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Police role seen in increased violence against Dalits

Special Correspondent

JAIPUR: The Centre for Dalit Rights (CDR) on Saturday blamed the police officers posted in rural areas for increase in violence against the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, saying they were often found subverting the law to shield the accused and deny relief to the victims because of their own caste prejudices.

The CDR activists listed seven cases from across Rajasthan involving alleged dubious role of police personnel at a press conference here and demanded prompt action to render justice to the Dalit victims.

In each of these cases, the victims were allegedly pressurised to change their statements and very mild action was taken against the accused.

The CDR patron, P. L. Mimroth, and the director, Satish Kumar, said the concern about the increasing violence expressed by Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot at a meeting of the State-level Monitoring Committee here recently would yield result only if the police officers were instructed to strictly follow the legal provisions in the cases of Dalit atrocities.

“Our practical experience shows that the officers at police stations in the villages are often hand in glove with the accused belonging to higher castes. Instead of conducting a fair investigation, they put pressure on the victims to dilute the cases,” said Mr. Mimroth.

The seven cases listed by the CDR included those of murder of a Dalit woman in which the Bharatpur Sessions Court pulled up the police, rape of a minor Dalit girl in Bharatpur in which she was forced to change her statement to arraign her brother and the attack on a Dalit family in Tonk in which a false case was registered against the victims.

The CDR demanded registration of cases against the guilty police officers under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

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