

AISA activists return to Jantar Mantar; around 150 protesters detained

NEW DELHI, OCT 3: Around 150 protesters, including AISA national president Neha Bora, activist Yogendra Yadav and senior advocate Prashant Bhushan, were detained on Saturday as they marched from Patel Chowk towards Jantar Mantar to protest against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and demand his resignation, an official said.

AISA members said senior advocates Kapil Sibal, Nitya Ramakrishnan, Pallav Sisodia and Prashant Bhushan, along with activist Yogendra Yadav, joined Bora and other students during the march.

Police began detaining protesters as they gathered near the protest site, with security personnel deployed at multiple points and barricades placed on roads leading towards Jantar Mantar.

AISA members alleged that a male police officer manhandled Bora during the police action and that another Delhi Police officer abused her. The allegations could not be independently verified immediately.

The fresh mobilisation came after Bora, who was among those detained on Friday, called on activists to return to Jantar Mantar at 1 pm and continue their protest demanding Kumar's resignation and raising concerns over the SIR of electoral rolls.

The development comes a day after nearly 1,000 protesters were detained from Jantar Mantar and surrounding areas as police and paramilitary personnel prevented large groups from



reaching the protest site. Many of those detained were subsequently released.

Delhi Police has registered at least three FIRs in connection with Friday's protests, two at Parliament Street police station and one at Connaught Place police station, under Section 223 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) for alleged disobedience of an order duly promulgated by a public servant.

No individual or organisation has been named as an accused in the FIRs, though details of the organisers and organisations that proposed or participated in the demonstrations have been mentioned in their contents, a senior police officer said.

The FIRs relate to alleged violations of prohibitory orders imposed across the New Delhi district under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS),

which prohibited gatherings of five or more people, processions, demonstrations, picketing, dharnas and slogan shouting without prior written permission.

On Friday evening, Bora said in a video message that the protest would continue and urged activists to return to Jantar Mantar. She said the detentions would not intimidate protesters and called for continued mobilisation in support of the demand for Kumar's resignation. The protesters are opposing the SIR exercise and alleging irregularities in the revision of electoral rolls.

Delhi Police had denied permission for Friday's gathering and imposed heightened security measures in central Delhi. Several roads were barricaded and entry and exit at a number of Metro stations in the vicinity of Jantar Mantar were temporarily

restricted during Friday's protest.

The second day's mobilisation saw continued police deployment around Jantar Mantar as AISA and other groups pressed ahead with their protest.

The demonstration comes days after The Indian Express reported that Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi objected on record at least 14 times over the last 10 months to decisions and orders on the SIR that they said were issued without their knowledge or recommendation. Under fire over the red flags raised by two of its commissioners over the SIR process, the EC has asserted that differing views and observations are a normal part of deliberations in any institution and that all its orders carry full legal sanction and follow established statutory procedures. (PTI)

IYC Chief Moves Delhi HC Against Denial Of Permission For Jantar Mantar Protest

NEW DELHI, OCT 3: The Indian Youth Congress (IYC) president Uday Bhanu Chib has moved the Delhi High Court challenging the police's refusal to grant permission for a proposed demonstration at Jantar Mantar, arguing that authorities cannot prohibit peaceful assemblies under the guise of regulating them.

According to an official statement, the petition challenges a Delhi Police order dated October 1 rejecting the IYC's request to hold a peaceful demonstration involving around 100-150 people. It contends that the decision was taken without an individualised and proportionate assessment of the proposed gathering.

Filed by party's Legal Department, the petition ar-



gues that the police cannot "convert the power to regulate a peaceful assembly into a power to prohibit it".

The IYC had applied for permission on September 25 and undertaken to comply with all lawful conditions concerning security, traffic, discipline and public order, the statement read.

Despite repeated follow-

ups, the rejection was communicated only on October 1, the first proposed date of the programme, it added.

The petition invokes Articles 14, 19(1)(a) and 19(1)(b) of the Constitution and challenges what it describes as the mechanical application of protest guidelines, the statement read.

The development comes a

day after IYC workers staged a protest against the Election Commission, demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over alleged irregularities in electoral rolls.

Dressed in black robes, white masks and skulls hanging around their necks, the protesters described themselves as "living ghosts" who had allegedly been removed from voter rolls despite being alive.

