

News

Allahabad High Court Reaffirms Article 25 Rights: No Permission Needed for Prayers on Private Property



The [Allahabad High Court](#) ruled that people do not need previous government permission to hold religious prayers or events on their private property, which is a major affirmation of constitutional liberties. The Court underlined that the freedom to exercise one's religion is a fundamental right guaranteed by Article 25, which cannot be curtailed by administrative "embargoes" unless the activities extend into public areas.

The Court's harsh stance against administrative meddling in private religious activities was evident in its decisions regarding distinct petitions pertaining to both Islamic and Christian prayer meetings.

The matter initially came to light during a hearing about a mosque in Sambhal. Munazir Khan, a resident, had petitioned the court, claiming that during the holy month of Ramadan, local

officials had limited the number of worshippers to just 20. The cap was justified by the administration on the grounds of **"law and order."**

A two-judge bench made up of Justices Atul Sreedharan and Siddharth Nandan had earlier noted that the Sambhal Superintendent of Police (SP) and the Collector should resign or seek a transfer if they were incapable of upholding the law. This was a sharp reaction to the state's incapacity to handle the situation.

After looking at pictures of the location, the bench observed that although the building isn't currently considered a "mosque," it was once utilized for namaz. As a result, the Court ordered that devotees who wanted to pray there should not face any obstacles.

The bench highlighted the nation's cultural diversity in its observations. The Court stated, **"The resilience and strength of this republic of 1.4 billion people on Earth, arising from her historical, religious, cultural, and linguistic diversity, lies in her glory."**

The judges said that Article 25 of the Indian Constitution, which guarantees every person the freedom to freely profess, practice, and promote religion, **"formalizes India's unique coexistence of all major religions."**

Parallel to this, the [High Court](#) heard two petitions from Christian organizations: Emmanuel Grace Charitable Trust and Maranatha Full Gospel Ministries. In order to hold prayers on their private estates, both organizations had formally requested permission.

After the Uttar Pradesh administration acknowledged that there is no statute requiring such authorization, the Court dismissed the writ petitions as unnecessary. The following was made clear by the bench:

- 1. Private Premises:** Religious prayer gatherings that take place solely on private property do not require permission.
- 2. Public Spillover:** The organizers of a religious event must notify the police and secure the necessary legal permits if they anticipate that the event will overflow into public roadways or property.
- 3. Fundamental Right:** The Court reaffirmed that when the law does not require it, the state cannot impede the exercise of a fundamental right under the pretense of administrative procedure.

The panel came to the conclusion that the Indian nation-state is strong because it permits

different languages and religions to coexist in "peace, harmony, and mutual respect."

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