Beat: News

Buddhists Demand Control Of Bihar's Mahabodhi Vihar

BSI Condemns Injustice

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USPA NEWS - The Buddhist Society of India - Andhra Pradesh branch has condemned the ongoing control of Bihar's Mahabodhi Vihar by non-Buddhists, calling it an injustice against the global Buddhist community. The organization demands that the site, considered the holiest Buddhist shrine, be handed over entirely to Buddhists.

Nationwide Mobilization If Demands Are Ignored

Buddhist organizations across the country are prepared to launch large-scale protests if their demands are not met. The Andhra Pradesh BSI President Bethala Sudarshan has warned that failure to act will lead to nationwide mobilization to reclaim control of Mahabodhi Vihar and other Buddhist heritage sites.

Bodh Gaya Temple Act Denies Buddhist Autonomy

The Mahabodhi Vihar, where Gautama Buddha attained enlightenment in 528 BC, is regarded as the most sacred site by millions of Buddhists worldwide. However, under the Bodh Gaya Temple Act of 1949, the temple's management committee consists of nine members, of whom only four are Buddhists, while five are Hindus. Additionally, the committee's chairman is the District Collector, who must be a Hindu if he is to hold the post.

Buddhist leaders argue that this provision amounts to systemic discrimination and legal oppression, depriving the Buddhist community of its rightful authority over the site.

Demands for Repeal of the 1949 Act

The Indian Buddhist Mahasabha has put forward three key demands:

The Bodh Gaya Temple Act of 1949 should be repealed immediately.
Mahabodhi Vihar should be brought entirely under Buddhist control.
All Buddhist heritage sites in India should be placed under Buddhist administration.

Appeal To Government For Constitutional Justice

The Buddhist Society of India has submitted a memorandum to the President and Prime Minister, urging immediate action. They emphasized that the Indian Constitution upholds equality and religious freedom, and any form of religious domination contradicts these principles.

"Buddhists are committed to peace, non-violence, and equality, but it is unjust for Hindu religious supremacy to deny us our rights," stated the Andhra Pradesh President of the society.

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