Led by Chib, the protesters attempted to march from the IYC office on Raisina Road to Jantar Mantar, raising slogans and displaying banners demanding Kumar's resignation. Police stopped them outside the office, IYC workers said. (Agencies)

2,101 Kg Illegal Firecrackers Seized From Two Vehicles, Godown In Delhi, 3 Held

NEW DELHI, OCT 3: The Delhi Police has seized around 2,101 kg of illegal firecrackers from two vehicles and a godown in outernorth Delhi and apprehended three people in connection with the recovery, officials said on Saturday.

Acting on specific information about the transportation of a large consignment of firecrackers from Haryana to Delhi through the Urban Extension Road-II (UER-II) in Bawana, police intercepted two tempo vehicles on October 1, they said.

The vehicles were found carrying around 1,350 kg of firecrackers and both drivers



were apprehended, police said.

During the follow-up investigation, the police traced an additional storage facility

in Alipur, where another 751 kg of firecrackers was recovered, they said.

A man identified as Manoj Kumar (34), a resident of

Tilak Nagar, was found at the godown and apprehended, police said.

The accused were identified as Amit Gupta (42), a resident of Bindapur, Uttam Nagar, and Sunil (42), also from Bindapur, who were allegedly driving the two tempo vehicles, and Manoj Kumar, police said.

A case was registered under sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Explosives Act on October 2, they said.

Necessary legal action will be taken against those found involved on the basis of the investigation and evidence, police said. (Agencies)

Will Help People Where Truth Is Being Crushed: Rahul Gandhi After Launching 'Satyagraha' Platform

NEW DELHI, OCT 3: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday alleged that truth is being suppressed and that it was his responsibility to ensure this did not happen, as he launched the 'Satyagraha' digital platform to consolidate issue-based protests occurring across the country.

He urged people to register their protests against the government on the 'Satyagraha' platform, which he launched a day after the 152nd birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, to help ensure aid for people wherever "truth was being crushed".

"Across the country, people are fighting for their rights - and too often, fighting alone. Gen Z, students, farmers, Adivasis, Dalits, women -- every struggle has its own story. But a lone voice is often easier to silence.

"Satyagraha" is an initiative to bring these voices together on one map," he said



in a post on X.

Invoking Mahatma, the Congress MP said, "Bapu taught us that truth is our greatest weapon. But an even greater weapon is standing together with the truth. If you too are fighting against any injustice, share your story. It will take just two minutes."

Gandhi said their protest will find a place on the Satyagraha map, adding "you will see who else, like you, is

fighting their own battle".

"And I will do whatever I can - in Parliament, on the streets, through letters, wherever I am needed - to stand with you. As the Leader of the Opposition, that is my responsibility. Tell me the story of your Satyagraha..." he said.

In a video posted along with it, the Raebareilly MP said, "As you all know, truth is being suppressed all across

the country, and there are multiple protests happening across the country."

Noting that protests on land, women's rights, Dalit rights, OBC rights, education, and exams are taking place, he said, "And we want to help organise these protests, put them together on one map, and work together with you to see if we can help you resolve what you're fighting for. Take a look at the Satyagraha website. Fill out the form. Enroll your movement on the website, and we will try to see how we can support you. We'll be in touch."

"As the leader of the opposition, it's important for me to help people resist where truth is being crushed. The truth is important. It's important at the highest levels, but it's important that we fight for it in every corner of the country," Gandhi said in his video message. (Agencies)

NEW DELHI, OCT 3: Prime Minister Narendra Modi was aware of the Election Commission's IT division restricting the access of electoral registration officers to the ECINet portal, as pointed out by two election commissioners.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh claimed that the complaint of the two election commissioners had gone to the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), for which the minister responsible is the prime minister himself, and it is likely that the decision was taken at his direction.

Ramesh pointed to a media report claiming that the officer about whom the two election commissioners had complained to the Cabinet secretary in July continues to be the key pivot in the Election Commission.

"Instead of action being taken against him, the officer is now overseeing the controversial IT division of the Election Commission," Ramesh said in a post on X.

The Congress leader said



the letter to the Cabinet secretary "was prompted by an order from the officer that removed oversight from the IT division to enable it to continue functioning without any transparency".

"We now learn that since August, the officer has been given the power to oversee the IT division. So, the ECI's deceptive clarification in its press note released on September 26 was to hide the real story," Ramesh alleged.

The two election commissioners had pointed out that the IT division was restricting the access of electoral

registration officers (EROs) to the ECINet voter roll portal and overriding the statutory authority of the EROs over deletions/additions in the rolls, Ramesh said.

"The complaint reached the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), for which the minister responsible is the prime minister himself. So the prime minister is aware of all this, and it is likely taking place on his direction.

