

Jignesh Mevani's arrest, a political Vendetta



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Jahir Ahmed Barbhuiya 25 April 2022 Updated 26 Apr 7122 views

Guwahati: Mass protests across the country have been witnessed amidst the arrest of Jignesh Mevani, a dalit leader and an elected representative of the Vadgam constituency in the Gujrat Legislative Assembly, by the Kokrajhar Police, Assam.

Notably on April 20, Kokrajhar Police arrested Jignesh Mevani at midnight from Gujrat for making remarks against Prime Minister Modi on Twitter. Mevani was then brought to Kokrajhar Police station on April 21st and remanded for three days in police custody.

According to police, BTC executive member from BJP and an executive member of the council government in charge of the health and family welfare portfolio, Arup Kumar Dey had lodged an FIR against MLA Mevani in the Kokrajhar Police Station on 19th April. Arup Kumar alleged Mevani for derogatory remarks against PM Modi.

"Negative online posts about PM Modi hurt BJP workers and people should be careful when tweeting about him," Arup told [NDTV](#).

People across the country are rising in dissent, alleging BJP, for curtailing freedom of expression as there was nothing derogatory in that tweet, they claim.

Mevani's tweet reads, "The Prime Minister, who considers Godse his deity, has been in Gujarat since April 20; an appeal to him to appeal for peace and tranquility against the religious clashes that took place in Himmat Nagar, Khambhat and Berabal in Gujarat.

At least this much we can expect from the architect of Mahatma Mandir, isn't it?"



On Sunday, Mevani was sent to judicial custody for a night in the district Jail. The following day, the latter was produced before the CJM amidst a strong security vigil. While several learned advocates from Guwahati, Bongaigaon, Dhubri and Kokrajhar came forward to extend legal help on behalf of Mevani, they managed to get him bail.

However, Mevani was rearrested by the Barpeta Police on the same day. According to reports, a new FIR was known to be lodged against Mevani, registered no. 81/22. No sooner had he managed bail, he was brought to Barpeta Police Station under strict security norms by Kokrajhar.

According to sources, he has been rearrested under sections 294 (obscene act in public), 323 (punishment for voluntary causing hurt), 353 (obstructing public servant availing his duty) and 354 (Assault or criminal force on woman with intent to outrage her modesty) by the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

MLA Mevani said that the arrest has been made under a deep conspiracy against him. He has accused that this is a political tactic to make bad image on him.

"The BJP and RSS have been trying to destroy me with tarnishing tactics. They want to destroy me as they systematically target me," Mevani told the media.

Amidst confirming Mevani's rearrest, his advocate Angshuman Bora informs 'The Wire' that since he was not handed a copy of the FIR in the new case registered by Barpeta Police, he can only presume what the accusations against Mevani might be.

“I was not handed a copy of the FIR. From what I saw in the remand warrant presented at the chief judicial magistrate’s court by Barpeta Police soon after his bail was granted, sections of the Indian Penal Code like 354 and so on were mentioned. This would then mean that the police were accusing him of outraging the modesty of a woman,” Bora said.

While Assam times accessing the FIR copy, the matter came to light where it states that a female sub-inspector named Debika Brahma had filed a complaint against MLA Mevani with the Barpeta Road Police Station. She accuses Mevani of uttering slang words and misbehaving with her.

She claims she was escorting the arrested accused person Jignesh Mevani in connection with the Kokrajhar case from Guwahati airport to Kokrajhar in a government vehicle along with two other senior police officials that day.

“During the way, just after crossing the Simalguri point of Barpeta district around 1.30 p.m., the arrested accused person uttered slang words towards me. When I asked him to behave properly, he used more slang words. He pointed fingers at me and tried to frighten me and pushed me on my seat with force. He thus assaulted me during the execution of my legal duty of being a public servant and outraged my modesty by touching me inappropriately while pushing,” meant her complaint.



An odd development led the matter while it is seen that Mevani's Lawyer Bora, speaking to the media ,informs, “while there was not even a whisper about this FIR even while the Kokrajhar police was vehemently opposing his bail plea at the lower court hearing on April 24 evening, once the bail was granted, the new case was mentioned and remand granted by the chief judicial magistrate at Kokrajhar.”

Bora further added: "What I saw for the first time in my long legal career yesterday was that after the case was heard, the CJM arrived at court to take possession of the case diary, etc. To this, I objected as the case was already heard by another magistrate and only the order had to be passed. I cited various previous cases to make my point. Outraged at my intervention, the CJM then asked me to leave the court premises, an odd development."

Protests arose across the country, mass people rose in dissent against the undemocratic arrest of MLA Mevani as they had to say. Congress, whom Mevani had held his hand a few days before, is seen organising protests in different places not only in Assam but also in various places of the country.

Many opposition leaders have come forward to protest against this move, Raijor Dal supremo Akhil Gogoi and CPIM MLA Manoronjon Talukdar from Sorbhog constituency have also been seen raising their voices.

Speaking to the media, Akhil Gogoi, claimed this arrest was a 'political vendetta'. Jignesh has been his friend for long and he is a powerful Dalit leader of Gujrat, BJP is trying to ruin his image, Gogoi stated. He further added that there was nothing in that tweet that shall incite enmity between the two communities and he hasn't seen any, happening there, since that tweet. This arrest is baseless and undemocratic, he claims.

"In the next Assembly election, BJP is going to lose control over Gujrat, and if opposition forms the Government, Jignesh shall be appointed as the Deputy CM, which BJP has feared of. So, BJP wants Jignesh behind bars as they did with me before the Assam Assembly election. It is nothing but a political Vendetta", told Gogoi.

Political misuse of the justice system has reached a new extreme. An elected representative of the people in our democracy jailed for a tweet!

Gujarat MLA Jignesh Mevani granted bail in Kokrajhar but arrested again by Barpeta police for a fabricated case.

[#Justice4Jignesh](#)

— Shashi Tharoor (@ShashiTharoor) [April 25, 2022](#)

Peasant Cum, a farmer's rights activist and a spokesperson for Rajor Dal, Bonojit Hussain, speaking to the media, has told me that people around the country can smell the odd. Arrest could have been made from anywhere across the country, and it is precedented of choosing a remote district like Kokrajhar.

During Mevani's rearrest, his lawyer Bora awaits a hearing date for a bail plea and arguments for the imposed sections.

Jahir Ahmed Barbhuiya

Jahir Ahmed Barbhuiya reports from Hailakandi, Assam

BY JAHIR AHMED BARBHUIYA

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