

News

Calcutta High Court refuses to stay foundation stone event for Babri Masjid-inspired mosque



A petition had been filed for orders to halt a foundation-stone event announced by suspended MLA Humayun Kabir.

The Calcutta High Court on Friday refused to stop the foundation-stone laying ceremony for a mosque in Murshidabad, West Bengal, which is supposedly going to be modelled after the Babri Masjid that was destroyed during the 1992 communal riots in Ayodhya.

The stone-laying ceremony, planned for December 6, had been announced by suspended TMC MLA Humayun Kabir, who had suggested building such a mosque in

Beldanga.

The Trinamool Congress Party (TMC) had apparently suspended Kabir from the party on December 4 over his remarks about building this '**Babri-style**' mosque and distanced itself from the foundation stone event.

A petition was then brought before the High Court by one, Dr. Abdus Salam Shaikh, to stop the event on concerns that it could disturb communal harmony.

However, a Division Bench of Acting Chief Justice Sujoy Paul and Justice Partha Sarathi Sen yesterday refused to halt the event and closed the petition.

The Court noted that the core grievance put before it by the petitioner related to law-and-order management in the district and the need to ensure protection of life and property.

During the hearing, the Advocate General Kishore Datta assured the Bench that the administration was alert to the situation and that law and order would be kept strictly.

Recording this statement, the Court disposed of the plea.

"The State must act as per its stand and the law and order situation shall be maintained in Murshidabad strictly and the lives and properties of the citizens will be protected," the order said.

The petitioner had earlier written to the Superintendent of Police on November 30, warning that the upcoming event could lead to unrest. The petitioner's counsel claimed that preventive steps were needed to avoid any disturbance.

The Central government's counsel told the Court that 19 companies of the central armed forces were already stationed in Murshidabad following earlier directions of the High Court.

In view of these assurances, the Bench refused to intervene further and disposed of the petition.