

Lucknow protesters win justice in Meher Bhargava murder case, India, 2006

- ([mainly or initiated by](#)) [people of color](#) [1]

Timing

25 March

2006

to:

5 April

2006

Location and Goals

Country:

India

Location City/State/Province:

Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

[View Location on Map](#)

Goals:

Immediate arrest of the accused and a Central Bureau of Investigations probe into the case.

Methods

Methods in 1st segment:

- 104. Professional strike
- 146. Judicial noncooperation>Lucknow High Court and other city courts closed to protest murder.

Methods in 2nd segment:

- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols>"We want justice."
- 034. Vigils >Candle light vigil held outside of General Post Office.
- 038. Marches>Hundreds march to General Post Office.
- 104. Professional strike
- 146. Judicial noncooperation>Lucknow High Court and other city courts closed to protest murder.

Methods in 3rd segment:

Methods in 4th segment:

- 047. Assemblies of protest or support>Protest for the arrest of the killers in the Uttar Pradesh capital.

Methods in 5th segment:

Methods in 6th segment:

Segment Length:

1.6 days

Classifications

Classification:

Defense

Cluster:

Democracy

Human Rights

Group characterization:

- civil groups
- government employees/officials
- students
- women's organizations

Leaders, partners, allies, elites

Leaders:

Bahujan Samaj Party leader Mayawati, members of Congress

Partners:

Bharatiya Janata Party, members of the elite, officials of the courts

External allies:

Not known

Involvement of social elites:

Most of the people involved were members of the social elite

Joining/exiting order of social groups

Groups in 1st Segment:

- Bharatiya Janata Party
- Officials of the courts
- members of the elite

Groups in 2nd Segment:

Groups in 3rd Segment:

Groups in 4th Segment:

- Members of the elite (Many exit)

Groups in 5th Segment:

Groups in 6th Segment:

Segment Length:

1.6 days

Opponent, Opponent Responses, and Violence

Opponents:

Police investigators, Samajwadi Party leader

Nonviolent responses of opponent:

Not known

Campaigner violence:

Not known

Repressive Violence:

Not known

Success Outcome

Success in achieving specific demands/goals:

6 points out of 6 points

Survival:

1 point out of 1 points

Growth:

2 points out of 3 points

Total points:

9 out of 10 points

On 28 February 2006 Meher Bhargava, a lawyer and wife of Indian National Congress leader Luv Bhargava, was shot. She was defending her daughter-in-law against the lewd comments of a group of men on the street in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India.

Meher Bhargava was hospitalized, but died on 25 March. The day that she was shot, Sunny Rawat confessed to the murder but he retracted his statement the following day. It wasn't until after her death that Congress began to mobilize to demand justice for Bhargava's murder.

Lucknow High courts and other city courts closed until 27 March to protest the murder and Congress organized a candlelight protest march and vigil, also for the 27 March. Hundreds attended the march to the General Post Office (GPO) where they stopped and had the vigil, in front of the Gandhi Statue in the GPO park.

Part of the movement made up of women's groups wanted to deliver a memorandum to the governor in Raj Bhavan, but they were stopped from doing so by the police. Members of Congress said that the march and vigil were organized in order to demand an immediate arrest of the accused in the case.

Also on 27 March, Bahujan Samaj Party president Mayawati called for a Central Bureau of Investigations (CBI) probe into the case. She was supported by the members of the Bharatiya Janata Party. The leader of the Samajwadi Party, however, said that the probe was unnecessary. On 29 March, Mayawati petitioned the governor to force the Uttar Pradesh government to conduct a CBI probe. When the State Assembly announced that they would not, Congress members walked out on them.

Also on 29 March, Congress staged a protest in the Uttar Pradesh capital for the arrest of the killers. Fewer members of the city elite participated in this action than in the march and vigil due to the concern that the issue had become too politicized. The fact that Mayawati had accused the leader of the Samajwadi Party of being involved in the case since he rejected the CBI probe and the fact that Congress had not mobilized until after Bhargava's death put the motivations of Congress into question in the eyes of the other members of the elite who were fighting for justice in the case.

Later, on 29 March, police engaged one of the men involved in the murder, Sanjay Pahadi, but he escaped. The police did manage to arrest Sunny Rawat that day, however. On 5 April, the court held an identification parade through which Rawat was accused by eye-witnesses. On 20 May, another man involved in the murder, Sachin Pahari was found by police and shot dead in a confrontation. Three other associates had been arrested, but were later acquitted.

On 4 June 2009, Rawat was sentenced to life in prison plus a 10,000 rupee fine.

Research Notes

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