## Why Dalits are wary of a diluted Atrocities Act

The growing crimes against the community, low conviction rates, and a sense of disenchantment with NDA may all be contributing to Dalit anger

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ess than four months after a Bharat Bandh called by Dalit groups to protest against the dilution of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act claimed nine lives across the country, another such protest is being planned on 9 August to press for the reinstatement of the stringent provisions of the Act which were struck down by the

Supreme Court. One of the constituent parties of the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA), the Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) has warned the government of aggressive protests on 9 August unless an ordinance is

promulgated to supersede the court ruling on the Act.

What explains the restiveness Dalit among groups? The growing crimes

against Dalits, low conviction rates, and a sense of disenchantment with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led NDA regime may all be contributing to Dalit anger, keeping Dalit politics on the boil, a *Mint* analysis suggests.

Data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) show that the rate of crimes against Dalits has been rising over time. In 2016, an estimated 214 incidents of crimes against Scheduled Castes (SCs) were reported per million SC population, up from 207 in the previous year, NCRB data shows (see Chart 1).

Till 2015, NCRB provided the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities (PoA) Act as well as overall data on crimes against SCs or Dalits, which included crimes registered under other

> rates vears.

Hence, we also examined the rate of murders of Dalits, which are more unlikely to go

unreported. The murder rate, too, shows an increase since

Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan reported the highest rate of Dalit murders in 2016. Some of these states, such as Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh, have been witness to large-scale protests by Dalit youth over the past couple of vears in response to Dalit atrocities. The increase in crimes against Dalits in recent vears has followed a sharp plunge in conviction rates for such crimes, NCRB data

data on crimes recorded under

PoA/non-PoA crimes in previunder-reporting that may

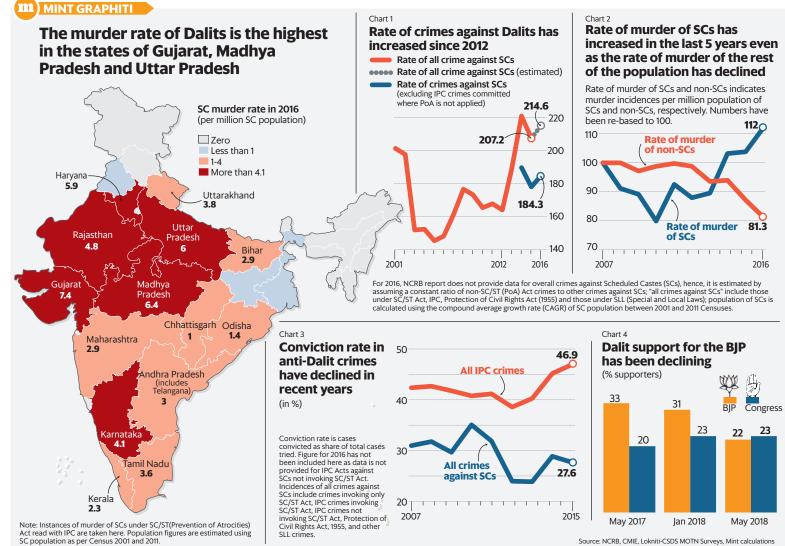
across

shows, suggesting that rising

provisions. However, from 2016 onwards, this overall figure has not been provided. The estimate for 2016 has been generated based on the ratio of ous years. Also, as pointed out in an earlier Plain Facts column (bit.ly/2zpco7A), the population projections used by NCRB to calculate crime rates are not consistent over time. Hence, they have been re-estimated for the analysis using census 2001 and 2011 figures. Given the nature of such crimes, there is likely to be affect the crime

2012 (see Chart 2). Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh,

Note: Instances of murder of SCs under SC/ST(Prevention of Atrocities)



impunity could be one factor driving such violence (see Chart 3).

While the conviction rate of overall Indian Penal Code (IPC) crimes has increased over the last decade, the conviction rate of crimes against Dalits has declined.

