

Tribals Forced To Do 'Dandavat Parikrama': NCST Launches Probe, Issues Notice To West Bengal Police

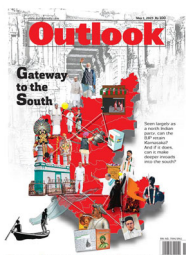
An NCST investigation has been launched into allegations that Trinamool Congress (TMC) leaders in West Bengal forced tribal women to circumambulate in a prostrate position as punishment for joining the BJP.



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The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) has launched an inquiry into allegations that some Trinamool Congress (TMC) leaders in West Bengal forced tribal women to perform "Dandavat parikrama" (circumambulation in a prostrate position) as punishment for joining the BJP.

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Introduction

Hindutva's Test

State BJP president Sukanta Majumdar had written to the commission on Monday, demanding an inquiry into the matter and strict action against those responsible.

The NCST on Wednesday wrote to West Bengal Police Chief Manoj Malaviya that the commission has decided to investigate the matter and that he submit "facts and information on the action taken on the allegations within three days".

The NCST also said it will issue summons for personal appearance if the West Bengal Police chief failed to respond in the stipulated time.

Majumdar alleged that around 200 people from tribal families in his Balurghat Lok Sabha constituency joined the BJP on April 6, which did not go down well with a section of the TMC leadership.

He claimed that TMC "goons" pressured those families and forced some of them to join the TMC.

In an example of "inhuman medieval period autocracy", four poor tribal women were forced to do "Dandavat parikrama" for about a kilometre as punishment for joining the BJP. They were later given the TMC flag in the district party office, Majumdar claimed.

A video of the purported incident is doing the rounds on social media, triggering outrage.

The state BJP chief said TMC leaders had earlier also made comments against President Droupadi Murmu.

Majumdar said such incidents cannot be tolerated particularly when Prime Minister Narendra Modi is doing everything to uplift the downtrodden and the President is a woman belonging to the tribal community.