A Ban on Protests at Jantar Mantar - II

Why in news?

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- The National Green Tribunal – NGT has recently asked the Delhi government to ban protests at Jantar Mantar.
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Why is the order being criticised?

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- The residents around Jantar Mantar petitioned the NGT for freeing the roads of alleged nuisance in the area during protests.
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- NGT ordered a total ban on protests at Jantar Mantar to remedy it.
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- The order is being criticised for being vaguely worded & failing to scrutinise the claims of the petitioners.
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- Also, it is outside the tribunal’s scope to have a determinative say in how public spaces are to be used for non-violent dissent.
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- NGT even suggested that Ramlila Maidan as an alternative venue for protests.
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- This raises several concerns about the tribunal’s attitude towards use of public spaces for protests.
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What is the way forward?

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- While the courts or governments can issue guidelines to facilitate better

dissent, a ban on locations for protests is in bad taste.
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- Notably, Jantar Mantar, has a legacy for various popular protests, that have considerably influenced our polity.
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- Hence, NGT’s order needs to be corrected and the public’s claim over democratic spaces needs to be reasserted.
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Source: The Hindu

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