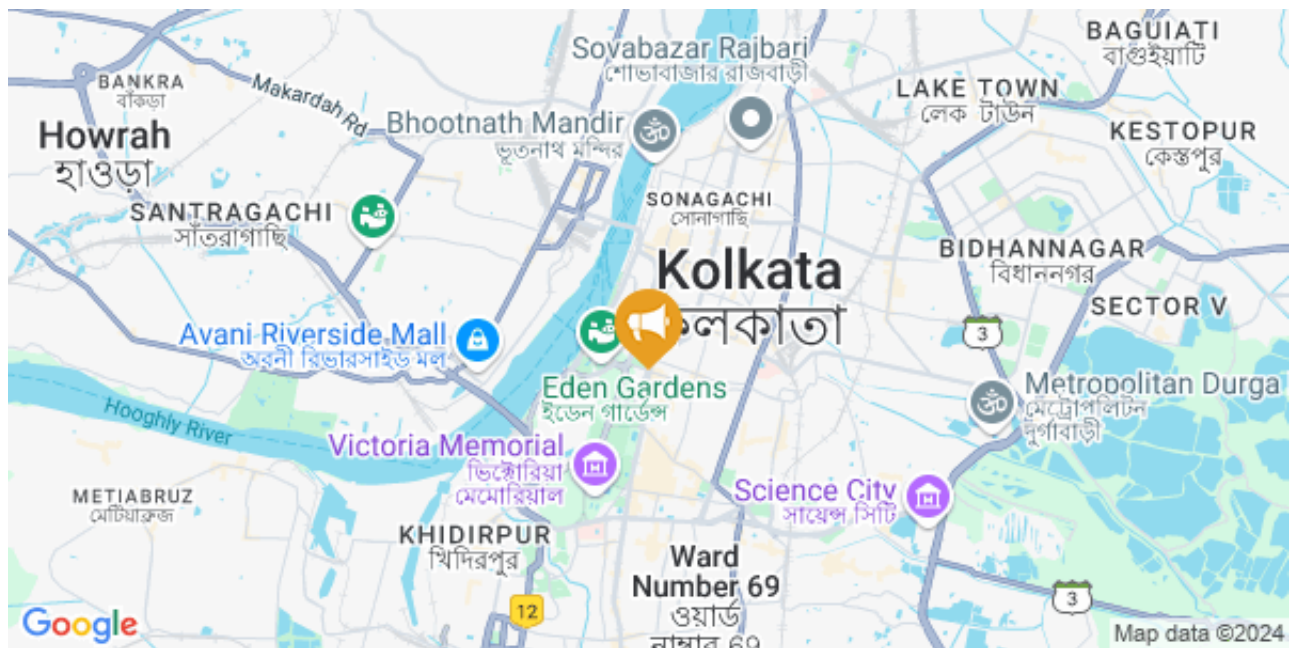


Protest



21

DEC

12:14 UTC

India Tactical: Multiple protests slated in West Bengal, including in Kolkata, until December 26; maintain vigilance

Current Situation

- The West Bengal Joint Platform of Doctors, a group of senior medical professionals, will hold a protest against the bail granted to two accused in the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital sexual assault-murder case, until December 26 at Esplanade in Kolkata.
- The doctors will demonstrate to demand that the CBI immediately submit a supplementary chargesheet in the case.
- On December 16, the Kolkata Police denied permission for the aforementioned protests, which were set to begin from December 17, citing potential traffic congestion due to the location's centrality. The Calcutta High Court permitted the doctors to hold a sit-in protest from December 20-26; however, as of writing, reports do not indicate that the protest has started.
- The court has set conditions for the protest, including a maximum 40-foot stage, crowd size capped at 200-250 people, and a location 50 feet away from Dorina Crossing to minimize traffic disruptions.
- The police are authorized to reduce the crowd size, if necessary, and a compliance report is required to be submitted by the police no later than January 13, 2025.
- Separately, West Bengal Chief Minister and All India Trinamool Congress (TMC) Mamata Banerjee will lead a protest against the alleged insults to Dr. BR Ambedkar by Union Home Minister Amit Shah between 14:00-15:00 in Kolkata on December 23. Similar protests will also be held across

various blocks and municipalities in West Bengal. The exact location of the protest in Kolkata remains unknown, as of writing.

- The protest is in response to Shah's remarks in the Rajya Sabha, which Mamata Banerjee claims insulted Ambedkar and undermined the Constitution.



Source: [The Indian Express](#), [Aaj Tak](#)

Assessments & Forecast:

1. The turnout at the doctors' protest is liable to range in the high dozens-to-low hundreds, given the sensitivity surrounding the case and the involvement of influential medical professionals. Security measures will likely be in place to prevent disruptions, especially in the busy Esplanade area. Separately, the turnout at the TMC protest is expected to range in the mid-to-high hundreds, particularly in urban areas like Kolkata, with strong support from the All-India Trinamool Congress' (TMC) base. The Chief Minister's direct involvement is likely to attract widespread participation.
2. The doctors' protest is expected to be peaceful as it is framed around legal concerns and is not directly anti-government. However, there remains a risk of clashes and the possibility of heightened political tensions between the TMC and the BJP, with potential for counter-protests from BJP supporters. Disruptions to traffic are likely, particularly near Esplanade and the surrounding roads, from December 22. Security measures will be heightened given the holiday season and the nearby Park Street area is a major crowd attraction. Security measures will likely be intensified across the state to maintain order on December 23 in light of the TMC's protests, and travel disruptions in key areas of Kolkata are expected.

Recommendations:

Those operating or residing in West Bengal on December 21-26 are advised to maintain vigilance due to the slated protests and associated security measures while allotting for travel disruptions.

