

AAP, student leaders among 700 detained as protesters take to streets seeking CEC's ouster

NEW DELHI, OCT 2: As opposition parties and student outfits took to the streets on Friday demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, Delhi Police detained more than 700 protesters from Jantar Mantar and several locations nearby, including former Delhi chief minister Atishi.

Slogans including "Ek ka-chori, do samosa, Gyanesh tumhara kya bharosa" and "Gali-gali mein shor hai, Modi-Gyanesh vote chor hai" were raised during the protest.

The protesters, including AAP leaders and members of AISA, SFI, NSUI and other student and youth organisations, are demanding Kumar's resignation over the alleged irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and mass deletion of voters.

AAP leaders Saurabh Bharadwaj and Sanjeev Jha, along with some party workers, were detained at Jantar Mantar, while other protesters were detained at different locations as they tried to reach the protest site.

Atishi and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh were also among those detained. Police stopped Singh at North Avenue while he was on his way to the protest.

A police source said around 700 SFI members trying to reach Jantar Mantar at around 11 am were stopped at the Ashoka Road roundabout, with many of them detained.

Another police official said around 700 protesters, including AAP leaders and members of AISA, SFI, NSUI and other student organisations, were detained from Jantar Mantar and nearby areas.

Several NSUI activists, in-



cluding its national president Vinod Jakhar, were also detained from the protest site. Jakhar was detained during a foot march from the organisation's office towards Jantar Mantar.

In a post on X, he said several NSUI activists had been taken into custody and alleged that activists were subjected to police action during the march.

"The voice of the people's votes cannot be suppressed by the might of any power," he said, adding that the organisation's "peaceful struggle for democracy" would continue.

Wearing masks bearing the faces of the CEC and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Indian Youth Congress protesters marched from the IYC office on Raisina Road, moving towards Jantar Mantar as they raised slogans and carried posters and banners demanding accountability from Kumar.

IYC president Uday Bhanu Chib led the demonstration, with the youth wing announcing plans to gherao the Election Commission office.

"We are protesting because the Election Commission is responsible for protecting the sanctity of every vote. When questions are being raised within the Commission itself over decisions

concerning electoral rolls, the country deserves answers and accountability," Chib said.

Police said permission had not been granted for the proposed gathering and deployed additional personnel and barricades in and around Jantar Mantar.

Prohibitory orders were also imposed in the area to prevent an unauthorised gathering.

Several protesters were seen trying to cross barricades at Firoz Shah Road as police attempted to stop them from reaching the protest site.

Police personnel also made repeated public announcements asking people not to gather at Jantar Mantar as no gathering had been permitted there.

In a video message, Bharadwaj said police had told them that permission had not been granted for the protest. He questioned why permission was needed to hold a demonstration in a democracy when Jantar Mantar was a designated protest site.

He said the party had submitted letters seeking permission about a week earlier and added, "We are exercising our democratic right to raise our concerns."

Bharadwaj also appealed to people to travel to the

nearest open metro station and, if possible, walk to the protest site, saying several stations near Jantar Mantar had been closed.

After being stopped from reaching the protest site, Singh said he was sitting on a dharna in front of the statue of Mahatma Gandhi in the Parliament premises against "vote theft".

"The end of dictatorship will come, Modi-Gyanesh will have to go," he said.

SFI general secretary Aishe Ghosh said several SFI and DYFI activists had been detained.

"Delhi Police is not being able to stop crimes in the capital but when it comes to the protection of someone like Gyanesh Kumar, they get down on the streets," Ghosh said.

"This is not democracy. If police think they can stop the movement by detaining us, we want to tell them that this is just the start," she said.

AISA activists alleged that police used force against protesters, including women, during the detentions.

An AISA activist, while being detained, said, "No matter how much lathi charge you use or no matter how many of us you put in jail, Gyanesh Kumar has to resign."

The protest is a part of a wider mobilisation by political parties, student organisations and civil society members against the SIR exercise and the Election Commission.

The Delhi Metro temporarily closed entry and exit at 12 stations in central Delhi, including Rajiv Chowk, Central Secretariat and Jantar Mantar, as part of security arrangements around the protest. Internet services were also suspended at the protest site and in surrounding areas. (Agencies)

path will come from India," he said.

He said India possessed a vast knowledge tradition comprising the Vedas, Upanishads, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Gita, Jain Agamas, Tripitaka, Guru Granth Sahib and the teachings of saints. "Our country has a very great treasure of knowledge, which the world needs today. One can come closer to the Almighty through the strength of devotion," he said.

According to Bhagwat, preserving the lives and traditions of those who carry this knowledge was not merely a religious responsibility but a service to humanity. "You are not protecting just one life. You are protecting the safe future of the entire human race," he said. (Agencies)



tal protection, individual freedom and family life, and religious faith and conflict.

