Bhagirath Prasad, Prabhat Jha, Maya Singh, Rustam

Singh and Narendra Tomar, and Congress leaders like Kamal Nath, Jyotiraditya Scindia and Digvijaya Singh have got a taste of the protests. On Tuesday, a Swabhiman Sammelan was held at Gwalior where members of Kshatriya Mahasabha, Gurjar Mahasabha and Parshuram Sena and other organisations gathered against the amendment to the Act. District authorities had taken adequate precautions and no untoward incident was reported. The state government has also decided to take adequate precautionary measures in view of a bandh called on social media by general category and OBC members on Thursday. Though no organisation has officially taken responsibility for the bandh call, the state government has decided not to withdraw extra security personnel deployed in cities and towns in view of Janmashtami celebrations. In fact, additional forces were deployed in many parts of the state on the eve of the bandh call given by several organisations.

Certificate lost

I have lost my original certificate of X, bearing roll No 11340 of 1980 issued by Board of Secondary Education Manipur on the way between Thoubal and Heirok Bazar on 3/9/2018. Finders are requested to handover the same to the undersigned.

Sd/-
Khundongbam Harigopal Singh
Heirok Bazar
Contact No. 8014130879 &
7005465301

Supreme Court extends house arrest of rights activists till Sept. 12

Courtesy - The Hindu New Delhi, Sept 6,

The Supreme Court on Thursday extended till September 12, the house arrest of five rights activists in connection with the violence in Koregaon-Bhima in Maharashtra. A bench headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra took umbrage over the statements given by the Assistant Commissioner of Police of Pune on the matter, saying he was casting aspersions on the court.

The bench, which also comprised Justices A.M. Khanwilkar and D.Y. Chandrachud, told the Maharashtra government to make its police officials "more responsible" on matters pending before the court. "You must ask your police officials to be more responsible. The matter is before us and we don't want to hear from police officials that the Supreme Court is wrong," the bench told ASG Tushar Mehta, who was appearing for Maharashtra government.

On Wednesday, the Maharashtra govt told the apex court that the members of banned organisation, CPI (Maoist), were preparing for large scale violence and an "armed rebellion."

Poser to Romila Thapar

The bench also asked petitioner Romila Thapar and others to satisfy it on whether a third party could intervene in a criminal case. Meanwhile, Mr. Mehta told the bench that keeping the activists under house arrest would hamper the ongoing investigation. The bench posted the matter for further hearing on September 12.

The Maharashtra government had on Wednesday told the apex court that the five rights activists were arrested due to the cogent evidence linking them with the banned CPI(Maoist) and not because of their dissenting views.

Who are those rights activists

Varavara Rao

A renowned Telugu poet and writer, he founded Virasam (Revolutionary Writers' Association) and is also known for espousing radical causes. A vocal advocate of tribal rights, he has been arrested by successive governments for his views.

Vernon Gonsalves

He is a writer, social activist and trade unionist, who was arrested in 2007 under similar charges. The security agencies had filed 20 cases against him, of which he was acquitted in 17. He was formerly a professor at a prominent Mumbai college.

Sudha Bhardwaj

A trade union activist, lawyer and visiting professor at the National Law University, Delhi, she is also the national secretary of the People's Union for Civil Liberties. She holds a mathematics degree from the prestigious IIT Kanpur.

Arun Ferreira

A human rights activist and lawyer, who was arrested on charges of sedition under the UAPA in 2007. In 2012, he was acquitted and released.

Gautam Navlakha

He is a human rights activist, a member of People's Union for Democratic Rights, a journalist (formerly editorial consultant with the journal Economic & Political Weekly). In 2011, he was refused entry into Kashmir at Srinagar airport and was forced to return to Delhi.

Anand Telumbe

He is a civil rights activist and a noted columnist. He teaches data analytics at the Goa Institute of Management. His latest book Republic of Caste on the dalit movement in India, was released recently.



'Planning for armed rebellion'

The State police had filed the affidavit in response to a plea of Ms. Thapar and four others, challenging the arrest of the five activists in connection with the Koregaon-Bhima violence case, and claimed that they were planning to carry out violence in the country and ambush the security forces.

While prominent Telugu poet Varavara Rao was arrested from Hyderabad, activists Vernon Gonsalves and Arun Ferreira were nabbed from Mumbai, trade union activist Sudha Bharadwaj from Faridabad and civil liberties activist Gautam Navlakha was arrested from Delhi.

