

Best Bakery case: Sessions court rejects plea for transfer of trial

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/mumbai-news/best-bakery-case-sessions-court-rejects-plea-for-transfer-of-trial-101660153407453.html>

The city sessions court on Wednesday rejected a plea seeking transfer of the Best Bakery case of Gujarat to some other additional sessions judge. The petitioner, an accused in the case, has claimed that the trial court had not taken cognisance of his apprehension that witnesses were being tutored. He had also written to the Gujarat police to probe if activist Teesta Setalvad had played any role in influencing the witnesses.

Harshad Solanki had on July 20 filed the plea through lawyer Prakash Salsingekar. “I have moved a plea to transfer the case as the court passed the order for further examination of the witnesses and issued summons to witnesses for identification of the accused in my absence and without hearing me,” Salsingekar had said.

Solanki is being prosecuted along with Mafat Gohil for allegedly being part of a mob that had attacked Best Bakery at Hanuman Tekri, Vadodara, on March 1, 2002, and killed 14 people. This incident followed the burning of Sabarmati Express in Godhra on February 27 in which 14 karsevaks (Hindu pilgrims), who were returning from Ayodhya, were killed.

On June 27, 2003, a Vadodara court acquitted all 21 accused in a riot case after the witnesses turned hostile. Some of the witnesses later told the media that they were under pressure. Taking cognisance of the matter, the National Human Rights Commission filed a petition before the Supreme Court, which in April 2004 ordered retrial in several riot cases, including the Best Bakery case, in Mumbai.

Haryana bill on State Police Complaint Authority referred to select committee

<https://theprint.in/india/haryana-bill-on-state-police-complaint-authority-referred-to-select-committee/1077812/>

A bill that restricts Haryana's State Police Complaint Authority from taking up complaints under certain conditions, including those filed anonymously, was on Wednesday referred to the select committee of the state assembly after some Congress MLAs raised objections. The Haryana Police (Amendment) Bill, 2022, was introduced in the House this evening by state Home Minister Anil Vij on the concluding day of the three-day monsoon session of the State Assembly. Congress MLA Varun Chaudhary objected to the bill, claiming that State Police Complaint Authority's power to hear the complaint on a suo motu basis was being taken away, and said the authority's ambit should be widened instead of being cut down like this. According to the Bill, "...no anonymous, synonymous and pseudonymous complaints shall be entertained...

"The Authority shall not enquire into any matter where a report under section 173 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 has been filed in an appropriate court; any matter pending or that has already been dealt with by NHRC, State Human Rights Commission/National Commission for Scheduled Castes...." Chaudhary, who is MLA from Mullana, said, "I want the Bill to be deferred because the Authority's power to hear the complaints on a suo motu basis was being taken away.

"Already under the pressure of police, so many people don't complain against them. That is why it was very important to have this suo motu power with the Authority," he said.

"In the first place, this Authority was set up after great difficulty. It's ambit should not be lowered, but widened. If a complaint comes, let the Authority investigate," he said. "The Authority has only to investigate, it does not have to pronounce punishment. Why is the body being prevented from this too," he said, demanding that the Bill be deferred. Later, Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala, while referring to objections raised by Chaudhary and one more Congress member Jagbir Malik, favoured that the Bill be referred to a select committee, stating that then it can be taken up in the next session. After this, Vij proposed that the Haryana Police (Amendment) Bill, 2022 be referred to the select committee. PTI SUN VSD RT RT