

Tension Erupts at Galia Toll Plaza Over Withdrawal of Local Exemption



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Shajid Khan 16 August 2025 22773 views

Tension flared at the Galia Toll Plaza in Bhawanipur, Bajali district of Lower Assam, after angry residents staged a dramatic protest against the toll authorities on Saturday. Locals accused the plaza staff of harassment and unfair treatment.

The unrest began when residents alleged that the exemption earlier granted to four-wheelers registered in the area had been withdrawn, forcing them to pay charges for using the road. Outraged by the decision, hundreds of locals gathered in front of the toll plaza to demand immediate redress.

The protest escalated dramatically when demonstrators brought in an excavator machine and demolished a wall that obstructed the emergency lane of the plaza.

Speaking to this correspondent, plaza manager Rabi Ranjan Dubey said: “In a democratic country, everyone has the right to protest. We are following NHAI guidelines, and anyone dissatisfied is free to raise their grievances with higher authorities.”

The incident highlights the simmering tensions between toll operators and local residents, who argue that they should not be compelled to pay toll charges for travel within their own region. Toll authorities, however, maintain that the charges are part of the national road maintenance system.

Locals have long accused the Galia Toll Plaza staff of high-handedness and discriminatory behavior. They allege that operators often misbehave with the public—and even with journalists—while showing undue leniency toward ruling party leaders and workers, raising allegations of bias and favoritism.

Protesters have now put forward several demands: Exemption of toll charges for local vehicles, Legal action against toll operators, Immediate transfer of staff.

They have also appealed to Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari to intervene in the matter.

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Recipient of The Annual Colosseum Awards 2014 & 2015 (by The Assam Tribune group), Shajid Khan is an Independent journalist based in Assam. He has contributed numerous political, socio-political stories for bountiful national, international as well as Assam based publications including The New York Times, Firstpost, The Telegraph. He also pens down analytic commentary on print and web based publications.

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