Less than one-third of cases of crimes against Dalits tried

by courts in 2015 faced convic-

Other caste groups such as the Marathas in Maharashtra have been arguing that the plunge in convictions in such cases is because of a rise in false cases

But there is very little evidence to back such a claim. The NCRB data shows that the

share of false cases in completed trials has declined 3 percentage points since 2012 to 20% in 2015.

against SCs

According to some lawyers the stringent provisions of the PoA Act which were struck down by the Supreme Court lend themselves to abuse. Such stringent provisions in another Act. Section 498A-

which was enacted to protect victims of dowry cases—have also been struck down because of the potential for abuse, said S.S. Naganand, senior advocate and senior partner, Jus-

tLaw, in Bengaluru.

2015

May 2017

Source: NCRB, CMIE, Lokniti-CSDS MOTN Sur

However, in response to multiple petitions from women's groups on this issue, the Supreme Court has

AHMED RAZA KHAN/MINT decided to revisit the Section 498A provisions once again (bit.ly/2LYJzRf).

Dalit activists argue that the courts and India's ruling class need to consider the disadvantageous position of Dalits in Indian society while examining the issue.

While there may be a few instances of abuse of the law.

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in a majority of cases the police are extremely reluctant to invoke the provisions of the Atrocities Act, or investigate cases of atrocities with due diligence, said Pradip More, deputy director at the non-governmental organisation Dalit Foundation.

Often, judges, too, shy away from invoking the provisions of the Act. For instance, in the infamous Khairlanji killingswhere upper caste men killed four members of a Dalit family in Maharashtra—both the trial court and Bombay high court refused to invoke the PoA Act.

Ultimately, it is the Dalit memory of being wronged throughout the history of Indian civilization that keeps the flame of Dalit protests

What may have added fuel to the fire is a sense of disappointment among Dalit voters who voted for the Narendra Modi-led BJP in large numbers in 2014.

The perceived inability to protect Dalit interests and to save Dalit lives may have fuelled discontent among Dalit youth, as an earlier Plain Facts column (bit.ly/2LOacvi) by political scientists Sanjay Kumar and Pranav Gupta argued.

Figures from successive rounds of the Mood of the Nation Survey conducted by Lokniti-CSDS suggests that Dalit support for the BJP-led Union government has been declining since mid-2017 even as Dalit protests have been growing (see Chart 4).

With the Congress party training its guns on the government on the issue of Dalit atrocities, the Bharatiya Janata Party has a tough challenge on its hands.

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went to Xperitus Insurance Brokers PVT LTD, Best Claims Service Provider of the year award went to Religare Health Insurance, Bancassurance Leader of Insurance, Marketeer of the year award went to Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, **Technology Initiative of the year** award went to Max Bupa Health Insurance Company Limited, Best Cyber Team of went to Aditya Birla Sun Life Insurance the year award went to The New India went to Paramount TPA, Best Start-up Broker of the year award went to Anzen

India Summit & Awards 2018, with the lightening ceremony and address by Chief

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The first Panel was - CEO Panel -The panel was moderated by Ms. Tejaswi Chawla, SVP, VYMO, with the key industry Raheja QBE General Insurance and Joseph

The prestigious 3rd Annual Insurance insurance business?".

