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Curfew clamped, mobile internet services suspended in Meghalaya's West Garo Hills following violence

The order prohibits the movement of any person outside their residence within the limits of the West Garo Hills district during the curfew period.

PTI

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Security personnel stand guard on a road amid curfew. Credit: PTI photo

Shillong: Curfew was clamped and mobile internet services suspended in Meghalaya's West Garo Hills district following violence linked to the Garo Hills Autonomous District Council (GHADC) election nomination process, officials said on Tuesday.



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The curfew was imposed on March 10 and will remain in force for 24 hours, while mobile internet services will remain suspended for 48 hours, they said.

The curfew was clamped in the wake of miscreants vandalising several shops in Chibinang area of the district on Monday evening.

District Magistrate Vibhor Aggarwal said the decision was taken following information indicating a likelihood of disturbance to public peace and tranquillity, which could endanger human life and property in the district.

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Authorities said the restrictions were necessary and proportionate in view of the prevailing law and order situation and were aimed at preventing any disturbance of public tranquillity.

The state government ordered 48-hour suspension of mobile internet services in West Garo Hills district from March 10 as a precautionary measure to prevent the spread of rumours and maintain public order, an official said.

Senior administrative and police officials, including magistrates, have been camping in the affected areas and closely monitoring the situation.

Security forces have been deployed in the area, with police and the CRPF maintaining strict vigil.

The vandalism of shops took place amid controversy over a recent notification issued by the GHADC requiring candidates to produce valid Scheduled Tribe (ST) certificates while filing nomination papers for the council elections scheduled to be held on April 10.

The Commissioner and Secretary in charge of Home and District Council Affairs, Cyril Diengdoh, said the government has instructed all deputy commissioners, including that of West Garo Hills, to convene peace committee meetings with community leaders and appeal for calm.

"We have told the DC to call all the communities and hold peace committee meetings and appeal for peace," Diengdoh told PTI.

He said additional security forces would be deployed in the district after the superintendent of police sought more personnel. "More forces will be sent," he said.

The deputy commissioner of West Garo Hills has been asked to submit a factual report of a candidate



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scrutiny of nomination papers is scheduled for March 17.

No candidate filed nomination papers on the first day, as political parties only collected nomination forms

reports. We will see as the situation unfolds, Bhengonen added.

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