

News

The Bombay High Court rejects a plea claiming inconsistencies in the Maharashtra Assembly Elections.



The Bench declined to impose costs while stating that the petition was a waste of the Court's time.

On Wednesday, the Bombay High Court denied a suit that claimed significant irregularities in the way the Maharashtra Assembly elections were conducted on November 20, 2024, particularly the disproportionately high number of ballots cast after 6 PM (voting hours).

Mumbai resident Chetan Chandrakant Ahire (petitioner) filed a writ petition, however a bench of **Justices GS Kulkarni and Arif Doctor** declined to consider it.

The Bench declined to impose costs while stating that the petition was a waste of the Court's time.

"We are certain that this petition must be denied in view of the aforementioned facts. As a result, it is denied. Hearing the petition took up an entire day of this Court's time. Even though they ought to pay expenses, the Court said, "we choose not to do so."

Due to claimed electoral process breaches, the petitioner petitioned the court to declare that the results announced for all 288 assembly constituencies in the state should be revoked.

An "unusually high number" of votes were cast beyond the official polling period of 6 PM, according to Ahire's appeal, which claimed that over 75 lakh ballots were cast after the deadline.

He also cited disparities in over 90 constituencies between votes that were polled and those that were tabulated.

Through his lawyer Prakash Ambedkar, the petitioner also argued that by failing to disclose these apparent discrepancies, the returning authorities disregarded Election Commission of India (ECI) regulations.

Details of post-6 PM voting tokens, a breakdown of votes cast outside of official hours per constituency, and the revocation of election certificates for victorious candidates were among the reliefs requested.

Hearing the petition took up an entire day of this Court's time.

High Court of Bombay

On behalf of the Election Commission, Senior Advocate Ashutosh Kumbhakoni said that Ahire lacked the authority to file a writ case contesting the results for the entire state. He added that Ahire did not list the victorious candidates as parties.

In a similar vein, the petitioner had to have submitted an election petition under the Representation of the People Act within the 45 days after the results, according to Advocate Uday Warunjikar, who was speaking on behalf of the Union of India, to the court. Despite its wide-ranging public ramifications, Ahire instead decided to submit a writ petition outside of this allowed timeline and without classifying it as a public interest litigation.