

Maharashtra Law on ‘Dangerous Persons’

Why in news?

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Aurangabad police recently detained a city corporator under MPD Act, 1981 of Maharashtra.

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What is the MPD Act?

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- It is Maharashtra Prevention of Dangerous Activities of Slumlords, Bootleggers, Drug Offenders and Dangerous Persons Act (MPDA), 1981.

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- The Act empowers the district magistrate and the commissioner of police to exercise its provisions.

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- They can decide in their view if a person is acting in a manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public order.

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- Either of these two authorities can pass an order under the Act directing that such a person be detained.

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- In the first instance, an order passed under MPDA cannot exceed three months.

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- The person against whom the order is issued could challenge the detention before a higher court.

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- If the court is satisfied with his/her plea, the order can be revoked or set aside.

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How did the Act come about?

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- The mafia in Maharashtra, particularly Mumbai, was making much of its earnings from bootlegging (illegal sale or transport of alcoholic liquor).
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- During this period (1980s and 1990s) slumlords too were dominant in Mumbai.
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- The MDP Act was mainly intended at handling these groups.
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- Today, the police use the law mainly during a build-up to a protest or threat to law and order.
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- People who could cause any harm, danger or alarm or a feeling of insecurity among the general public could be detained.
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- The state government is looking at a proposal to bring human traffickers under the realm of MPDA.
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- This is to deal effectively with the issue of missing girls.
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What is the current case?

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- A city corporator is an elected member of a municipal corporation.
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- Sayyed Mateen Rashid of All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM), a corporator was detained under MPDA act.
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- The Aurangabad Commissioner cited offences like arson, rioting, inciting mob for breach of communal harmony, creating alarm in society as the reasons.
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- In the past, he had reportedly opposed singing of the national anthem in the Aurangabad Municipal Corporation.
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- Recently, he had reportedly opposed a resolution to pay tribute to former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
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- And so, some BJP corporators allegedly beat him up and filed a complaint under the IPC.
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- He was accused of promoting enmity between members of communities.
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- He was granted bail in the IPC case but was shortly served the Commissioner's notice under MPDA.
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Source: Indian Express

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