The raids were carried out as part of a probe into an event called Elgar Parishad, or conclave, on December 31 last year, which had later triggered violence at Koregaon-Bhima village in Pune district of Maharashtra.

A relative of poet Varavara Rao on Tuesday had accused Pune Police of "forcing" him and his wife Hemalatha to sign a 'punchnama' in Marathi language.

Varavara Rao was arrested from his residence in Hyderabad by police from Pune and presented before a Nampally criminal court. Police are likely to shift him to Pune.

"Both Rao and his wife Hemalatha don't know Marathi... they were forced to sign on the punchnama written in Marathi," journalist N. Venugopal, the son-in-law of Rao, told the media here. According to Venugopal, as per the law the punchnama -- a document prepared by police and signed by respectable witnesses -- should be in a language the accused is familiar with.

"Without any search warrant, they (police) entered his house, snatched away cell phones. They also disconnected the land line phone and intercom and kept Rao incommunicado for eight hours," he claimed.

As for Rao's health, Venugopal said: "He is 78-year-old, has so many ailments and needs regular medicines."

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Proletarian Feminist Movement, Manipur - PoFM

Socialist Women Association - SWA Manipur



MPPDU



SSUM



PoFM

Quake in northern Japan kills two, causes landslides, blackout

Agency Tokyo, Sept. 6

A powerful earthquake rocked Japan's northernmost main island of Hokkaido early on Thursday, triggering landslides that crushed homes, knocking out power and forcing a nuclear power plant to switch to a backup generator. The magnitude 6.7 earthquake struck southern Hokkaido at 3:08 a.m. at the depth of 40 kilometres (24 miles), Japan's Meteorological Agency said. The epicenter was east of the city of Tomakomai but the shaking buckled roads and damaged homes in Hokkaido's prefectural capital of Sapporo, with a population of 1.9 million. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told a news conference that two people had been confirmed dead. He did not give details.

Japan is used to dealing with disasters, but the last few months have brought a string of calamities. The quake came on the heels of a

typhoon that wreaked havoc in western Japan, leaving the main airport near Osaka and Kobe closed after a tanker rammmed a bridge connecting the facility to the mainland.

The summer also brought devastating floods from torrential rains in Hiroshima and deadly hot temperatures across the country.

The Japanese national broadcaster NHK, citing its own tally, reported that 125 people were injured and nearly 40 are feared missing. Hokkaido's local disaster agency put the number of injured at 48.

Several people were reported missing in the nearby town of Atsuma, where a massive landslide engulfed homes in an avalanche of soil, rocks and timber.

Reconstruction Minister Jiro Akama told reporters that five people were believed to be buried in the town's Yoshino district. Some of the 40 people stranded there were airlifted to safer grounds, NHK said. Aerial views showed dozens of landslides in the surrounding area, with

practically every mountainside a raw slash of brown amid deep green forest.

Airports and many roads on the island were closed following the early morning quake. NHK showed workers rushing to clean up shattered glass and reinstall ceiling panels that had tumbled down in the region's biggest airport at Chitose.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said that 25,000 troops and other personnel would be dispatched to the area to help with rescue operations. NHK showed the moment the quake struck the city of Muroran, with its camera violently shaking and all city lights going black moment later. In Sapporo, a mudslide on a road left several cars half buried.

Power was knocked out for Hokkaido's 2.9 million households. Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Hiroshige Seko told reporters that the extensive power outage was caused by an emergency shutdown of the main thermal power

plant at Tomato Atsuma that supplies half of Hokkaido's electricity.

The hope had been to get power back up "within a few hours," Mr. Seko said. However, damage to three generators at the Tomato Atsuma plant means that the restoration of power could take more than a week.

Mr. Seko said utilities were planning to start up several other thermal and hydroelectric plants to provide at least some power. Altogether peak demand on the island averages 3.8 million kilowatts, stopgap supplies from smaller plants and from the nearby Tohoku region could bring supplies up to 2.9 million kilowatts within days, Mr. Seko said. However, that would leave a shortfall of roughly 900,000 kilowatts, causing inconveniences to many in Hokkaido.

In the meantime, authorities sent power-generator vehicles to hospitals so enable them to treat emergency patients, he said.