The next big panel was on the accelerating Mitigation, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Sherkhane, CISO, Aditya Birla Health Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance, Charanjit Attra, theme "BlockChain, Al & IoT - The Future growth of Cyber Insurance. The panel of Smart Insurance Industry" provided was moderated by Varsha Jalan, Senior Krishnan, CRO, Reliance Life Insurance, Bharti AXA General Insurance, Pascoal life Insurance, Venkatakrishna Narayana, a platform for industry stake holders to Associate, Khaitan Legal Associates. Vishal Dubhashi, Senior VP, HDFC ERGO Andrade, Assistant Vice President – CRO, Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance were the a platform for industry stake holders to Associate, Khaitan Legal Associates. Vishal Dubhashi, Senior VP, HDFC ERGO work out a roadmap for unleashing the Sasi Kumar Adidamu, Chief Technical General Insurance, Dr. Sanjay Tiwari, future of Indian Insurance Industry in Officer, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, Vice President, ICICI Lombard General India. The exclusive two days summit was Upendra Namburi, Chief Innovation and Insurance, Lalitha Bhatia, COO, IDBI DHFL General Insurance were the panel awaited and prestigious Insurance Awards organized during 21-22 June 2018 at Hotel Marketing Officer, Bharti AXA General Federal Life Insurance were the panel The Lalit Mumbai, India. Had Legal & members. The Day 1 was inaugurated with the lamp Company Secretary, Aditya Birla Capital - The Day 2 started with the panel on of Information & Cyber Security, ICICI **Insurance Sector** was given to K Sanath Life Insurance, Sudhir Gudal, Promoter & Accelerate Insurance Transformation with Lombard General Insurance presented Kumar, Ex-Chairman cum Managing Guest Honourable Shri Nilesh Sathe, Chief Distribution officer, Xperitus were the Blockchain Technology. The panel on Known and Unknown - A Risk Director, National Insurance Co Ltd for his Member Life- The Insurance Regulatory the panel members. Nishant Mohanty, was moderated by Shefali Sonpar, Senior Management Perspective. Charanjit Attra, immense work for the Indian Insurance and Development Authority of India Regional Sales Head, VYMO presented on Director - Head Insurance Practice, UST Partner, presented a session on EY IFRS 17 Industry. Insurance Personality of the Transforming Sales through Al.

The next highlight on the day was very & Head Global Business Services, Swiss the summit and the organizer, Quest crucial panel on the rise of **insurTech.** Re, Dr. S Prakash, COO, Star Health and Liability Management and Portfolio Life Insurance Company of the year Onthefrontier for organizing the important The panel was very well moderated by Allied Insurance, KV Dipu, President and summit on Indian Insurance Industry Raunak Jha, Chief Actuarial and Risk Head of Operations, Bajaj Allianz General Vice President, ICICI Lombard General Insurance Company Limited", General and Facility with the top and eminent Officer, Reliance Health Insurance and the Insurance, Swati S. Bhide, Blockchain Insurance was the moderator and Insurance Company of the year award experts and leaders. He also mentioned panel members were - Mohit Rochlani, Leader, FSS, IBM India Pvt. Ltd. Yatish Kailash Mittal, SVP - Actuarial, HDFC Life went to The New India Assurance Company of the year award went to "ICICI Prudential Life Want of Company of the year award went to "ICICI Prudential Life Namagement. Arvind Shah, Associate award went to "ICICI Prudential Life Namagement. Arvind Shah, Associate award went to "ICICI Prudential Life Namagement. Arvind Shah, Associate award went to "ICICI Prudential Life Namagement. Arvind Shah, Associate award went to "ICICI Prudential Life Namagement. Arvind Shah, Associate award went to "ICICI Prudential Life Namagement. Arvind Shah, Associate award went to "ICICI Prudential Life Namagement. Arvind Shah, Associate award went to "ICICI Prudential Life Namagement. Arvind Shah, Associate award went to "ICICI Prudential Life Namagement. Arvind Shah, Associate award went to "ICICI Prudential Life Namagement. Arvind Shah, Associate award went to "ICICI Prudential Life Namagement. Arvind Shah, Associate award went to "ICICI Prudential Life Namagement. Arvind Shah, Associate award went to "ICICI Prudential Life Namagement. Arvind Shah, Associate award went to "ICICI Prudential Life Namagement. Arvind Shah, Associate award went to "ICICI Prudential Life Namagement. Arvind Shah, Associate award went to "ICICI Prudential Life Namagement. Arvind Shah, Associate award went to "ICICI Prudential Life Namagement. Arvind Shah, Associate award went to "ICICI Prudential Life Namagement. Director – IT and Operations, IndiaFirst Bhatia, VP – Technology, ICICI Lombard Life, Hrishikesh Kunte, Digital Head, Aditya General Insurance, were the panel Birla Health Insurance, Kamlesh Manuja, members. Insurance Industry & India Vision 2025. Head of Business Operations, Edelweiss The session was followed by the Investments Officer, Reliance General the year (Life) award went to Amitabh Head – Products, Unlimit IoT Pvt. Ltd. experts - Mahesh Balasubramanian, MD Ashok Hariharan, CEO & Founder, IDfy Thought Leadership. The next panel was Insurance, Nilesh Mejari, CFO, CCO, CRO, (General) went to Tapan Singhel, MD & Assurance Co Ltd, Best Consumer & CEO, Kotak General Insurance, Tapan and Wriju Ray, Chief Revenue Officer, IDfy Cyber Security. The panel was very well Munich RE. The last panel of the summit CEO, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, CEO Engagement TPA 2017-2018 award Singhel, MD & CEO, Bajaj Allianz General presented on the topic - There's no such Insurance, Praveen Gupta, MD & CEO, thing as perfect crime - using machine Director - Head Insurance Practice, UST Regulation and Insurance Accounting Managing Director & CEO, Religare Health Augustine, CEO, XL Catlin's India. Later The presentation was followed by the of Risk and Information Security, SBI was moderated by Shikha Bagai, CFO, the year award went to Shriram General The prestigious summit was on Mr. Jürgen Hase, CEO, Unlimit IoT Pvt. final session of the day panel on How to Life Insurance, Avez Sayed, Senior AVP, Aditya Birla Health Insurance Co Ltd. Rising Star of the year conceptualised and organized by Quest