"The world is troubled. Every happiness remains incomplete, every aspiration comes with some loss, and every loyalty is tied to another loyalty. There is no balance; there is extremism," he

said. Bhagwat said the world was looking towards India for a way out of these contradictions, recalling that India had historically shared its knowledge without seeking to conquer other countries or convert people.

"The world knows that the

Dharma And Rashtra Inseparable; India Has A Role To Play In Troubled World: Bhagwat

MUMBAI, OCT 2: RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat on Friday said dharma and rashtra are not separate in India and asserted that the country's spiritual knowledge has a role to play in addressing several challenges confronting the world.

"Our rashtra (nation) and dharma are not separate. The purpose of the nation is dharma, and dharma helps sustain the nation. The two are interdependent. If one exists, the other also exists; if one does not exist, the other also does not," Bhagwat said here.

Addressing the 14th conference of the All India Vihar Seva group, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief said the world was facing dilemmas involving development and environmen-

RS polls: Mayawati slams SP for 'dynastic politics, favouring capitalists'

LUCKNOW, OCT 2: BSP president Mayawati on Friday accused the Samajwadi Party of practising dynastic politics and favouring wealthy industrialists, alleging that its recent Rajya Sabha nominations contradicted its claims of representing the backward, Dalit and minority communities.

In a post on X, the former Uttar Pradesh chief minister alleged that the SP sought votes in the name of PDA (Pichhda, Dalit, Alp-sankhyak) but preferred members of its own families and big industrialists for positions such as MPs and MLAs.

Mayawati cited the SP's decision to renominate senior party leader Ram Gopal Yadav, uncle of party president Akhilesh Yadav, and field Reliance Industries ex-



ecutive Dhanraj Parimal Nathwani for the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections from Uttar Pradesh as a recent example of what she described as the party's contradictory politics.

She also questioned the SP's possible decision to field a third candidate, suggesting that the move could be aimed at saving face despite

the possibility of losing the election.

"SP wants votes in the name of PDA, but makes mostly its own family members and big capitalists MPs and MLAs," Mayawati said, urging people not to be misled by the party's PDA narrative.

She claimed that "the BSP, unlike the SP and other rival

parties, did not rely on family members, relatives or wealthy industrialists for its electoral candidates, but instead fielded dedicated Ambedkarite workers from poor, middle-class and weaker sections of society."

Describing the BSP's politics as "free from dynastic considerations and the influence of money power", Mayawati alleged that "the SP's claims of being a socialist party and representing PDA were a political pretence".

She urged poor people from upper castes and members of the "Bahujan Samaj", including Dalits, tribals, extremely backward classes, Muslims and other religious minorities, to remain vigilant ahead of the 2027 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections.

Vice president pays tributes to Mahatma Gandhi, Lal Bahadur Shastri and Kamraj

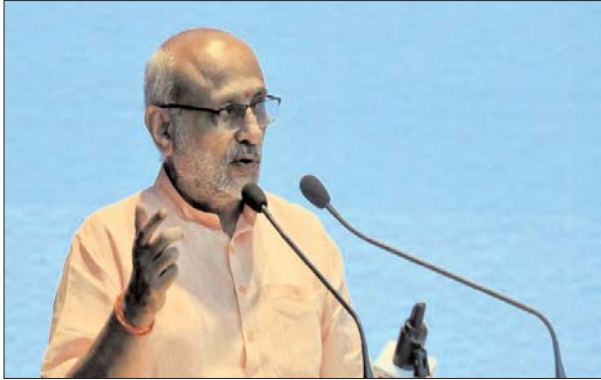
NEW DELHI, OCT 2: Vice President C P Radhakrishnan on Friday paid floral tributes and offered homage to Mahatma Gandhi and former prime minister Lal Bahadur Shastri on their birth anniversaries.

He also offered homage to former Tamil Nadu chief minister K Kamaraj on his death anniversary.

At Raj Ghat, the vice president paid tributes, offering homage to Mahatma Gandhi.

Recalling his enduring legacy, Radhakrishnan said Gandhi's unwavering faith in truth and non-violence, steadfast commitment to justice and profound belief in the dignity of every individual continue to inspire humanity.

Radhakrishnan said Mahatma Gandhi's life and message remain an enduring



beacon of peace, compassion, selflessness and service, an official statement read.

He called upon everyone to reaffirm their commitment to the values cherished by Mahatma Gandhi and dedicate themselves to building a just, harmonious and inclusive society.

At Vijay Ghat, the vice president paid floral tributes to Lal Bahadur Shastri on his birth anniversary.

Describing Shastri as a leader of quiet strength and extraordinary resolve, Radhakrishnan said that he exemplified humility, integrity and unwavering commitment to the nation.