"It appears that Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and the prime minister himself have kept the par-

ticular officer in place to retain their centralised control over the entire system. The 'Vote Chori' operation is becoming clearer by the day," Ramesh alleged.

The Congress has been questioning the functioning of the Election Commission under Gyanesh Kumar, seeking his ouster.

The allegations have been surfacing ever since a report in The Indian Express claimed that two election commissioners -- Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi -- had objected on record at least 14 times over the last 10 months to decisions and orders on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise that they said were issued without their knowledge or recommendation.

Under fire over the red flags raised by the two commissioners, the EC has clarified that differing views and observations are a normal part of deliberations in any institution and that all its orders carry full legal sanction and follow established statutory procedures. (Agencies)

CJP Stresses Non-Violence, Urges Citizens To Join Oct 10 Delhi Protest

NEW DELHI, OCT 3: The CJP on Saturday stressed that its proposed October 10 protest in Delhi would be peaceful and urged every citizen seeking free and fair elections to join the agitation if Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar does not resign.

The Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) has been demanding Kumar's resignation, citing alleged irregularities in the electoral processes and the conduct of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise.

In a statement released here on Saturday, CJP founder and convener Abhijeet Dipke said citizens and movement members from every corner of the country would converge in New Delhi and launch a mass



protest at Jantar Mantar if Kumar did not step down.

"If Gyanesh Kumar doesn't resign, cockroaches from across India will march to Delhi and protest at Jantar Mantar on October 10," Dipke said.

"And if the Delhi Police tries to stop us, wherever they stop us will become our

Jantar Mantar. Ours will be a peaceful protest. We will walk on the path shown by Mahatma Gandhi," he said.

The Delhi protest would "strictly follow a non-violent philosophy", drawing "structural inspiration from historic civil disobedience to protect public faith in democratic institutions", accord-

ing to the statement.

The CJP leadership said "bureaucratic blockades" would not deter the movement, pointing to previous prolonged demonstrations and recent detentions as proof of its resolve.

"This is a fight to save our democracy," Dipke said. "Every citizen who wants free and fair elections must join us on October 10."

The statement followed a protest held by the CJP at Mumbai's Shivaji Park on Friday, where thousands of people gathered despite police restrictions to demand Kumar's resignation over the alleged electoral roll irregularities.

The Mumbai protest also featured calls for a fresh agitation in Delhi if Kumar did not step down. (PTI)

Foreigners perform pind daan in Bihar's Gaya Ji during Pitru Paksha

GAYA JI (BIHAR), OCT 2: A number of foreigners from several countries such as Germany, Russia, Ukraine and Ghana on Friday performed pind daan and tarpan on the banks of the Falgu river during the ongoing Pitru Paksha fair in Bihar's Gaya Ji district.

They participated in the rituals according to Hindu traditions amid the chanting of mantras at the Pitru Paksha Mahasagam Mela held in the district from September 25 to October 10, attracting visitors to the river, Vishnupad Temple and various 'pind vedis' (sacred altars) to perform rituals for their ancestors.

Dressed in traditional Indian attire, including saris and dhoti-kurtas, the pilgrims offered prayers at the sacred site and remembered their departed family members and friends.

"People come here to perform rituals for their sons, husbands, brothers and

other relatives. Devotees from several European countries, including Italy, Germany, Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands have arrived to perform the rituals here. Forty-eight people arrived in three batches in two days," said Lok Nath Gaur, a priest.

Some have also come from African countries like Ghana, he said.

The priest recounted instances of pilgrims coming to Gaya Ji after losing loved ones in tragic circumstances, including a woman whose friend had drowned in a river in front of her.

Natalia, a first-time visitor from Milan, Italy, said she was grateful for the opportunity to worship her ancestors in Gaya Ji.

"I am very happy to be here. I express my gratitude to this land for giving us the opportunity to worship our ancestors," she said.

Another young woman from Germany also said she felt "blessed" to be in Gaya Ji to perform the rituals.

"Gaya Ji is a special place with a unique energy, unlike Germany," she said, adding that she had been reading the Bhagavad Gita once a week for about five years to understand Hinduism and Lord Krishna.

The Vishnupad temple here houses a sacred footprint believed to belong to Lord Vishnu. Lord Krishna is his eighth avatar.

Another pilgrim said that her group prepared for the rituals for a year by reading stories and understanding their importance.

Pind Daan is a sacred Hindu ritual performed to honour deceased ancestors and help their souls attain peace and liberation (moksha). (PTI)