Global. Amit Kalra, Managing Director

Sanjiv Dwivedi, SVP Investigation and Loss Lombard General Insurance, Krantikumar Dhulipala, Appointed Actuary & President, Satyanandan Atyam, CISO, Partner, E&Y, Subhash Pillai, CFO, Tata AIA Head IT Infrastructure and Information panel members. Security ICICI Lombard General Insurance, The evening started with the most members. Later on, Avez Sayed, Senior 2018. The first award for the category of AVP, Enterprise Risk Management & Chief Life Time Achievement Award in the

- Insurance Contracts. next panel was on **Asset** CMD, The New India Assurance Co Ltd. Insurance, Subhrajit Mukhopadhyay, Ltd, **Health Insurance Company of the**Chief & Appointed Actuary, Edelweiss **year** award went to Star Health and Lombard GIC Ltd. **Fraud Intelligence**Tokio Life Insurance, Ramkumar K, Chief Allied Insurance Company Ltd. **CEO of Insurance Company of the year** award Tokio Life Insurance, Narendra Saini, presentation by Swati S. Bhide, Blockchain Insurance, TA Ramalingam, Senior Chaudhry, MD & CEO, HDFC Standard Leader, FSS, IBM India Pvt. Ltd. on IBM – President Channels, Bajaj Allianz General Life Insurance Co Ltd, CEO of the year learning and data science to detect fraud. Global. N.K.V Roop Kumar, EVP, Chief Standards with IFRS 17. This session Insurance, Customer Service Provider of Insurance Brokers Pvt Ltd. Ltd. presented his keynote presentation Combat Fraud in Insurance. The Panel Enterprise Risk Management and Chief Financial Officer, award went to DHFL General Insurance Comferences, and supported by Mr Nilesh on "Can loT transform the commoditized was moderated by subject matter expert of Information & Cyber Security, ICICI IndiaFirst Life Insurance, Sai Srinivas Ltd. Insurance Broker of the year award Sathe, Member Life-IRDAI.



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