The vice president recalled that, at a defining moment in India's journey, Shastri's leadership instilled confidence and unity, and his call of "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan" gave enduring recognition to

the sacrifices of the nation's soldiers and the vital contribution of its farmers.

At Uprashtrapati Bhavan, the vice president paid tributes to K Kamaraj on his death anniversary, recalling his outstanding contribution to public life and nation-building.

Describing Kamaraj as a towering statesman and a true people's leader, Radhakrishnan said that he devoted his life to the service of the nation and the welfare of the common people.

He said Kamaraj lived his entire life guided by Gandhian thought and made lasting contributions to the development of Tamil Nadu by expanding roads and educational institutions, introducing the midday meal programme and bringing new hope to the lives of the poor. (PTI)

Cong accuses EC of 'lying' about ECINet, calls for accountability

NEW DELHI, OCT 2: The Congress on Friday accused the Election Commission of "lying" about the ECINet portal and violating The Representation of the People Act, as it stressed on accountability for the "violations of the law and the Constitution".

Congress general secretary in-charge Jairam Ramesh said that in its "damage control but actually damage enhancing" press note on September 26, 2026 the Election Commission of India had promised a committee to certify that the legally suspect ECINet "complies with the provisions of the Acts and Rules".

"In reality, this should never have been in doubt at all in the first place if the intentions of the CEC Gyanesh Kumar were honest - which they were not," Ramesh said. ECINet was launched on January 22, 2026 with much fanfare to "enhance transparency, credibility and public trust", he said.

The ECI press note of that day assured the country that it "has been developed in strict accordance with the law" and in full compliance with the Constitution of India, the Representation of the People Acts, 1950 and



1951, and Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, he said on X.

"All of this was a lie," the Congress general secretary claimed. By restricting access of Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) to the ECINet voter roll system and by overruling EROs in states like Goa, West Bengal and others, the ECI controlled by the CEC has violated The Representation of the People Act, 1950 and the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960," Ramesh said. Both these laws establish that the ERO has statutory authority over the electoral roll, he said.

After the revelations last week, the Maharashtra CEO wrote to the ECI on September 24, 2026 asking for a correction of this illegal state of

affairs, Ramesh pointed out.

"Starting today, the INDIA janbandhan, citizens and many civil society organisations will hit the streets across the country demanding accountability for these violations of the law and the Constitution," Ramesh said. The Congress on Thursday had said the chorus of voices against the capture of the electoral system is getting louder and asserted that citizens will no longer tolerate "vote chori" in any form.

The opposition INDIA bloc on Wednesday announced joint 'save democracy' marches in all districts and five major rallies, demanded that future polls be held with ballot paper and appealed to the Supreme Court to expedite cases of

Picnic turns into tragedy as 8 students drown off Diveagar beach in Maharashtra's Raigad

MUMBAI, OCT 2 : Eight male students of a private coaching institute drowned in the Arabian Sea while on a picnic at the popular Diveagar beach in Maharashtra's Raigad district on Thursday, with the bodies of all the victims recovered, police said.

These students of Class XI and XII were part of a group from coaching institute 'Winners Academy' based at Alandi in Pune district, they said.

Located around 170 km from Mumbai, Diveagar is famous for its beach and historic temples.

A police official said a group of 48 -- 25 boys, 17 girls and six teachers -- had gone for a picnic at the beach under Dighi coastal police station limits.

Eight students ventured into the sea and were swept away after misjudging the depth of the water and current, he added.

Search and rescue teams rushed to the spot following an alert and recovered the bodies, he said.

Police identified the deceased as Yash Kiran Wankhede, Soham Tukaram Bhandwalkar, Tanmay Datatray Vahile, Kaustubh



Sandeep Daund, Kaivalya Satish Wasankar, Rajveer Yuvraj Vahile, Pranav Ramdas Bansod and Sumit Bharat Ahire. All of them were 16 years old.

Terming the incident as "heart-breaking", Shiv Sena MLA Mahendra Dalvi, who represents the Alibag assembly constituency in Raigad district, blamed the local administration for the "lack of adequate safety precautions".

"Such incidents keep happening there time and again, so the local administration

must take safety precautions. Young schoolchildren may not be able to assess the risks posed by the sea, including high tide and the depth of water," he said.

"Schoolchildren have no idea about the sea. It's not a pond, it's the sea....They cannot gauge the high tide or the depth of the water. Moreover, these children might not even know how to swim," Dalvi said, urging the local MLA and MP to look into the issue.

Prashant Kurhade, chairman of the Alandi Municipal

Council, told PTI that some of the students were from Alandi town itself, while others were from neighbouring Kelgaon.

"We have been contacting the families," he said, adding that some of the parents had already left for Diveagar.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis in a post on X termed the deaths as extremely tragic and painful.

Condoling with the families who lost their children, he said the local administration was coordinating the transportation of the bodies.