

QUOTA PROTESTS SHOW NO SIGNS OF ABATING

# Maharashtra Govt Begins Issuing Kumbi Caste Papers to Marathas

Activist Manoj Jarange's fast for Maratha quota enters the eight day today

Our Political Bureau/PTI

Mumbai: The Maharashtra government on Tuesday accepted the first report of a committee headed by retired high court judge Sandeep Shinde, appointed to decide the procedure for granting Kumbi caste certificates to the Marathas in the Maharashtra region.



The process of the issuance of Kumbi certificates has begun, an official statement said. Kumbi, a community associated with agriculture, is grouped under the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category in Maharashtra and enjoys reservation benefits in education and government jobs.

The state cabinet meeting, chaired by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, decided that the OBC Commission would collect fresh empirical data to assess the educational and social backwardness of the Maratha community.

These decisions by the government came amid activist Manoj Jarange's indefinite fast for quota for the Maratha community, which entered the seventh day on Tuesday.

of violence mainly in the Marathwada region.

The first report of the Justice Sandeep Shinde (retd) committee has been submitted. The process of granting Kumbi certificates to Marathas has started, the statement from the Chief Minister's Office said.

Talking to reporters after the cabinet meeting, the chief minister said it is the responsibility of the government to provide the reservation to the Maratha community in the state and has

"The government is committed to giving the Maratha community a reservation which can pass the legal muster. The reservation will be given without disturbing the quotas of other communities," he said.

**ACTION AGAINST PROTESTERS** After an orgy of violence that has left at least 10 people dead and hundreds injured, the government has taken a stern view of the violence done allegedly by Maratha protesters in the state and has

filed cases of attempt to murder against the protesters. The Marathas stir may lead to caste conflicts/riots too in the state as Maratha leader Manoj Jarange said. He has warned OBC community leaders against agitating against the Maratha community to begiven the Maratha quota.

**BUS OPS SUSPENDED IN FIVE MARATHWADA DISTRICTS** Services of the Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) buses have been stopped completely in five districts of Marathwada in central Maharashtra amid the violence over the demand of quota for the Maratha community, an official said on Tuesday.

Services in Parbhani, Dharsivli, Latur, Jalna and Nanded districts have been stopped. The official of the state-owned corporation said that the buses have been stopped for the last three-four days while they have been hit to some extent in Beed, Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar and Solapur districts, said the official of the state-owned corporation. As many as 36 of the 250 bus depots of MSRTC in Maharashtra were shut on account of the agitation as of Monday evening, he said.

## At The Statue Of New Bloc's Actions Against Society And Country: Modi

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Gandhinagar: Prime Minister Narendra Modi attacked the INDIA bloc without directly naming it, and said that the big political formation cannot see any way to do positive politics and that its strategies were against the society and the country.

Taking part in the celebration of 'Rashtriya Ekta Diwas' after paying floral tribute to Sardar Patel on his birth anniversary, he said, "The season of election is upon the country. The process of election is on across many states and next year Lok Sabha elections will take place. You must have seen there is a big political formation but it cannot see any means to do positive politics. Unfortunately, this political formation is adopting strategies which are against the society and the country."

Modi lashed out at the opposition, saying the "political formation" holds its self-interests beyond the unity of the country. "They want to achieve their political ends by hurting the integrity of the country," he said.

On the occasion, Amit Shah flagged off a 'Run for India' campaign to mark the 100th birth anniversary of Sardar Patel.

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## India United Because of Sardar Patel's Efforts: Shah

Our Political Bureau

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday said the country — from Kashmir to Kanyakumari — has been united by the marvellous contribution of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Addressing an event in New Delhi to commemorate India's first Home Minister, Shah said Patel's 148th birth anniversary, Amit Shah called all citizens to take a pledge to put the nation in the top position in the world in all sectors by 2047 when it will celebrate the centenary of its Independence.

"It was because of Sardar Patel that we have today's India. It was due to his unforgettable contribution that the whole country — from Kashmir to Kanyakumari — is united. Without Sardar Patel's contribution and far-sightedness, we would not have been here today," he said.

On the occasion, Amit Shah flagged off a 'Run for India' campaign to mark the 100th birth anniversary of Sardar Patel.

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## Fiscal Deficit Contained at 39% of FY24 Target

Tight leash on revenue expenditure in past 2 months, rise in tax mopup prevent spike

Twesh.Mishra@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: The Indian Railways has imposed restrictions on the movement of lithium and lithium-ion batteries in leased parcel space of trains, impacting the movement of laptops, mobile phones, and small electric vehicles, among other commodities—using the railways' parcel service.

The railways has mandated a 48-hour prior notice for transport of lithium batteries or powered equipment. "The consignment will also be checked by Railways officials who will approve whether it has been packed appropriately before being moved by trains," a senior government official told ET.

"Stops are also being taken to prevent misclassification of commodities," the official said.

Another official, aware of the development, said the restrictions

follow occurrences of parcels catching fire. Five instances of fire across Indian Railways were reported in the first half of the current fiscal year. Of these, two occurred in September itself. In comparison, there were only two cases of train fires in the same period last year.

Permission to move lithium, lithium-ion batteries, and equipment powered by these batteries was given in February this year with the amendment of the Railways' Tariff Rules, 2001.

This allowed movement of cell phones, laptops, small electric vehicles, among others using the Railways Parcel service.

It was also decided to allow movement of fire extinguishers, lighter or lighter refills, inflammable perfume products, and corrosive disinfectant liquids.

The railways' move to allow leased parcel space was in line with efforts to diversify revenue streams and attract more e-commerce firms to use the service.

Commenting on the curbs, Ravinder Gupta, former Director General of the Indian Railways said, "There is a need to adapt a battery-specific code by Indian Railways with inputs from international shipping..."

State of Fisc

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