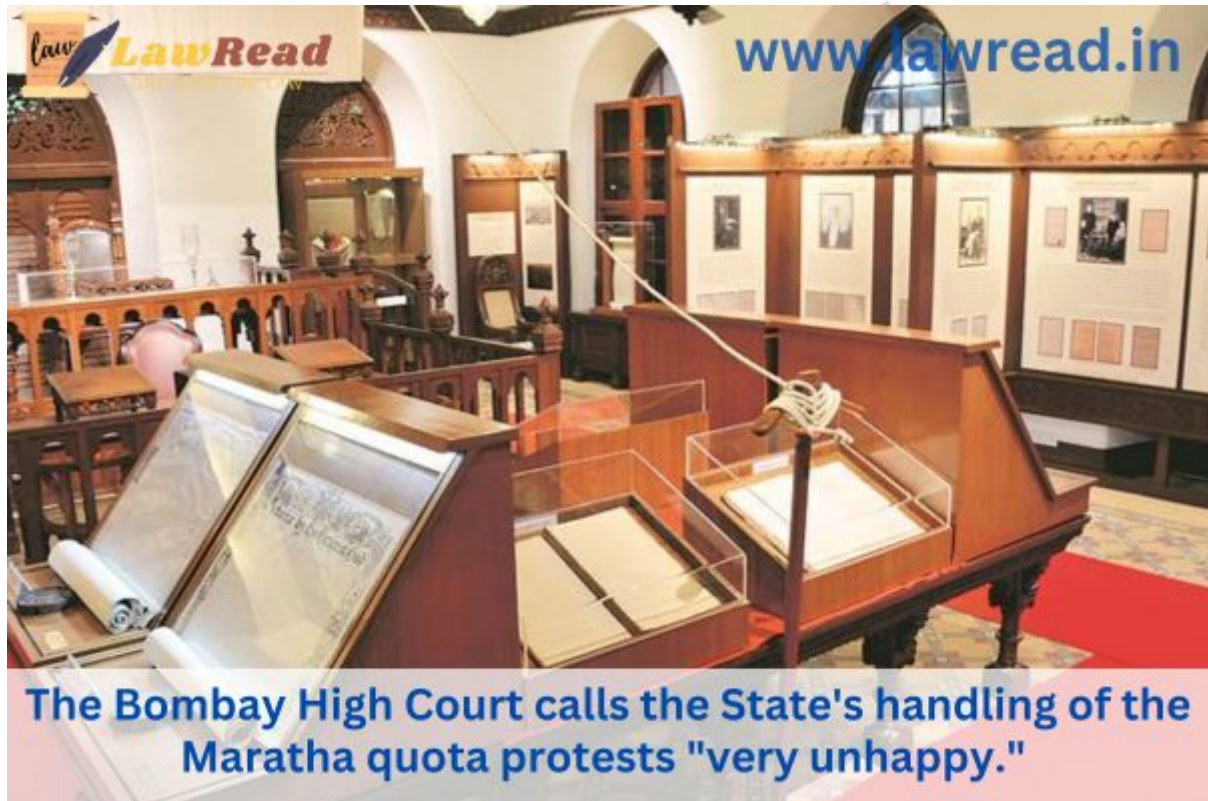


News

The Bombay High Court calls the State's handling of the Maratha quota protests "very unhappy."



Concerns on the scope and effects of the protests, which had interrupted Mumbai's regular routine, prompted the hearing.

The Maharashtra government's handling of the ongoing Maratha reservation protests in Mumbai, spearheaded by activist Manoj Jarange Patil, was strongly criticized by the Bombay High Court on Tuesday [**Amy Foundation v State of Maharashtra**].

During a PIL hearing on the agitation, a bench consisting of Acting Chief Justice Shree Chandrashekhar and Justice Aarti Sathe expressed their "extremely dissatisfied" with the

State's strategy and hinted that they could be forced to issue instructions to enforce the law.

"You've allowed things to get to this point. This is a serious problem. We are truly dissatisfied," the Court said.

Concerns on the scope and effects of the protests, which had interrupted Mumbai's regular routine, prompted the hearing.

Despite the protest's initial 24-hour authorization, the Court noted that participants persisted in occupying public locations outside the specified area for longer than allowed.

The gathering had not entirely dispersed even after a different High Court bench had previously ordered protesters to leave the streets by Tuesday lunchtime.

Jarange Patil's attorney said at the court that almost 90% of the demonstrators had already departed the city. In order to give his client time to consult with a State Cabinet subcommittee, he asked the Court to postpone the case.

Additionally, he told the court that Patil had appealed to his supporters to respect the law and depart Mumbai amicably.

The Court acknowledged the statement but voiced concerns about the demonstrators' ongoing presence and the authorities' lack of response. It noted that the State was depending on **Jarange** Patil to keep the gathering under control, although having taken certain steps, including as making public announcements and giving the organizers warnings pointing out infractions.

According to the Court, the State should have taken action on the second day of the protests, but instead it let things get out of hand.

"You're profiting off his client's fame. You are in charge of maintaining law and order. This is something you ought to have done on the second day. The Bench said, "We have to issue an order against you as well.

Additionally, it noted the September 1st order, which had already made plain that **Jarange** Patil, the rally's main organizer, was not going to take a firm stance.

It was noted that **Jarange** might be held accountable for encouraging and facilitating the entrance of numbers larger than the 5,000 allowed.

You have allowed things to get to this point. This is a serious problem. We're not happy at all.

High Court of Bombay

The Court also stated that a number of significant concerns raised by the protests would need to be addressed by the organizers.

The Court made it plain that it would take the appropriate action in the event that its directives were not followed, and the subject was postponed until Wednesday at 1 PM.

We must state before we depart that this court will be limited in its ability to issue orders and take any necessary action to preserve the supremacy of the law. The Bench stated unequivocally that any violation of the order issued by this court would not be accepted.