

Mumbai Catholics protest attempts to remove crosses



Mumbai Catholics protest attempts to remove crosses. Court order allows wayside crosses not over 50-years-old to be removed by local authorities November 29, 2016
Catholics in the western Indian city of Mumbai protested on Nov. 25 against efforts by local authorities to remove or demolish wayside crosses.

The protest was in response to a notice issued by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation that seeks to remove or demolish all wayside crosses built in the last 50 years.

Christians say that half of the city's 100 wayside crosses were erected in the last five decades.

Protesters like Godfrey Pimenta of the Watchdog Foundation said the government decision to remove the crosses from public space is "about harassing" the city's minority Christian community.

The Supreme Court had earlier divided the wayside crosses into three categories. The court said that category A crosses, erected prior to 1964, cannot be moved but category B crosses, erected from 1964-2009, can be relocated and category C crosses, erected after 2009, can be demolished.

City council officials say they do not have legal documents proving ages of the crosses and have issued demolition notices asking Catholics to show reason why the crosses cannot be demolished.