

'Untouchability still exists in various forms'

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Mangalore, November 9: Deputy Commissioner Subodh Yadav on Monday revealed that a total of 149 Dalit atrocity cases were reported in Dakshina Kannada district from 2001.

He was speaking during a meeting of the district vigilance and management committee mandated under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Rules 1995.

While only two cases were reported in 2001-02, the number shot up to 39 in 2010, he said adding that a total of Rs 36.58 lakh has been spent to solve several cases.

Rajeev Salian of Nagarika Seva Trust Guruvayanakere told the meeting that a survey of all villages in Belthangady taluk revealed that untouchability still exists in various forms.

He pointed out that students from these communities found it difficult to gain access to higher education because of the donation menace. He emphasised that there was a need for the Government to ask for an audit of the implementation of various schemes.

Grievance meet

A SC/ST grievance meet followed the VMC meet, which was presided over by the DC in the presence of Mangalore South MLA N Yogish Bhat.

Several Dalit leaders, activists and others who attended the meeting complained that lands reserved for Scheduled Castes by the district administration had been encroached upon by others in several places.

Having done this, the local bodies claimed that land was not available to give to people from Scheduled Castes when they applied for it. Several others said that Dalits had not been given hakku patras (title deeds) for several years.

Deputy Commissioner Subodh Yadav said that a land survey was under way and that it was only partially completed at present, and said more time would be required to complete the survey.

He added that the district administration could either attempt to ensure that the encroached land was returned or to identify other suitable land to give to people of Scheduled Castes. An activist made a request to Yadav saying, "usually when other land is identified, it turns out to be a hilly terrain. Please do not give us such land."





