

Ahead of farmers' march, Haryana suspends mobile internet, bulk SMS services in 12 Ambala villages

The suspension will remain in force till December 17, according to an order

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Punjab farmers at the Shambhu border amid the ongoing protest by farmers to press the central government to accept their demands including a legal guarantee to the MSP on crops, in Patiala district, on December 13, 2024 | Photo Credit: PTI

Hours before the **resumption of the farmers' protest march to Delhi** from the Shambhu border, the Haryana government on Saturday (December 14, 2024) suspended mobile internet and bulk SMS services in 12 villages in Ambala district to maintain "public peace".

The suspension will remain in force till December 17, according to an order issued by Additional Chief Secretary (Home), Sumita Misra said.

"It has been brought to my notice by additional director general of police, CID, Haryana and deputy commissioner, Ambala that in view of the call for Delhi Kooch given by certain farmers' organisations, there is an apprehension of causing tension, annoyance, agitation, damage of public and private property and disturbance of public peace and tranquillity in the area of districts Ambala," the order said.

Mr. Misra said the order to suspend mobile internet in Dangdehri, Lehgarh, Manakpur, Dadiyana, Bari Ghel, Choti Ghel, Lharsa, Kalu Majra, Devi Nagar (Hira Nagar, Naresh Vihar), Saddapur, Sultanpur and Kakru villages in Ambala was issued to prevent any disturbance of peace and public order.

The suspension shall be in force from 6 am on December 14 to 11.59 pm on December 17, it said.

A 'jatha' (group) of 101 farmers will resume their foot march to Delhi at 12 noon on Saturday from their protest site at the Shambhu border on the Punjab and Haryana border.

The farmers are marching to force the Centre for a legal guarantee for minimum support price for crops. They are also pressing the Centre to hold talks with them to resolve their issues.





Punjab farmers warm themselves at a bonfire at the Shambhu Border amid the ongoing protest by farmers to press the central government to accept their demands including a legal guarantee to the MSP on crops, in Patiala district, on December 13, 2024 | Photo Credit: PTI

A heavy deployment of security personnel has already been made on the Haryana side of the border.

Earlier, the Haryana government had **suspended mobile internet services**, bulk SMS and dongle services from December 6 to 9.

In the fresh order issued on Saturday, Misra said, "There is a clear potential of disruption of public utilities, damage to public assets and amenities and disturbance of public law and order in district Ambala on account of misuse of internet services by way of spread of inflammatory material and false rumours, which are being/could be transmitted/circulated to the public through social media/messaging services on mobile internet services, SMS services and other dongle services".

"In order to stop the spread of misinformation and rumours through various social media platforms, such as WhatsApp, Facebook Twitter on mobile phones and SMS, for facilitation and mobilisation of mobs of agitators and demonstrators who can cause serious loss of life and damage to public and private properties by indulging in arson or vandalism and other types of violent activities.

"Therefore, in exercise of powers conferred upon me, I do hereby order the suspension of the mobile internet services, bulk SMS and all dongle services provided on mobile networks except voice calls," said the order.

The order is being issued after taking utmost care of public convenience by exempting individual SMS, mobile recharge, banking SMS, voice calls, internet services provided by broadband and lease lines of corporate and domestic households, thus not affecting the commercial/financial interest of the state and basic domestic needs of individuals, said the order.

The farmers are gathered under the banner of Samyukta Kisan Morcha (non-political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha and have been camping at Shambhu and Khanauri border points between Punjab and Haryana since February 13 after their march to Delhi was stopped by security forces.

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